

SEAMAN USD 345
PARENT/STUDENT
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
HANDBOOK
785-286-8440
5620 NW Topeka Blvd
Topeka KS 66617
Office Hours: 6:00 am - 5:15 pm

[USD #345 Board of Education Members](#)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents and students with the Rules and Regulations of the State of Kansas and USD #345 Policies and Procedures concerning student transportation. Our goal and obligation is to provide safe student transportation. Please read this booklet carefully and discuss it with your children. Keep it handy for further reference. The assistance of parents in promoting student obedience to school bus rules greatly assists the drivers in maintaining proper discipline.

Our drivers meet all state and district certification requirements which include maintaining a current CDL B driver license with all pertinent endorsements, passing a DOT physical examination, completing a First Aid/CPR Course and Defensive Driving Course, and passing the district's driver training program which includes behind-the-wheel training prior to transporting students. In addition, a periodic check is made of each driver's driving record. Drivers are subject to federally mandated drug and alcohol testing.

Our drivers also receive ongoing training in accident prevention and safety. We work continuously to maintain proper student discipline on the bus. We have a good safety record; and for everyone's sake, please do your part to help us keep it that way. With the pupil's cooperation and your support, we believe the Seaman District can maintain a safe and efficient transportation program. Seaman District school bus service is owned by the district and operated and maintained by district personnel. All route buses are equipped with two-way radios. Each bus must pass a Kansas State Highway Patrol annual safety inspection. In addition, the district has a preventive maintenance program that keeps our buses in excellent condition.

Our basic philosophy is based on three areas: SAFETY, EFFICIENCY, and SERVICE, in that order. We strive to provide adequate service at a reasonable cost to our patrons. We cannot stop at every house, wait for students, or adjust our pick-up and drop-off routes to meet the schedule of individual families.

KEY RULES FOR RIDERS

These rules apply anytime the pupil is riding a school bus (regular routes, activity or field trips). In addition, on activity or field trips, pupils shall follow directions of a teacher or a chaperone appointed by the school.

By state law, the driver is in charge of all passengers while they are loading, unloading and riding the bus.

Any act that may endanger the safety of others may be cause for temporary or permanent suspension of bus riding privileges.

Prior to Loading:

1. Pupils must be on time! Be outside at the stop 10 minutes prior to stop time. In extreme weather pupils may wait inside, but must be on the way to the bus as it approaches. The bus cannot wait beyond its regular schedule for those who are tardy.
2. Horns are safety-warning equipment and are not to be used to notify students and parents that the bus has arrived.
3. Bus riders shall conduct themselves in a safe manner while walking to the bus stop, waiting for the bus and boarding the bus. Students should stay 10 feet away from the roadway and face traffic when walking to their bus stop. Never stand in the roadway. Stand single file in an orderly manner while waiting for the bus. If you must cross the street to board the bus, do so only after directed to do so by the bus driver and after you have looked both ways before you enter or cross the street. Always cross in front of the bus, in a straight line and stay at least ten (10) feet away from the front of the bus. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the red safety lights are flashing before attempting to enter the bus or begin the crossing procedure. The bus will stop at least ten (10) feet away from the closest student.

While on the Bus:

1. Obey the driver promptly and courteously.
2. Classroom conduct is expected. In the interest of safety, only low conversational volume levels are acceptable. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is prohibited while the bus is moving.
3. When boarding the bus, go quickly and quietly to the assigned seat, remain seated and face forward in seat at all times, until it is time to unload.
4. Keep arms, head and all parts of the body inside the bus at all times.
5. Assist to keep the bus clean and free from trash.
6. Treat bus equipment with respect. Damage to seats, etc., must be paid for by the offender(s). Any damage to the bus is to be reported at once to the driver.
7. Pupils shall not tamper with the controls or the equipment on the bus.
8. Do not throw anything inside the bus, or out the bus windows.
9. Keep books, packages, coats, feet and all other objects out of the aisle. The student must take all musical instruments and other personal items to his/her seat. If these items

impede visibility, cannot be stowed properly, or are too large for the student to hold without depriving another student of his/her seat, then the student must make other arrangements for their transportation.

10. Absolute quiet is necessary at railroad crossings. Drivers may ask for silence from passengers when they are faced with adverse driving conditions such as snow, ice and heavy rain.
11. No glass containers, animals, pets, weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed on the bus.
12. Smoking, chewing tobacco, violence, bullying, and use of profane or obscene language, unacceptable signs or moral offenses are prohibited.
13. Eating, drinking and chewing gum, while the bus is moving, is an unsafe practice, which may cause choking and is not allowable.

