



SIERRA UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Message to Parents



School Bus Safety & Transportation Information

Transportation Lead

Scott Cardoza



SIERRA UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Sierra Unified School District provides daily transportation service to and from school for over 1275 students. To promote and ensure the safety of its students the District has initiated several student transportation policies and regulations to assist students in understanding their responsibilities while riding SUSD buses. Parents play an important role in reinforcing school bus safety. The goal for safe riding practices will help assure safe and proper transportation. These safe riding practices shall be observed while waiting at a bus stop, riding the bus home, to school or on any activity/field trip. Please take the time to review the following list of student actions with your child several times throughout the school year. The following list of student actions, while not being exhaustive, constitutes violations of the established rules and regulations.

1. Abrasive body contact (slapping, hitting, poking, shoving, pulling hair, etc.)
2. Fighting on the bus or at a bus stop.
3. Using other than the student's regularly designated stop without parent written permission.
4. Crossing the road without the driver's escort or getting off the bus and crossing without permission.
5. Using profane language or obscene gestures.
6. Unauthorized exits (through emergency doors, windows, etc.)
7. Putting any part of the body out of the bus window at any time.
8. Any movement out of the seats while the bus is in motion.
9. Riding the bus after being denied the riding privilege.
10. Legs, feet and objects obstructing the aisle or facing to the rear in the seats.
11. Creating excessive noise.
12. Any improper bus stop procedure(not lining up, throwing objects, playing in the street, any property damage at a bus stop, etc.)
13. Unauthorized opening, closing, or tampering of any kind with the bus doors, windows or exits.
14. Lighting of matches, cigarettes or smoking of any kind, including electronic smoking devices.
15. Throwing any objects in or out of the bus or throwing objects at the bus.
16. Any type of damage to the bus or defacing of the bus.
17. Littering of any kind.
18. Transporting live or dead animals, reptiles, or insects in the bus.
19. Eating, drinking or chewing tobacco or gum on the bus.
20. Disrespect to the driver.
21. Transporting of any object the driver feels is unsafe.
22. Giving improper identification when requested by the driver.
23. Tampering with the radio or bus controls.
24. Failure to obey the driver. (CCR Title 5, § 14103)
25. Failure to remain quiet at all railroad crossings.
26. Failure to wear seat belts in buses so equipped.
27. Endangering the life or limb of other people.
28. Other unauthorized or unsafe actions.

Authority of the bus driver as explained in California Code of Regulations Title 5 Section 14103:

- a) *Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and responsible directly to the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway, or road. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation. A bus driver shall not require any pupil to leave the bus en route between home and school or other destinations.*



Students shall be held accountable to all school rules and regulations, generally once they are in sight of the bus driver. Students are required to abide by all school rules and regulations while under the supervision of the driver. The drivers have authority to discipline students and shall do so in the following manner:

<u>First Offense:</u>	written warning.
<u>Second Offense:</u>	1 day suspension from all buses.
<u>Third Offense:</u>	3 days suspension from all buses.
<u>Fourth Offense:</u>	5 days suspension from all buses.

Any student who commits a serious offense could be denied transportation even on the first offense. Students who continue to have serious discipline problems on the bus may have their riding privileges suspended indefinitely. In such cases, a conference and a contract can be written between the student, parents and the school district to insure continued eligibility for bus transportation. Any additional infractions shall result in denial of home to school, school to home transportation, including any activity/field trips for the remainder of the school year. When students are denied district transportation, the parents/guardians of the student involved become responsible for seeing their student get to and from school and school activities safely. School bus drivers also have the right to assign specific seats to pupils if the driver feels it will help maintain proper supervision and safety.

After September 1, 1992, Federal and State law required all new school buses in California to be equipped with a stop sign on the side of the bus near the rear that shall be extended at red light crossings. In addition, drivers that escort students are required to use an approved hand-held stop sign.

School buses have amber flashing lights next to the red lights that will be illuminated approximately 200 ft prior to a bus stop to warn motorists of the impending red light activation.

