

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Novato Unified School District is committed to ensuring the continued maintenance of the school buses and the continued training of our professional drivers.

THE BUS DRIVER

The bus drivers are responsible for the students' conduct and safety while boarding, riding and disembarking and crossing the street to or from the bus at the bus stops.

THE STUDENT

Students are subject to the bus driver's authority and must listen to and follow the driver's instructions at all times.

THE PARENT

The parents make sure that the children are out boarding the bus on time and support the safe riding practices outlined in this brochure.

THE PRINCIPAL

The principal determines and carries out any disciplinary action.

BUS ROUTES

Regular home-to-school bus route schedules are delivered to school offices two weeks prior to the beginning of the school year. Although bus routes and stops change infrequently, occasionally notices are sent to school or given directly to students. Any questions regarding any revised bus schedules should be directed to the Transportation Department. A number identifies routes. Students need to have a designated school bus stop.

Students are urged to be outside waiting for the bus at least **five minutes** prior to the posted stop time. Bus pick/up and drop off times may change or vary, depending on ridership changes made during the first couple of weeks of school. Parents and students will be notified of any changes. The bus driver is to wait **3 minutes** after the pick-up time. If the child does not load the bus in that time, the driver will move on from that pick-up. The driver will not return to the house.

Each student is picked up at the safest point possible. Not all students will be picked up in front of their home. Some may need to walk depending on the location of their house.

WAITING FOR THE BUS

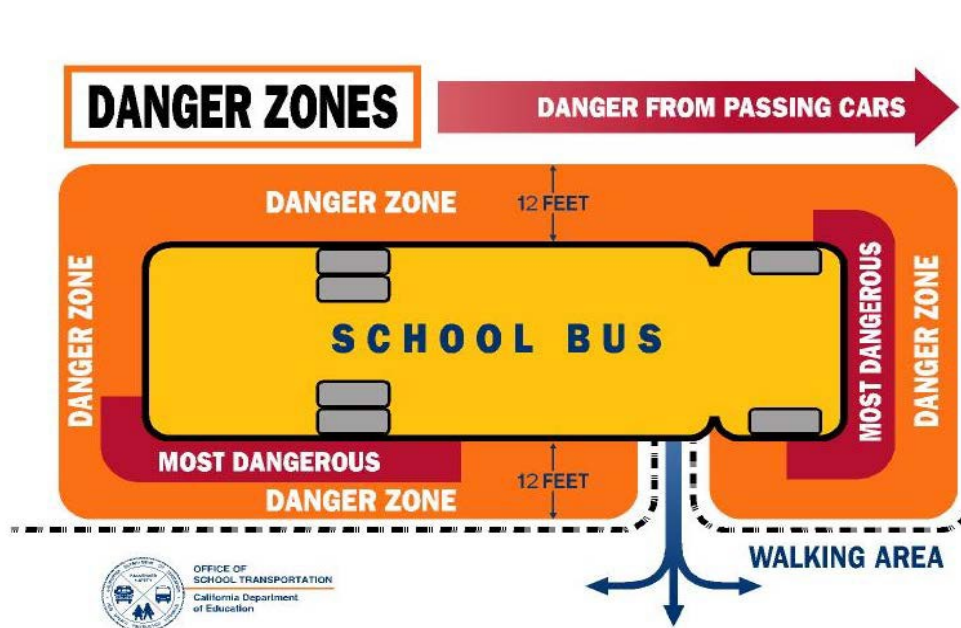
Students should be very careful when waiting for the bus at their stops. Parents should accompany young children to the bus and assist in keeping order while waiting for the bus. Children should be instructed to keep on sidewalks or on the shoulder as far away from the main traveled portion of the roadway. Children should pay close attention to traffic, weather conditions, and visibility conditions. Children should remain orderly at all times and refrain from boisterous conduct or horseplay while waiting for their school bus to arrive. Children should not engage in conversation with strangers or accept rides from passing motorists. When waiting for a bus, children should always face traffic.

The Novato Unified School District in accordance with State Law establishes bus stops. Bus Stops are not supervised by school personnel. The District is not responsible for any injuries or damages that occur as a result of disorderly conduct. However, any report or observance of misbehavior at the bus stops can lead to disciplinary action.

