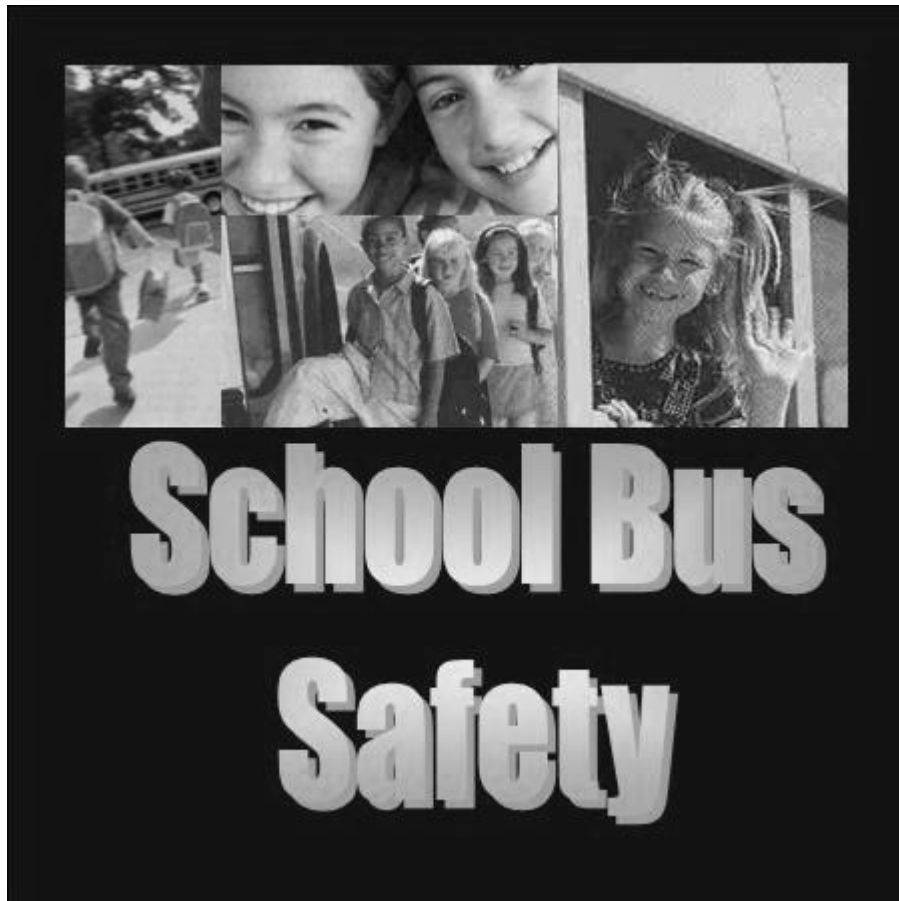


**Delsea Middle School
Parent/Student Transportation Manual
2014-2015**



Delsea Regional School District

SAFETY IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY

To Parents and Guardians:

It is necessary for parents and guardians to support school safety rules and help their children abide by them for their own safety as well as for the safety of others. Student management on the school bus is probably the biggest problem facing school bus drivers today. As in the classroom, student management on the bus is an important issue. There are however, some differences. Unlike the classroom teacher, the school bus driver has his / her back to the students. Unlike the classroom teacher who has 20 – 30 students the bus driver has 20 – 54 students. A bus driver must control thousands of pounds of steel, glass, and rubber as he / she drives through traffic in varying road conditions. The school bus driver is constantly aware that a single lapse in concentration could result in a serious accident and possible injury or death to students on board the bus or to persons off the bus. To avoid distractions it is imperative that the students be under control at all times. It is essential to communicate to students the importance of good behavior on the bus. It is imperative that students hear this from parents and teachers as well as the Transportation Department staff.

Parents are encouraged to do the following:

- Stress the importance of remaining seated and reasonably quiet while the bus is in motion.
- Stress the importance of following the directions of the bus driver.
- Advise their child that the Red Flashing lights cannot stop oncoming vehicles. The student must not cross the roadway until directed by the bus driver as well as looking both ways before crossing the roadway.
- Reinforce that their child must be at the bus stop **10 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time.**
- Support the district's policies and procedures as they are established to ensure student safety.

