

# School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

## Rules for Riding School Buses

### Loading

1. Be at the bus stop 5-minutes ahead of the posted schedule; the bus will not wait for those who are late.
2. If it is necessary to cross a highway, do not do so after the bus has arrived at the stop.
3. Use your designated bus stop only.
4. Stay on the shoulder or sidewalk, well away from the pavement, while waiting for your bus. Do nothing that might hurt someone or damage someone's property.
5. Remain well back from the bus as it comes into the bus stop, and wait until the bus is completely stopped before stepping near it.
6. Do not run beside the bus while it is moving.
7. Boarding the bus will be in single file and in an orderly fashion. Access to the bus can be denied by the driver until order is achieved.
8. Take your seat right away, and stay there while the bus is moving.
9. Waiting time for scheduled bus routes should be approximately 20-minutes. If the bus has not yet arrived by that time, you should return home.

### On the Bus

10. Remember that the bus driver is in full charge at all times. Follow his or her instructions about staying seated and quiet, and do nothing that might distract the driver's attention from the road.
11. You may be assigned a seat in which you must be seated at all times.
12. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
13. SMOKING, EATING, CHEWING GUM and DRINKING are NOT permitted on the bus. Activities such as the following are also NOT permitted:
  - ❖ Chewing gum, spitting, throwing objects, shouting/excessive noise, damaging the bus, obscene language
14. Never engage in fighting, bullying or horseplay on a bus.
15. Do not throw waste or any other items on the floor or out of bus windows.
16. Do not at any time extend your arm(s) or head out of the bus windows.
17. The bus driver is authorized to confiscate from a student any object or implement he or she feels has the potential to inflict bodily injury or cause damage on the bus.
18. Keep your lunch kit, backpack and other things out of the aisle; they might trip someone. The aisle must be kept clear at all times. Students' belongings must not be placed on the floor, on the engine cover, or behind the driver's seat.

19. The Motor Vehicle Act Regulations, disallow the carrying of suitcases, hockey sticks, large musical instruments, skateboards, or skis on school buses. All items, including musical instruments, carried by students on buses must be small enough to be held on a student's lap without protruding into the aisle, onto the neighboring seat, or above the student's head. The driver will determine if a musical instrument or other item is within the allowable size limit. No exceptions will be permitted.
20. Any damage to the bus or to equipment must be reported at once to the driver.
21. No student will be allowed to sit in the driver's seat or on the engine cover.

### **Unloading**

22. Do not leave your seat until the bus has come to a complete stop.
23. Do not push or shove.
24. When departing the bus, immediately step onto the shoulder or sidewalk, away from the roadway.
25. REMAIN on the shoulder of the road or the sidewalk, UNTIL THE BUS LEAVES, and then disperse when safe to do so. NEVER leave the bus stop or attempt to cross the road before the bus has left the stop. Never assume that other vehicles will stop just because a bus has its red lights flashing. Some motorists ignore or don't see these signals, and some do not know that they are supposed to stop.
26. If it is necessary to cross the road, look both ways and make sure there is no traffic. When it is safe to do so, cross the road.

### **General**

Bus transportation is available for students to their place of childcare if the service is needed on a regular basis and if there is a vacant seat on the bus. The service is provided on a priority basis. Application forms are available at schools.

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***Please remember that bus transportation is a privilege which may be withdrawn if a student does not behave in an appropriate manner. School district disciplinary measures do apply up to and including suspension from school. Should a student receive a discipline slip as per Student Discipline on Buses (Policy 6036R1) it requires that the discipline slip be signed by the parent (guardian) before the student is allowed to ride the bus.***

### **To Parents**

If you find it hard to concentrate on driving safely with a station wagon full of kids, think how difficult it must be for a school bus driver to transport 40-70 children safely.

When you send your children off to school on a bus, or any public transit, make sure they know that they must behave themselves and enter and exit the bus safely.

- ❖ Leave home early enough to catch the bus without rushing.
- ❖ Walk the safest (not necessarily the shortest) route to and from the bus stop.
- ❖ If you must walk across a street or highway, be extremely careful. Do so safely by stopping and looking both ways.
- ❖ When waiting for a bus, stay off the roadway and be alert to traffic.

## **Loading and Unloading**

This district uses the "Baltimore System" for loading and unloading school buses. This system is judged to provide the highest guarantee for safety of students while at their bus stops and while boarding or leaving their buses. This system works as follows:

1. Wherever possible, bus stops are located in areas where the school bus can pull completely off the road onto the shoulder to pick up or discharge students. In this case red flashing lights are not used.
2. Where it is not possible for the procedure in (1) above to be followed, the bus will stop on the roadway, using red flashing lights to stop all traffic.

Please note that when flashing lights are used, their purpose is to stop traffic—not to assist children in crossing the road. It is the view of the Board of School Trustees and the local RCMP that if children are taught to cross roadways safely to and from bus stops, they will be better to do so safely at all times.

Although traffic safety and busing procedures are taught in district elementary schools and the subject is reviewed each September in all schools, please take time to make sure your children understand how to ride school buses and public transit safely. Their lives depend on it.