



Safe, Reliable, Efficient Service

And



HARLOW'S

School Bus Rider Handbook with Rules and Guidelines

SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION GUIDE
ISSUED BY
BISMARCK PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
(Revised February 2018)

The information contained herein serves as a general overview for all parents and students to acquaint themselves with school policies concerning transportation of students.

The Bismarck School District believes that riding the school van/bus is a privilege. Therefore, every bus rider shall abide by the rules, as set by policy, or be deprived of the privilege of riding on the school buses. Our Transportation Team is made up of bus drivers, monitors, mechanics, and subs from both BPS and our contracted vendor, Harlow's. Together we transport more than 3,500 students on the bus daily.

Bismarck Public Schools provides transportation for all elementary students living within the BPS district boundaries. Students must live inside the attendance boundary for and live ½ mile or more from the school in their boundary area to be eligible for busing.

Transportation is also provided to students who are within the BPS school district boundaries and who live more than one mile from any Middle or High Schools. Students must live inside the attendance boundary of the school and live 1 mile or more from the school in their boundary to be eligible for busing.

IMPORTANT reminder for STUDENTS and PARENTS/GUARDIAN:

Student transportation is an extension of the school day; any student may be suspended or expelled for behavior exhibited in any school building, school grounds, in any vehicle (which applies to school buses either belonging to the district or on contract) or affecting any school activity.

Questions:

All general education busing questions should be handled as follows:

- Call **Harlow's Bus Service** at **224-1767** or email them at bismarckroutes@goharlows.com first with questions pertaining to general education bus routes, these buses have the name Harlow's on them.
- If you have not received a reply to your question or issue is not resolved with 48 hours then call Bismarck Public Schools at 323-4500 or email bpstransportation@bismarckschools.org

All Special Services and BECEP/Headstart busing questions should be handled as follows:

- Call Bismarck Public Schools, at **323-4500** or contact us by email at bpstransportation@bismarckschools.org

All student athletic/activity busing questions or comments should be handled as follows:

- Call Bismarck Public Schools, at 323-4500 or contact us by email at bpstransportation@bismarckschools.org

Late or Delayed Bus Route Information:

Under the Busing link on the Bismarck Public Schools website [Bus Delays/Changes](#) we have added a “Bus Delays/Changes” link. On this link you will find any buses that are delayed or if a spare bus has been sent out.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The parents/guardians of all students being transported by the BPS Transportation Department should:

1. Make certain their child is ready and at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time. The bus cannot wait more than 1 minute at each stop for students.
2. **Monitoring of students** shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian until the student boards the bus at the beginning of the day as well as when students exit the bus at the end of the day. It is expected that parents/guardian will support BPS high standards of student behavior while students are on the bus and work with the Transportation Department to solve any problems.
3. **If a student will not be riding bus to or from school, please contact**
 - Harlow’s Bus Service at bismarckroutes@goharlows.com or text to 354-2625 or call 224-1767
 - Bismarck Public Schools Transportation Department at 323-4500, or email at bpstransportation@bismarckschools.org
 - The call may be placed any time and email may be sent any time or after business hours, simply leave a message. The bus driver can then be notified that the student will not be riding.
4. In the case that a student has **NOT ridden the bus to or from school for (5) five consecutive days**, Policy EDD states, “It shall be the practice of Bismarck Public Schools to remove from the ridership list any student who has not ridden the bus for five or more consecutive days and whose legal guardian has not contacted the transportation department. Should the student and family wish to receive bus service in the future, they must reapply using the established procedures.”
5. Drivers **cannot** accept instructions for busing changes from children or parents. Parents must work through the Bismarck Public Schools Transportation Office at 323-4500.
6. Due to food allergies that some students may have, students are not to eat on the bus. Water ONLY is allowed as long as the student is responsible. Student will lose this privilege if they purposely squirt or dump their water on the bus.
7. **Parents/guardians are not allowed to enter the bus without the consent of the bus driver.**
8. Parents **must** notify their school of any change of address in order to assure continuous service.
9. The only items (band instruments, projects, etc.) allowed on the bus are those that can be held on the students’ lap.
10. No student showing need of immediate first aide will be allowed on the bus. This includes bloody noses, scrapes, etc. This must be taken care of before the student enters the bus and must be tended to by parent.