Positive communication is also necessary to operate the transportation system. Parents need to communicate with the Transportation Coordinator, if there are questions or behavior management problems. Parents need to let the Transportation Department know if there is a problem or perceived problem by identifying the day it happened and the bus number. Parent, teachers, and the transportation staff must all set a positive example for our students.

Bus Cameras

Our buses are being equipped with cameras for the primary purpose of preventing disciplinary problems and vandalism on the bus. Access to and use of video cameras from our buses shall be limited. Only the transportation director, bus drivers, principals, police, and the District Administrator shall be authorized to view the videos for the purpose of documenting a problem and determining which student(s) may be involved. School administrators may authorize pupil services personnel to view segments of a specific camera if viewing the video is beneficial to their role in assisting the student.

BUS CONDUCT RULES

The Transportation Department staff is looking forward to a safe, efficient, and effective year working as a team with parents and students. In order to maintain high safety standards, it is important that everyone works together. Please remember the **bus driver is in complete charge at all times**, students will not question the driver's authority. For safety and consideration of others, students must follow these Board of Education-approved procedures as defined in this document.

Generally, the first conduct report is a warning. Serious misbehavior or further reports of misbehavior will bring disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students who damage a bus will be charged for repairs, including parts and labor. Riding privileges may be suspended until damages are paid. If you have questions, please call the Transportation Office at 856-694-0100 extension 218.

RESPONSIBILITIES

DISTRICT

It is the District's responsibility to:

- Develop safe and appropriate bus routes and schedules.
- Designate safe bus stops.
- Determine the mile computation as required by the Board of Education policy.
- Provide appropriate student information to bus drivers.
- Provide vehicles that meet or exceed the requirements of state laws pertaining to vehicles utilized to transport school students.
- Provide appropriate insurance coverage.
- Hire certified and qualified staff.
- Provide on-going training for the Transportation Department staff.
- Decide when school should be closed due to inclement weather.
- Develop and administer disciplinary procedure for students who exhibit inappropriate bus riding behaviors.

PARENT

It is the parent / guardian's responsibility to:

- Have the student(s) at his/her **assigned bus stop** at least **10 minutes** prior to scheduled pick-up time.
- Make arrangements to have an appropriate person at home or at the designated drop-off time if needed.
- Take their child home if he/she becomes ill at school.
- Deliver medication directly to the school. (Children are not permitted to bring medication on the bus.)

- Keep animals away from the bus stop. Take responsibility for the safety of students to, from, and at the bus stop.
- Send in a note when students will be riding on another bus or another stop. **Students are not permitted to ride another student's bus without the explicit written consent from BOTH sets of parents or guardians.** Notes must be sent to the central office during homeroom.

STUDENTS

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Be at your stop **10 minutes prior** to your scheduled pick up time.
- Wait in the designated location for the school bus, facing the bus as it approaches.
- The bus will stop approximately 10 feet in front of the student. When crossing the roadway to board the bus, you must cross in front of the bus and only cross when directed by the driver.
- Walk to your seat, sit facing forward, keep feet on the floor and remain seated at all times. If a project, instruments or sports gear cannot sit on your lap, you will not be able to bring it on the bus. Have parents bring it to school.
- Obey your bus driver at all times.
- Board the bus promptly and correctly.
- You must wear your seat belts.
- Observe the same conduct rules as in your classroom.
- Be courteous; use no profane language.
- Do not smoke on the bus.
- Do not be destructive. (No cutting, punching, writing, or tearing bus seats. Do not cause damage to the bus inside or out.)
- Sit in your assigned seats. (The driver is authorized to assign seats.)
- Do not stand or walk while the bus is moving.
- Do not block the aisle (head, hands, legs, book bags, etc.).
- Do not throw objects in the bus.
- Do not throw objects out of the bus windows.
- **Do not spray aerosol of any kind on the bus** (perfume, body spray, hairspray, deodorant, etc.). People have allergies and this can be very dangerous.
- No fighting, kicking, punching, pushing, pinching, spitting, arguing, teasing, or taking anyone's property.
- Keep your head, hands, and feet inside the bus at all times.
- No radios, toys, skate boards, large projects, or fund raiser items are to be brought on the bus.
- iPods, cd players etc., keep volume to a minimum, and students must not have headphones on while entering or exiting the bus
- No cell phone use during school hours except for emergencies (school hours start from the time the students board the bus in the morning, until the students depart in the afternoon.)