After January 1, 1998, all school buses are required to use the flashing red light signal system **at all times** for the purpose of loading and unloading students. Not just when students are escorted across the road. Except, on a state highway, such as Hwy 168, with a posted speed limit of 55 mph or higher where the school bus can be completely off the main traveled portion of the highway.

There is a dramatic increase in the number of times you will encounter school buses with their red lights flashing. As a passing or following motorist, you are required to stop until the lights are extinguished for the safety of the students. If you fail to stop, you may be fined up to \$1000 and your driving privilege suspended for one year. As you may know students sometimes act in an unpredictable fashion, so stopping for the red lights prevents a potential tragedy.



SIERRA UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Stop When Red Lights Flash!

It's The Law!



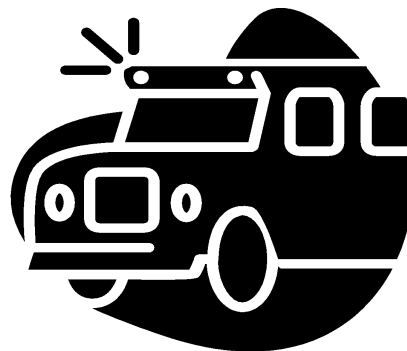
Whenever the red, alternate flashing lights (near the top of the bus) are illuminated all traffic must stop in both directions, as students are loading or unloading and may be crossing the road.

Sierra Unified School District policy is: Bus drivers will escort all students PK-12 across the road at "red light crossings". Please be exceedingly aware of school buses that are stopped. Students that are getting off the bus at their stop must be extra cautious to exit the bus and walk away from it as quickly as possible. Please instruct your child that if he/she drops papers or books, to walk away far from the bus and get the driver's attention.

Never go under the bus to retrieve papers and stand back a good distance from the bus.

California's procedure for crossing students at bus stops is vastly different and safer than the procedure of any other state in the nation. When a student needs to cross the road and the stop is designated as a "red light crossing", the driver will "escort" the students across the road. The students are to follow all of the directions of the driver, and not cross the road until the driver verbally tells the student to proceed. The crossing maneuver is considered most dangerous and students must be aware, alert, listen and follow all directions of the driver.

STOP WHEN RED LIGHTS FLASH!





Riding the bus is a privilege, not a guaranteed right.

A note signed by the parent/guardian requesting their student get off the bus at a stop other than their designated stop must be submitted to the school site office. The office will give the information to the teacher(FES) or student(SJSHS) which must be presented to the bus driver upon entering the bus. The request must not require the bus to go off its route or require an additional stop.

If the student is being picked up by the parent/guardian at school, the parent/guardian must be at the school prior to the student boarding the bus. Approval must be given to the driver by the school site office or the transportation department to release a student from the bus after boarding. Students will not be released to anyone not listed on their emergency card without proper documentation. All students 3rd grade and below must have a parent at the bus stop to receive their student before the bus arrives. Students will be held on the bus and transported back to FES when no parent is present at the students assigned stop. Students may have an 'authorization to release' form submitted to the district in cases where parents/guardians wish to let their students walk home on their own or with siblings.

