

## **Edgefield County School District Transportation Policies**

The South Carolina Department of Education regulates school bus transportation, and a local school system can give service only within the limits of the resources made available by state government.

Absenteeism, discipline problems, breakdowns, inclement weather, etc. may result in second trips and routing disruptions.

### **Regular Route Pattern**

A regular route pattern is established by traveling along main roadways and centralized streets within a community or area. Routes are designed to prevent buses from traveling on unsafe roads, making unnecessary or dangerous turnabouts, making unsafe stops, and dangerous entries onto major traffic arteries.

School buses shall not leave the regular route pattern to travel along roadways unless the student's legal residence is greater than three-tenths of a mile from the regular route pattern (SC-59-67-420).

School bus stops shall not be closer than two-tenths of a mile at safe points as defined by state traffic criteria (SC-43-80-F).

Buses shall not be permitted to leave the regular route during inclement weather. Buses may not be able to travel on some roads covered by snow, or dirt roads made impassable by heavy rains.

Buses need wide areas for maneuvering, clear of all hazards (limbs, posts, cars, etc.) with sufficient surfaces to support the heavy bus and a 60-ft radius for turn-about. The district must have signed a release to operate on private roads.

### **Assigned Bus Stops**

All students must ride specifically assigned buses and board or exit at specifically assigned bus stops. Parents are not allowed to come to the site of breakdowns, accidents, incidents, etc. and pick students up. In the event of a breakdown, when possible, a spare bus will be sent so that the driver can resume the route.

Unassigned students will not be allowed on another bus without a note or request for change in transportation form signed by the parent and approved by the transportation supervisor and then, only if seating is available.

Parents and other citizens must never interfere with the operation of or board a school bus or threaten the driver or students. The use of threatening, obscene, or profane language addressed to the driver or any passenger entering, leaving, or waiting for a bus is disorderly conduct.

When growth results in overcrowded buses, second trips are necessary. Some students may arrive at school or at home later than usual.

One bus holds 40 to 60 students. It is common for several buses to have operational problems simultaneously. The district cannot contact parents and also efficiently manage events when breakdowns occur.

The funding for school buses is the responsibility of your elected state Legislature. Edgefield County School District can offer services only within the limits of available resources.

No student is to cross any four-lane road at any time when engaged in school bus transportation services.

### **Waiting At The Bus Stop**

Parents and guardians are responsible for the safety and conduct of their children going to and from, and while at, the bus stop, according to state law.

Never cross the street until the bus arrives, lights are flashing red, and the driver signals students to cross.

Buses can break down, resulting in irregular bus arrivals. This cannot be controlled by school district staff. Riders are instructed to be at their stop 15 minutes before the regular arrival time of their school bus.

### **Progressive Bus Discipline**

School buses are classrooms in motion in traffic. Discipline violations will be handled by each school transportation designee. If you have questions regarding a disciplinary issue involving your child, please contact the office at the school at which your child attends.

Riding the bus is a privilege and not a right. Correct behavior is the responsibility of the student, not the driver. Students will be held responsible for obeying all student transportation regulations and school district conduct code.

Bus drivers will determine who sits where and with whom on the bus. Drivers can use seating assignments to manage student behavior.

### **Carry-On Items**

All legal carry-on items must fit within the student's seating space. No class projects, glass, animals, insects, containers or balloons are permitted on school buses. Class projects must be transported by car. Instruments the size of a trumpet or larger will not be allowed on school buses.

The final determination of what objects may be transported on a school bus rests with the Transportation Supervisor.

### **Authority To Manage Bus**

Drivers, by state law, have the responsibility and full authority to manage the bus. Any problems should be brought to the attention of the Transportation Supervisor, never to a driver.

### **Vandalism**

Parents will be charged should their child damage any bus equipment. Seat covers can cost as much as \$50. The loss of riding privilege may remain until payment for damages are received.

### **Community Hazards**

The initial responsibility for community hazards, including concerns with pets and wildlife, lies with city and county government, law enforcement and parents.

For more information, call the Edgefield County School District Department of Transportation Supervisor, Tanja Bryan at 803-275-1776.