Unloading/Crossing Procedures:

When unloading from the bus, students should always look both directions to make sure they can safely exit the bus.

If the student does not have to cross the street, after unloading, they should walk at least 10 feet away from the roadway before the bus proceeds.

If the student does have to cross the street, after unloading, they should walk a distance of 10 feet along the side of the road, ahead of the front of the bus, then turn and look at the Driver. When the Driver has determined that the student can safely cross the street, the Driver will give the student an exaggerated head nod, which signals that it is safe to cross. As the student crosses the street, they should always look both directions before entering the other lane of traffic. Once a student safely crosses the street, they should walk at least 10 feet away from the roadway to remain clear from traffic. Students must never cross the street behind the bus!

After unloading and crossing, if applicable, students must walk at least 10 feet off the roadway and never return to, or towards the bus for any reason. If students check the mailbox after unloading, they must remain at least 10 feet off the roadway and wait for all traffic to clear, before returning to the mailbox.

Any children or adults who wait for brothers or sisters should stay well away from the street and never go near the bus at any time.

KINDERGARTEN AND OTHER FIRST TIME RIDERS

Young riders are special in several ways. The younger the child, the more responsibility and care adults in charge must provide. Parents, please be sure these first time riders understand the bus rules and the importance of following them. These young riders should understand that they could be hurt by the bus or by other traffic unless they are careful. The ideal situation is for the youngster to have a healthy respect for the "big yellow fellow" without being fearful of the bus.

Remember that young riders need to be reminded of the rules and praised for practicing safe ridership.

Even at a young age, students should be taught to assume responsibility for their safety. No matter how careful and conscientious a bus driver is, there are times when the child is outside of the bus that the driver simply cannot protect the child from harm. Students should practice the habit of checking traffic for themselves after getting the signal to cross from the driver.

If your child is new to the district or for some reason has not ridden our buses before, be sure you take time to go over the rules of safety that are listed in the Parent/Student Transportation Handbook, before his/her first ride on the bus.

RECEIVING KINDERGARTEN AND PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

A responsible person is required to be present and visible to the driver to receive each child delivered from school after kindergarten. A responsible person is required to be present and visible to the driver to receive each child delivered from school after preschool.

If no one is present, the driver will finish the route and return the child to school. The parent/guardian or babysitter is now responsible to pick up the child from school.

PAY-TO-RIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR COMMUNITY STUDENTS

Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, all preschool children will have the opportunity for bus transportation, including community students. In June 2020, the board approved a "Pay-to-Ride" option for community students who do not qualify for district-provided bussing due to funding restrictions. We hope that many parents will find this option appealing and convenient for their community student(s).

Pay-to-Ride Transportation for Community Students

FULL YEAR TOTAL: \$507.00

SEMESTER TOTAL: \$253.50

- Only students designated as "community students" will pay a transportation fee. All other students qualify for reimbursable district-provided transportation.
- Students will receive their pick-up and drop-off times in PowerSchool, prior to the first day of school.
- Students should be ready and waiting for the bus at least ten (10) minutes prior to the time listed on the bus times.
- Age- and size-appropriate child safety restraint systems will be utilized for preschool bus riders.
- Each preschool bus will have a driver and one para.
- A responsible person must be present for preschooler pick-up and drop-off.

- If your child will not require bus transportation to or from school for the day please contact the Transportation Department.
- No food or drink on the bus.
- Pay-to-Ride transportation is offered on a space-available, first-come, first-serve basis.

At any time please feel free to contact Mathes Early Learning Center or the Transportation Department with any questions or concerns regarding your child's transportation.

If you are interested in utilizing the "Pay-to-Ride" transportation for your community student, please email the preschool principal to get started.

ELIGIBILITY

Transportation is available for all students to/from their attendance center of residence.

Elementary and Middle school students staying at a daycare located in their home attendance center will be transported on a space available basis to/from a daycare provider.

High school students are eligible for transportation only to/from their legal residence. Students attending Pleasant Hill Learning Campus may be picked up and dropped off at designated locations.

Transportation is restricted for students attending under the In-district/Out-of-district transfer policy:

Elementary in-district and out-of-district students may ride on a space available basis to/from a daycare provider located in the attendance center where the student has transferred.

Those Middle School and High School students attending under the out-of-district transfer policy are not eligible for transportation.

IEP's: Students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), whose program is offered at their home school, will be transported by regular education transportation service unless their IEP specifically states another type of transportation service. Students with an IEP whose program is offered at a school within the district other than their home school, or whose program is outside the district will be transported to/from their legal residence or day care provider, whose day care service is located within the Seaman District.