1. Students should wait in an orderly fashion.
2. Whenever possible, students should be at least twelve feet back from the main traveled portion of the roadway and visible to the driver
3. No pushing, shoving or horseplay is allowed.
4. Many bus stops are located adjacent to private property. Throwing rocks or other objects, playing around, causing excessive noise, touching or tampering with private property or vehicles is strictly prohibited.
5. Upon arrival of the bus, students must wait for the driver to come to a complete stop, the flashing red signal lamps have been activated and the door of the bus is opened before they begin to move forward to the bus.
6. Students should board the bus one-at-a-time and move quickly to an open or assigned seat.
7. If a student drops papers or other objects while boarding the bus, he/she should get the attention of the driver. **NEVER GO UNDER OR NEAR THE BUS TO RETRIEVE PAPERS OR OTHER OBJECTS!**

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY ZONES

The areas closest to the perimeter of the bus are called the danger zones. Students are directed to be no closer than twelve (12) feet to the bus, except when loading and unloading. The vast majority of school bus accidents and injury to students occurs outside of the bus in this danger zone. If a student drops papers, lunch boxes or other objects while loading or unloading from the bus, the student must get the attention of the driver. **Never go under or near the bus to retrieve papers or other objects.**



Novato Unified School District bus operators only transport Special Education Students. If your student rides the school bus to and from school, please take the time to go over this diagram of danger zones of the bus. Many students might forget their jacket or back pack and want to run back to the bus. Please remember that it is our job as drivers to ensure all students are safely transported home to school and we take this very seriously. If we teach our students/riders to be aware of the dangers of the bus, we can keep our students safe.

DETERMINING IF A PUPIL REQUIRES ESCORT

The driver, in conjunction with the Transportation Manager, the School and the student's parent's input shall determine if escort is required at a particular bus stop in compliance with Section 22112 of the California Vehicle Code. Particularly with new students registering in a school, which the Transportation Department may not have exact address information or home location, the driver may have to rely on the student's input. If the input of the student is unclear, the driver may need to radio Dispatch and have the secretary call the school to verify the address. Every stop requiring an escort will be clearly marked on the route sheet.

SAFE RIDING PRACTICES

In compliance with Education Code Section 39831.5 students annually receive instruction on proper loading and unloading procedures including escorting by the driver, proper passenger conduct, bus evacuation and location of emergency exits and emergency equipment. Instruction may also include responsibilities of passengers seated next to an emergency exit.

Prior to departure on any school activity trip, all pupils riding on a school bus or school pupil activity bus (SPAB) shall receive safety instructions that includes, but is not limited to, location of emergency exits, and location and use of emergency equipment.

In addition to the information above, the driver will inform students to rules and expectations during their first days of each school year.

1. Wait for the bus driver to secure and open the passenger door before approaching the bus.
2. Once you have boarded the bus, put your seatbelt on and always face forward.
3. Keep all parts of your body and all belongings inside the bus at all times.
4. No live animals, insects or glass containers are allowed on the bus per State Law and safety precautions.
5. NO EATING, DRINKING OR SMOKING IS ALLOWED

6. All school behavior standards are in effect on school busses. These standards are applicable to all athletic and field trip events. A school bus is school property.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINE

VERBAL WARNING

If a student misbehaves in a manner that is not a threat to the safety of the passengers, the bus driver will give a verbal warning.

WRITTEN WARNING

The driver will issue an unsatisfactory conduct form for the student's continued misconduct or if the student's conduct is unsafe. The specific act is described so that the students, parent and teacher can take corrective action. The parent must sign a copy and returned to the Transportation Department. The Manager will review the incident and determine if it needs further discussion with the parent. A copy will be filed with the Transportation Department.

SUSPENSION OF RIDING PRIVILEGES

If disorderly conduct persists after issuance of the Notice of Unsatisfactory Conduct on a School Bus, or if the conduct threatens the safety of passengers and others, the student may lose bus-riding privileges.

On the way to or home from school:

The bus driver shall file the Notice of Unsatisfactory Conduct on a School Bus with the Transportation Manager. The Manager will contact the program specialist, teacher and parent.

The teacher will investigate the incident and, if deemed necessary, set up a conference with the student, parent, and Manager to review what occurred and discuss the suspension of bus riding privileges. Final authority for determining suspension rests with the Manager.

RED LIGHT CROSSINGS

When a student needs to cross the road and the stop is designated as an escorted crossing, the driver sets the parking brake, secures the bus, takes the key, checks traffic, turns on the red lights, opens the door and exits the bus with a hand held stop sign to escort the student across the road. The student should follow all of the directions of the driver and not cross the road until the driver verbally tells the student to proceed. Students are to cross the street in front of the bus between the bus and the driver. This is a rare occasion due to NUSD only transporting Special Needs Students. All stops are to be on the right side of the roadway.

On October 9 1999, AB 1573 was signed into law. This law amended the January 1 1998 Thomas Edward Lanni School Bus Safety Act. This law will require school bus drivers to activate their red crossing lights at specified stops. It is the motorist's responsibility to come to a complete stop when red lights are flashing. An exception applies when motorist is on the opposite side of a divided road or highway

CLOTHING HAZARDS

Many injuries occurring on school buses have been due to clothing or backpacks that have drawstrings. The drawstrings have become caught in handrails on the bus without the driver's knowledge. Please inspect the children's clothing or backpack to ensure there are not drawstrings or other hanging objects that could be caught in the handrail or door.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS OR CIRCUMSTANCES

If you encounter a student transportation safety situation that is not covered in this plan or seems unique, please contact the Transportation Department (415) 892-1598 for direction.