

**Portland Public Schools  
Transportation Policies**  
(Revised October 1998)

**Discipline Process**

The Portland School Committee has determined that inappropriate behavior on the school bus will not be tolerated. Transportation to and from school is part of the school day, and all of the rules governing student behavior are in force. The issue of safety requires that students be on their best behavior while on school vehicles.

Students, parents and school employees must understand that rules are to be consistently and fairly enforced and obeyed.

Such misbehavior as rudeness, pushing, fighting, throwing objects, obscenity, and other offenses may result in the suspension of transportation services. The School Department may request that parents accompany a disobedient youngster on the school bus if necessary to guarantee good behavior.

The following will be observed in dealing with violations of the Student Bus Conduct Code:

**1. First Offense      Warning**

The driver will turn in the name of the student on a completed bus disciplinary form to the Principal or designee<sup>1</sup>. The Principal will meet with the student to issue a warning and will also assure communication of the warning to parents/guardians. Students and parents/guardians will also be informed of future steps (Step #2) that will be taken should a second offense occur.

**2. Second Offense      Short Term Suspension**

The Principal is required to initiate an immediate suspension of bus service for up to five (5) school days. The Principal will then communicate the disciplinary action to parents/guardians and a meeting shall be held at the school if necessary.<sup>2</sup> Parents/guardians will also be informed of future steps (Step #3) that will be taken should a third offense occur.

**3. Third Offense      Long Term Suspension**

The Principal is required to initiate an immediate suspension of bus service for a period of between six (6) and ten (10) school days. A hearing will then be scheduled by the Principal between the parents, student, Principal, and Transportation Director prior to the end of the assigned suspension. The purpose of this meeting will be for the student to provide assurance of future good behavior and to establish with the Transportation Director appropriate safeguards to assure that the student will obey bus rules. In the event that safeguards can not be mutually agreed upon after a third offense, the Transportation Director will immediately suspend bus services for a period of forty-five (45) school days.

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<sup>1</sup> Designee may act on the Principal's behalf when referenced in this document.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to translation guidelines for non-English speaking families.

Students and parents/guardians will also be informed of future steps (Step #4) that will be taken should a fourth offense occur.

**4. Fourth Offense      Extended Suspension**

The Principal is required to immediately suspend bus services for a period of forty-five (45) school days for a fourth or subsequent offense. Procedures outlined in Steps #5 and # 6 will then be followed. The Principal will assure communication of the disciplinary action to the parents/guardians and explain the resolution process outlined in Steps # 5 and # 6.

**5. Extended Suspension Resolution**

A hearing will be scheduled at the end of the extended suspension with the School Bus Disciplinary Committee. The committee will be made up of the following individuals: the Principal, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education Support assigned to the student's school, and the Transportation Director. The purpose of this hearing will be for the student to provide assurance of future good behavior, and to establish with the committee safeguards to assure that the student will obey school bus rules. The committee will decide on the appropriate course of action. Should the committee receive adequate assurances from the student, bus privileges will be immediately reinstated. In the event the committee decides that adequate assurances are not in place, school bus privileges will be terminated for the remainder of the school year.

**6. Appeal Process**

All cases involving termination of services by the School Bus Disciplinary Committee may be appealed directly to the Executive Director of Operations. A reinstatement hearing may then be requested. The decision of the Executive Director is final.

**7. Extreme Cases**

The school Principal, in collaboration with the Transportation Director, has the reserved right to invoke immediate suspension of bus services for the first offense in order to assure safety of students, staff and the public. Procedures outlined in #2 and #3 will then be followed.

**8. Alternate Transportation**

In cases of suspension or termination of bus service, the parents must provide the student with transportation to and from school.<sup>3</sup>

**9. Special Education Students**

Special Education students (whose IEP includes a transportation requirement) may be afforded alternate transportation should a student's bus privileges be revoked under the terms of this policy. Special Services personnel will be kept apprised of any service changes or interruptions.

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<sup>3</sup> Required attendance as cited in State Education Statutes Section 5001 Title 20-A