DESIGNATED PERMANENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF ADDRESSES

Each Elementary student must have one designated pick-up address and one designated drop-off address that is consistent daily. The pick-up and drop-off addresses may be different from each other, but each must remain constant and be located within the boundaries of the school the student is attending. These addresses shall be declared during enrollment.

Designated addresses for kindergarteners must be declared earlier, either at spring roundup, or prior to enrollment.

Each Middle School student will be transported to/from their home address unless the student's parent(s) have contacted the Transportation Office requesting service to/from a day care location. The pick up and drop off addresses may be different from each other, but must be located within the boundaries of the district, and must be consistent daily.

A permanent change may be made in a student's designated pick-up or drop-off address(s) by contacting the Transportation Office at least (3) days in advance of the change. Changes will be accommodated as long as there is space available.

Any permanent change of home address must be communicated to the Seaman Education Center (with an effective date at least (3) days in advance) and processed prior to starting bus service to/from the new address. In the event of a move, please call the school with the new address several days before the effective date. All changes of home address (and associated Home Phone number) are to be initiated through the school of attendance (with an effective date) and the school should then communicate the change to the Transportation Office. If a permanent change is to be made in a student's designated pick-up or drop-off address(s) due to a Home Address change, communication of the request from the school, is to be at least (3) days in advance of starting bussing to/from the new address.

A change of pick-up/drop-off location may be allowed with a note from the parent/guardian, for each occurrence, which must also be signed by the school principal/administrator. This is only reserved for emergency situations. In an emergency, the principal/administrator may sign a note to allow a student to ride on a different bus route, if space is available and within the attendance area. Temporary changes are also reserved for emergency situations, and only on a space available basis.

END OF THE SCHOOL DAY

At the end of their school day, if a student is to be picked up (to be a car rider), or has permission to walk, direct the student not to get on the bus. If the student is a regular bus rider, please let the school know they won't be riding, either by calling the school office or sending a note to school, so they don't put them on the bus. Once a student gets on the bus (s)he will be released only upon approval of the school administrator (or his /her designee).

Never attempt to "flag down the bus" when it is on route. Students cannot be released along the route. This is a hazardous practice for the students, the bus, and other traffic.

Similarly, do not attempt to "Chase the bus" if your student missed the bus in the morning. Either take the student to school, or take the student to another stop farther ahead on the route and have him/her board with others at that stop.

It is extremely unsafe for a student to approach the bus from the back or side of the bus.

BLUE SLIP POLICY (BUS CONDUCT)

It is very important that the school bus be a safe and orderly mode of transportation. Most students don't ride the bus for an extremely long period of time. With only one person responsible for managing the students and also responsible for driving the bus in a safe manner, the students using the bus must follow the safety rules (pages 3 & 4 – Key Rules for Riders).

When a student has broken a bus safety rule, a blue slip (Bus Conduct Notice) is issued. The blue slip will give a general description of the infraction. A signed copy of the blue slip must be returned to the bus driver before the student can ride the bus again. A copy is also given to the principal. The principal will then notify the parents as to the consequences of the blue slip.

This is the list of consequences to be followed upon receiving blue slips:

First Blue Slip - Warning Only - Notification of Three Day Suspension from the bus on the second blue slip. Notification to a parent in writing.

Second Blue Slip - Three Day Suspension from Bus - Notification of Five Day Suspension from the bus on the third blue slip. Notification to a parent in writing and by telephone.

Third Blue Slip - Five Day Suspension from Bus - Warning of Ten Day Suspension from the bus on the fourth blue slip. Notification to a parent in writing and by telephone.

Fourth Blue Slip - Ten Day Suspension from Bus - Warning of Suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year on the fifth blue slip. Notification to a parent in writing and by telephone.

Fifth Blue Slip - Suspension From Using the Bus for the remainder of the school year - Notification to a parent and the Superintendent's office in writing and by telephone.

Levels may be skipped at the discretion of the building principal due to SEVERE BEHAVIOR, such as fighting, blatant disrespect, endangering others, etc.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If there is enough snow or adverse weather that you question whether or not school will be in session, please monitor your television or radio. The Superintendent will determine if school is to be canceled after checking road and weather conditions and consulting with other school officials. The Superintendent will notify the local media only when school is called off. (Please remember, school is not called "on!")

Please do not call the schools or the bus shop to inquire if school will be in session. Listen to a local TV or radio station. Occasionally a broadcaster will cause confusion by stating that the station has not heard from Seaman USD 345 and they do not know whether or not Seaman is having school. Do not be confused by this statement. The stations will only be notified if we are NOT having school; therefore, if the station has not heard from Seaman, Seaman is having school.