- Keep the bus clean (no gum, eating, or drinking), throw all trash in the trash receptacle.
- Do not attempt to ride on a bus other than the one to which you are assigned without permission. Students are not permitted to ride another student's bus without the explicit written consent from **both** sets of parents or guardians. Notes must be sent to the central office during homeroom.
- At dismissal it is your responsibility to board the bus within the designated time. Once the buses have begun moving, you will not be able to board the bus, you must report back to the office.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE WILL OCCUR

When a student has a behavior problem on the bus, the Bus Disciplinary Report will be utilized.

The Bus Disciplinary Report has eight steps and is outlined herein with guidelines:

- First Offense: Warning (except for serious overt disciplinary problems)**
- Second Offense: One day detention, parental contact by assistant principal**
- Third Offense: Two days detention, parental contact by assistant principal**
- Fourth Offense: One day Friday School and 3 days removal from bus (parents are responsible for their child's transportation)**
- Fifth Offense: Five days removal from bus (parents are responsible for their child's transportation), one day Friday School and parental conference**
- Sixth Offense: Ten days removal from bus (parents are responsible for their child's transportation), 2 days internal suspension and parental conference**
- Seventh Offense: Twenty-five days removal from bus (parents are responsible for their child's transportation), 3 days internal suspension and parental conference**
- Eighth Offense: Removal from the bus for the remainder of the school year (parents are responsible for their child's transportation)**

- Any unsafe, dangerous behavior can result in extreme discipline measures and a denial of bus riding privileges without going through the normal progression of light to harsher punishments.
- Serious misconduct that actually endangers the physical safety of other passengers or the driver shall be reason to bypass the above steps with the driver having the authority to remove the student from the bus by calling for law enforcement assistance. In such cases the Transportation Director and the School Principal will be notified as soon as possible.

TRANSPORTATION PRODECURES

School Closing

In the event it becomes necessary to close the school for inclement weather or an emergency; the announcement will appear on the Website (www.delsearegional.us), or a Global Connect call. Where and when possible, local radio and TV stations will then be notified. Students are to listen to the stations and are not to call the school or the local police. Delsea's code number is 812. Gloucester County Vocational School's Code is 833. If it becomes necessary to contact the school, the necessary information will be found by dialing 694-0100. Parents must also realize that there may be occasions to send students home early for emergency reasons without being able to give notice to parents. For the most part, after school activities are canceled on emergency school closing days. If in doubt, please feel free to contact the school after 11:00a.m.

Where Buses Can Travel

Delsea Regional Transportation guidelines include the following criteria for roads traveled by buses:

- Roads must be at least 20 feet wide.
- Roads must provide a location for change of bus direction with a minimum of backing up.
- Roads must be kept clear of snow, sleet, ice, vehicles, and other obstructions that would prevent safe travel of school buses.
- Bus stops for students will be centralized for pick-up and take-home whenever possible.
- Bus stops must be clearly and continuously visible to motorists approaching and following buses for at least 400 feet on road ways over 35 mph and 200 feet visibility for roadways 35 mph and under.
- Bus stops should be at least 300 feet apart.

Using Bus Stops

Please be aware of these Delsea Regional Transportation guidelines for student transportation and bus stops. Students may be required to walk up to a distance of one mile. Distance is measured on public roadways only and does not include personal or private driveway. **Safety of the student to and from the bus stop and at the bus stop is the responsibility of the parent** (in accordance with the guide lines set forth in the New Jersey Statutes 18A:39-1.).