Bus Route Changes

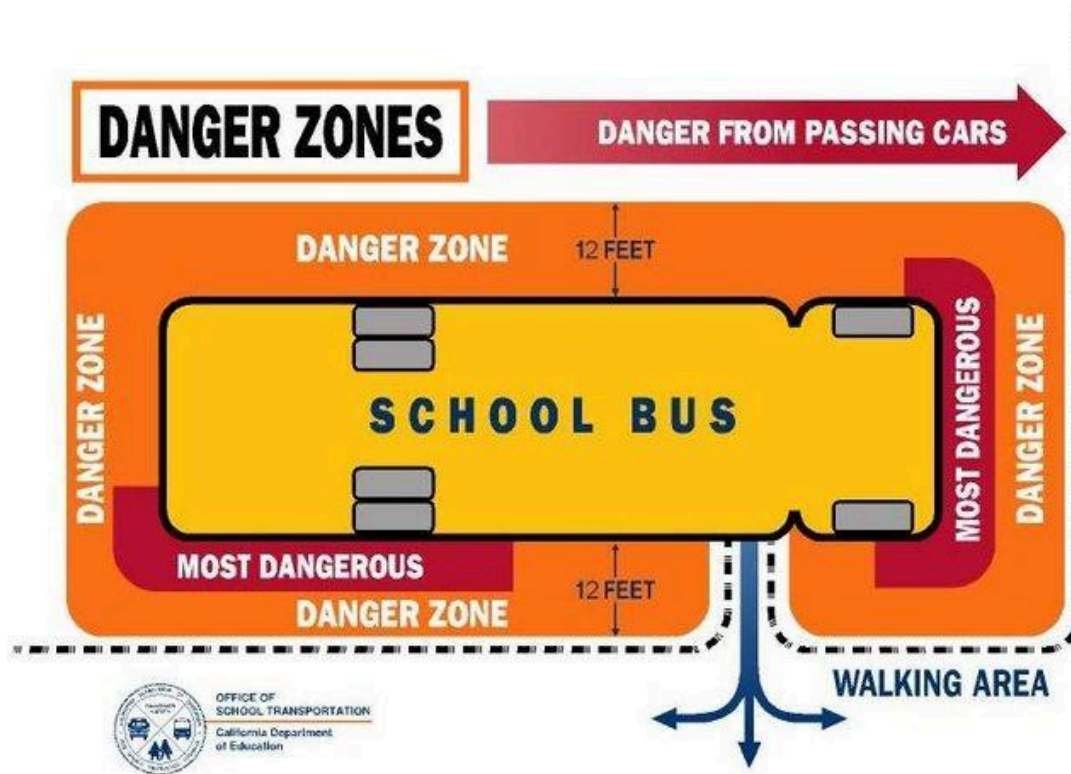
Transportation routes are designed with safety in mind. Pick-up and drop-off locations shall normally be the same. Transportation service will be arranged to and from a caregiver, provided they reside within the attendance boundary of the school district. School bus drivers shall not be permitted to make alterations to their routes. Requests for temporary or permanent route changes due to emergency situations shall be made to the Director of Facilities & Transportation and/or the Transportation Lead.

Walking to & from School Bus Stops

- ❖ Walking to and from school bus stops in our mountain area can be dangerous.
- ❖ Narrow roads and shoulders can pose a problem when getting to or from our bus stops.
- ❖ Always walk facing traffic. Walk single file when necessary to keep from walking in the roadway.
- ❖ No pushing, shoving or horseplay of any kind shall be allowed at any time.
- ❖ While waiting for the school bus at the designated stop, be courteous to other students. ***Students should be at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the posted stop time.***
- ❖ Remember to wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and the bus driver has opened the entrance door before students move toward the bus.
- ❖ Students should board the bus one-at-a-time, using the available handrails, and move quickly to an open seat.
- ❖ 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.**

Students are cautioned against entering the **Danger Zone**, which is the area twelve (12') feet around the school bus. Students exiting the bus should remain in the clear view of the bus driver.

Danger Zones





Escorted Pick Up

- ❖ At school bus stops, students should wait at a safe distance from the roadway.
- ❖ Common courtesy should be used while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- ❖ Upon arrival of the school bus, students shall not approach the bus or shall not enter the roadway until the bus driver has completely stopped the bus, activated the red crossover lights, and wait to be instructed to cross the road by the driver.
- ❖ Students shall cross the road between the front of the bus and the bus driver, watching for traffic as they cross. Once they reach the bus entrance door and board the bus they shall seat themselves as quickly as possible.

Escorted Drop Off

- ❖ Students shall remain seated until the school bus has come to a complete stop.
- ❖ Once the bus has stopped and the bus driver has opened the door, students shall exit the bus after the bus driver in an orderly manner.
- ❖ Students will then stand to the right side of the bus (NOT IN FRONT OF) and wait for instruction from the driver to cross the roadway safely.
- ❖ Students shall cross between the bus driver and the front of the bus, watching for traffic as they cross.

These procedures shall be done in an orderly manner.

Bus Route Schedules

Regular school bus route schedules are made available at all school sites and on the District Web Site: www.sierrausd.org



Transportation Department

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