Additional requirements apply for parents of Special Education students:

1. An adult must be present at the point of pick-up and drop-off each day, unless written permission to the contrary has been given by the parent.
2. If the child needs assistance boarding or leaving the bus, the parent should assist the van/bus driver or aide.
3. Parents or guardians are responsible for getting their handicapped child to the drive or curbside and for meeting the vehicle at the end of the school day at the drop-off point.
4. Drivers and/or monitors and aides DO NOT enter a student’s home.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the driver's responsibility to enforce transportation regulations concerning students, and to maintain discipline for the safety of all aboard. Drivers and Monitors know that the following rules have been issued for all students:

A. General, bus riders shall:

1. Ride on assigned buses.
2. Board and disembark from assigned bus (stop) at the selected destination unless prior permission from parent/guardian is granted. Parent/Guardian must contact Harlow's or BPS Transportation with permission, no notes from student will be accepted.

B. Prior to loading, the bus riders shall:

1. Be at the designated bus stop on time.
2. Respect home owners' property at bus stop.
3. Stay off the road, and conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting for the bus.
4. Stay back at least ten feet from the bus and wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and proceed only after the door is opened. Walk to the side of the road facing traffic to get to the bus stop if there is no sidewalk or path.
5. Be courteous, line up in an orderly single file manner and NOT rush to get on the bus. DO NOT take advantage of younger students in order to get a seat.
6. When entering the bus, use the handrail and watch their step when boarding the bus.

C. While on the bus, riders shall:

In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, children will be required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the established standards of classroom behavior. Schools are responsible for the behavior of the students on the school bus and must be diligent in enforcing the bus rules as follows:

1. Students are to remain seated facing forward while the bus is moving.
2. Talk to seat neighbor and bus driver in a respectful inside voice using appropriate language.
3. Keeps Hands, Feet, and Personal items to yourself.
4. Food and drink are not permitted on the bus. Water is permitted if used appropriately.
5. Students will be expected to board and depart the bus in an orderly manner keeping a safe distance from the bus.
6. Students will be charged for any damage to the bus or bus seats.

D. After Leaving the Bus, riders shall:

1. Walk, not run away from the bus.
2. Cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus, but only after checking to be sure no traffic is approaching and/or receiving a signal from the driver.
3. Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.
4. Be alert for the prearranged danger signal from the driver.

Discipline:

First, call **Harlow's Bus Service** at **224-1767** or email them at bismarckroutes@goharlows.com with busing questions pertaining to general education bus routes, these buses have the name Harlow's on them. If you have not received a reply to your question or issue is not resolved with 48 hours then call Bismarck Public Schools at 323-4500 or email bpstransportation@bismarckschools.org.

Bismarck Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

1. School bus drivers are a vital link in the education system. They are responsible for securing maximum transportation safety for all student riders. In order to do this they must have your support.
2. **The bus drivers are in complete charge of the bus and students are expected to comply with their requests at all times.**
3. The school bus is an extension of the school day, and all school rules and regulations that pertain to student conduct in school is applicable to student conduct on a school bus.
4. All discipline will be handled by the students' school. If you have questions on consequences that have been handed out, please contact your students' school.

BPS reserves the right to initiate any level of suspension based on severity of student offense.

Accidents:

In the event of an accident, parents/guardians of all students on the bus involved will be notified. We ask that parents stay clear of accident scene so emergency authorities and BPS/Harlow's representatives can handle the situation.

Lost and Found:

If your student has lost items while riding the bus, please contact Harlow's or BPS Transportation Department.

Severe Weather:

"It is our policy not to send the buses home before the regular hour of departure"

1. When a condition arises where impending weather conditions may affect the safety of school children, the Transportation Department will contact the National Weather Services, Public Works, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies to secure all information available concerning the weather conditions and may make personal spot checks on rural roads and city streets. After receipt of this information, the Superintendent will make the decision By 6:00 AM as to whether school should be called off. If school is called off, a message will be sent out by Bismarck Public Schools to parents via cell phone, text and email. Information will also be posted on the school district's website as well as TV and radio stations.
2. During the winter season, **all parents are urged to see that their children are warmly dressed when they board the school bus.** There is always the possibility that the bus could be stalled for a period of time. In this event, warm coats, hats, gloves, and snow boots could avert serious consequences. Parents of students not dressed appropriately will be contacted by the school.
3. Each day that the school buses leave for their return trip under unfavorable conditions, school officials and the Harlow's Bus Service will keep track of each vehicle by two-way radio and GPS. In this way, the approximate location of each bus can be established at any given time. Then, too, drivers have been directed to call their Bus Supervisor's Office whenever necessary to notify us of any difficulties that would cause a change in the time schedule.