- All students, unless they have special needs, should be at their **assigned bus stop 10 minutes** prior to their scheduled pick-up time. **All students must be visible to the bus driver.**

- **All students will only be picked-up or dropped-off at their assigned bus stop at all times**, except in an emergency or with permission from parents and the Transportation Department
- If the bus is late due to weather, construction, or road conditions, the Transportation Department apologizes and thanks you for your patience.
- All students will ride their assigned buses at all times except in an emergency or permission from parents and the Transportation Department.
- Students may be required to cross the road to be picked-up or dropped-off from their bus.
- Students are required to stand a minimum of 20 feet from the edge of the road footage and remain there until the bus has come to a complete stop before loading.
- Students should wait in the designated location for the school bus, facing the bus as it approaches.
- Students should board the bus only when signaled by the driver. They should load the bus slowly and in a single file using the handrail.
- When students exit the bus, they must walk at least 10 feet away from the side of the bus to a position where the driver can clearly see them.
- When students exit the bus and must cross the roadway, they must walk approximately 10 feet away from the side and front right corner of the bumper. Students should only cross the roadway when signaled to do so by the driver. Students should always stop and look in all directions, making sure the roadway is clear and is safe.
- Students are not to get the mail from a roadside mailbox until the bus has departed.
- **Do not walk behind the bus!**
- Once the buses start to move from in front of the school building, they will not stop to pick up students. If a student misses his / her bus at dismissal time, he / she is to report to the central office immediately. When a student misses the bus, the responsibility for transportation home will rest with the parents.

ALWAYS OBEY YOUR DRIVER

Bus Stop Review Procedure

Bus routes are computerized and then manually checked to ensure they meet the New Jersey Statutes and Codes. At times bus stops are changed for one of the following reasons:

- No students live at the residence.
- The bus stop does not meet the legal requirements.
- The bus stop is not safe.

Bus stop review will be performed from September 1st – October 15th each year by the Transportation Department. All bus stop changes are to be submitted in writing. After October 15th changes will be made only in emergency or unforeseen circumstances.

Sport and Activities Runs

Students must obtain from their teacher, advisor, or coach a **fully signed pass** in order to ride the activities or sports buses after school. The activities and sports buses serve those students involved with athletics, teacher conferences, tutoring and school sponsored extra-curricular activities. Only students who are involved in a supervised activity are granted the privilege of riding these buses.

Due to the fact that the after school activities buses have to cover a larger geographic area than regular runs, **the students on these runs may or may not be dropped off at their original bus stop.** Students may have to walk farther to their home when they are dropped off from the activities buses. Also, runs can take up to two hours to complete.

Activity runs are not predetermined runs, but vary each day based on the home location of students on the bus. **For this reason, it is the responsibility of the students to inform the bus driver, upon entering the bus, the location of their residence.**

Once the buses start to move from in front of the school building, they will not stop to pick up students. If a student misses the bus at dismissal time, he/she is to report to the central office immediately. When a student misses the bus, the responsibility for transportation home will rest with the parents.

MOTORIST REMINDER: USE CAUTION AROUND SCHOOL BUSES

Drive With Care:

Delsea Regional School District buses will be on the road from 6:00 a.m. until approximately 8:30 p.m. every school day. Motorists are reminded to use caution around school buses and remember the School Bus Stop Law!

- **There is no student drop-off or pick-up in front of the Middle School.** All student drop-offs or pick-ups are to be at the Middle School parking lot. This also includes after school activities. **The front of the school is for activity and sport buses only.**

- Vehicles must stop when a bus is stopped and displays the overhead alternating red flashing lights. Vehicles must be no closer than 25 feet in front of or behind the bus.
- Prepare to stop when you see the overhead alternating amber flashing lights.
- Proceed with caution when you see flashing yellow hazard lights (on the lower body of the bus).

The goal of the Delsea Regional School District and the Delsea Transportation Department is to provide our students with safe and secure transportation. Also, the Delsea Regional Board of Education has established policies and procedures in accordance with the laws set forth by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Student Transportation. We take pride in our transportation staff and supply them with continuous training in the way of workshops and mandatory transportation meetings.

Positive communications is necessary between the Transportation Department, students, and parents for us to run an efficient transportation program. Please feel free to contact us with any suggestions and concerns. We look forward to providing you and your child with continued safe and positive transportation.