Every day that school is in session, we will attempt to pick up all students. However, we cannot guarantee the bus will be able to come by every house. Some roads may be blocked by drifts, preventing the bus from passing.

If Seaman USD #345 is closed, no transportation is provided to any out-of-district programs such as Washburn Tech School (WTI) or Special Education.

It is recommended that students have a book bag or sport bag in which to carry all papers, books, shoes, etc., all loose items. This is especially important for younger riders who might forget the danger of chasing a paper or other dropped item under the bus.

It is recommended to label all bags, coats and other belongings with a name in the event of being left on the bus. A name tag on the item would help us identify the owner and attempt to return it to the student.

DRESSING FOR SAFETY

Students should wear appropriate clothing to be protected in all weather conditions. This includes rain gear (head covering, coats and boots) for wet weather and warm winter clothing for cold weather (caps, winter boots, winter coats and gloves). While students do not have to be out in the weather for very long most days, they should be prepared to wait at the bus stop in all weather conditions and be prepared for emergencies. Even though we maintain our buses through a program of preventative maintenance, a breakdown could occur causing students to have to wait longer for the bus or wait on the bus until help arrives. Buses do occasionally become stuck in the snow. Students should always have adequate protective clothing to be safe in these circumstances.

PASSENGERS OTHER THAN SCHOOL PUPILS

No one other than the students assigned to a bus route are permitted to ride the school bus to school or from school. Adults who are attending a field trip or class activity are allowed to ride the bus with the class, after prior arrangements are made with the school administrator.

EMERGENCY BUS EVACUATION DRILLS

Kansas Law requires that two evacuation drills must be performed each year, at each school, at the direction of the bus driver and under the supervision of the building administrator. The purpose is to prepare the students to recognize conditions that warrant evacuation, to know correct procedures for each type of evacuation, and to teach students to initiate and complete

an evacuation without driver supervision, if required. Drivers appoint leaders and helpers and instruct all students in overall procedures. A leader takes the evacuated students away from the bus; helpers remain at the doors assisting other students from the bus until all are evacuated.

The most important thing for students to remember in an emergency is to stay calm. Students should never run (this creates panic). Other actions to remember in an emergency are to leave loose items (lunches, bags, books, etc), to assist smaller children, and listen to and obey the driver.

ROUTES AND DESIGNATED STOPS

The district, taking into consideration various factors including safety, distance and efficiency establishes designated bus stops. Students should plan to walk to the district assigned bus stops. Generally, no student will have to walk farther than one-fourth mile from the street end of the driveway to the bus stop. Student bus riders will be assigned to a specific bus, with 10-minute windows for pick-up and drop-off times.

Most buses run a secondary route followed by an elementary route. This necessitates a time differential of 45 to 60 minutes between the beginning of secondary and elementary schools. Information on routes will be available at enrollment, for each school.

If a student is assigned to be a rider, but is not riding on a particular day, the family is asked to call the Bus Shop with this information: only if your driver has requested you to notify the Bus Shop. We only need to know about those students who live on the fringe of a route where we are only in your area to pick up your student(s). The phone number for the Transportation Department (Bus Shop) is 286-8440. Please call between 6:00am - 6:45am for secondary students, or 7:00am – 7:45am for elementary students. Give your child's name, address, *bus driver's name, bus number and the school your student attends to the person who answers the phone. Please do not have the student call!

STOP ARM LAW

Please see that all the drivers in your household know how to be safe and legal around school buses. It can be frustrating to get “caught” behind a bus making stops along its route. Some people let their impatience lead to risky actions that endanger students, themselves and other traffic. Some drivers do not know what the law requires of them. Please obey the law and please be patient for the kids' sake.

CELL PHONE POLICY

The use of cell phones are permitted on district buses while commuting to and from school. Students are restricted to texting or playing games in silent mode or listening to music with earphones. Picture/video taking is not allowed.

Any violation of this policy may result in a blue slip, the driver confiscating the phone and/or your student losing the privilege all together. Confiscated phones will be turned into the principal of your student's building.

The district/transportation department and/or representative will not be held responsible for damaged, lost or stolen personal property including cell phones.

USE OF SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

The district may use surveillance cameras to monitor student activity. Surveillance cameras may be used to monitor students riding in district vehicles and to monitor student behavior in or around any district facility. Surveillance footage which is a record of student behavior shall be secured in a secure location until the digital storage mechanism or tape on which the footage is maintained is either reused or erased. Surveillance footage of personally identifiable students depicting their involvement in an altercation or other violation of law or district policy shall be considered a student record and shall be subject to current law for the release of student record information.