



North Monterey County Unified School District Transportation Department

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to North Monterey County Unified School District. This letter is being provided to you in order to inform you and your child of important procedures regarding school bus transportation. Should you have questions, concerns, or need additional information, please call the transportation office at 663-3305. Have a wonderful and safe school year.

The Transportation Department would like to welcome you and your child as a new school bus rider. As part of the District's safety plan, this registration packet is provided for you and your child(ren) to review in order for you to become familiar with the district's policies and procedures regarding school bus transportation. Enclosed you will find information which explains the following:

1. Bus Loading Procedures at Bus Stops (handout)
2. Red Light Crossing Instructions (handout)
3. School Bus Danger Zones (pamphlet)
4. Safe Waking Tips (pamphlet)
5. School Bus Conduct Rules/Bus Ticket Policy (handouts)
6. 22112 (VC) School Bus Signal and School Bus Stops (handout)
7. 22454 (VC) School Bus: Meeting and Passing (handout)

A current list of the school bus stops near your home is available for review at each school site.

Riding the school bus in California is not mandated by law, however the North Monterey County Unified School District chooses to provide home-to-school bus service. Students who ride the bus shall be dropped off only at their authorized stop. Parent or Guardian written permission must be given to the school to designate emergency alternate stops for students.

The department of the California Highway Patrol is the agency that oversees the safe operation of school buses in the state of California, and the district must follow the regulations set forth in 13 CCR 1238, when determining the location of school bus stops. Designated school bus stops must not be altered by the bus driver or the parent/guardian. **When parents/guardians arrive at the bus stop and park on the opposite side of the street, the nature of the bus stop is changed, therefore creating a safety hazard.** Please ensure that you park and wait on the same side of the street as the bus stop location, therefore eliminating the dangerous and unnecessary crossover situation. Students are not allowed to cross the street when they are utilizing a stop that has not been designated as an ESCORT stop. Escort stops are shown on the route sheets as "ESC". If your child (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 8) utilizes an escort stop, he/she will be physically escorted across the roadway by the school bus driver.

GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT AT SCHOOL BUS LOADING ZONES

1. Make sure students are at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the scheduled departure time
2. Accompany young children to the bus stop and meet them upon their return
3. Children who walk to the bus stop are to use the shoulder of the road or side walks
4. Do not allow your children to play/damage other people's property
5. Children are to wait for the bus in a safe place, well off the roadway, in a single file line, until the bus is stopped and the bus driver has opened the entrance door
6. Children are to enter the bus in an orderly manner, no pushing or shoving, find a seat quickly, and remain seated while the bus is in motion
7. Students should be reminded to check-in at home after they exit the school bus after school

Bus Loading Procedures at Bus Stops

The school bus driver must follow the procedures outlined in the California Department of Education's Instructor's Manual for School Bus Driver's Training Course at every bus stop.

1. Students must arrive at the bus stop, on the **designated side of the street** at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. If students are late to the bus stop and are on the wrong side of the road when they see the school bus approaching, they **must not cross the street until after the bus driver gives them instructions and turns on the flashing red crossover lights. Students in grades pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1-8 must wait for the bus driver to physically escort them across the street.**
2. While waiting for the bus, students must respect the property rights of owners near the stop. Vandalism, dangerous play, excessive noise and abusive language may result in disciplinary action being taken. Students should wait for the bus in a safe location, well off the roadway. The bus will stop several feet before it reaches the students. The students should remain in a single file line and not approach the bus until the bus driver opens the entrance door. Students should load the bus in an orderly fashion, with no pushing or shoving and find a seat quickly. Students are to place their backpacks in their laps and use quiet voices on the bus.
3. In the event that a student is late to the bus stop and the bus driver has closed the door and pulled away from the curb, students are to return directly to their home and have their parent/guardian arrange for their transportation to school.

BUS UNLOADING PROCEDURES AT BUS STOPS

1. The bus driver shall stop to load or unload pupils only at a designated bus stop.
(Students on field trips and athletic trips shall load and unload at designated stops only).
2. The route sheet shall designate which stops require students to be escorted, however prior to releasing any student, the driver shall check with all students at the assigned bus stop in order to see if any pupils require to be escorted.
3. Prior to any student leaving his/her seat, the bus driver will bring the bus to a complete stop, set the parking brake, ensure that traffic around the bus has cleared, activate the red crossover lights, and then open the door. The students who need to be escorted will follow the bus driver out of the bus and remain out of the roadway until the bus driver instructs the child(ren) to cross the street. The students must cross the roadway between the school bus and the bus driver. Students should cross quickly and must **never run back across the roadway toward the bus.**

The school bus driver is a school official and by law, (5 CCR 14103) has the responsibility to ensure passenger safety while on the bus and at bus stops. He/she may remove any student from the bus who does not follow his/her instructions and/or continues to misbehave.

BUS RIDING IS A PRIVILEGE

It is important that all students show proper conduct on the bus. All students who ride the bus must be familiar with, and obey the bus rules. Your child(ren) may receive a bus ticket from the bus driver for misbehaving on the bus or at bus stops. Misconduct on the part of students may result in a denial of transportation. Please review the *School Bus Conduct Rules* and *Bus Ticket Policy for Elementary School* forms with your child(ren).

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTION

Each school year, students in grades pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1-8 inclusive, who receive home to school transportation on a District school bus, shall receive safety instruction. The instruction shall include, but not be limited to, proper loading and unloading procedures, including escorting by the driver; proper passenger conduct, bus evacuation, and location of emergency equipment. As part of the evacuation, student shall evacuate the school bus through the side emergency exit door.

Prior to departure on a school activity trip, all pupils riding on a school bus or school pupil activity bus shall receive safety instruction. The instruction shall include, but will not be limited to: passenger safety, and location and use of emergency exits and equipment.

Parent/Guardian Information

Vehicle Code section 22112 addresses the requirements of School Bus Signal and School Bus Stops, and basically states that school bus drivers shall only stop at school bus stops which have been approved by the district Superintendent, or authorized by the Superintendent for school activity trips.

School bus drivers will activate the flashing amber light warning system, if the school bus is so equipped, beginning 200' before the bus stop. The driver will then activate the flashing red signal lights and signal arm. There will be no exceptions to the use of the flashing red signal light and signal arm being activated at designated escort stops, where pupils are loading or unloading from the school bus and must cross the roadway upon which the bus is stopped. However, the operation of the flashing red signal lights and signal arm do not apply to the following locations:

1. School bus loading zones on or adjacent to school grounds or during an activity trip, if the school bus is legally parked
2. Where the school bus is disabled due to mechanical breakdown
3. Where pupils require the school bus drivers assistance to board or exit the school bus
4. Where the roadway surface is partially or completely covered by snow or ice and requiring traffic to stop would pose a safety hazard
5. On a state highway with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour or higher where the school bus is completely off the main traveled portion of the highway
6. Any location determined by a school district, with the approval of the C.H.P., to present a traffic or safety hazard

North Monterey County Unified School District utilizes these exempt stops at certain locations, mostly along Highway 101 and San Miguel Canyon Road. These "red light" exempt stops are noted on the route sheets as **NRL. (No Red Lights)**

Vehicle Code section 22454, addresses Meeting and Passing School Buses, and basically states that motorists must bring their vehicle to a stop immediately before passing the school bus and shall not proceed past the school bus until the flashing red light signal and stop signal arm cease operation. The driver of the vehicle does not need to stop for the school bus if he/she is on a divided highway or multiple-lane highway, and is approaching the bus from the other roadway (opposite direction of the school bus). (A multiple lane highway has two or more lanes of travel in each direction.)