

# Gallatin Gateway School



## Bus Rider Manual

**DO YOUR PART, RIDE SMART**

Gallatin Gateway School  
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**GALLATIN GATEWAY SCHOOL  
PO BOX 265, GALLATIN GATEWAY, MT 59730**

To Parents and Guardians:

Welcome aboard! I hope that you find the enclosed bus rider information both helpful and useful during the coming year.

Please take time to go over this information with your child(ren). Sign the *Bus Rules Agreement* on the last page and return to the bus driver. Your signature indicates that you have read the enclosed materials and have discussed the contents with your child. With your signature, you agree to support the enclosed bus riding policies and procedures.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kim DeBruycker  
Principal

*Bus Rider Manual*  
*Updated: August 2014*

## **Inclement Weather Conditions**

Students and parents can listen to the radio reports concerning questionable weather. It is the parents' responsibility to bring their student to and from school if the buses aren't running, unless school is closed.

## **School Bus Fees**

District #35 provides bus service to all students residing in the district. The state helps finance transportation only for those students who live farther than three-miles from the school. Therefore, the district must assess a bus fee to families living within a three mile radius of the school and out-of-district families to help cover operational costs. This fee is \$15 per month for one student and \$20 per month for two or more students in a family. Fees must be paid by the first Friday of each month in order to ride the bus. No refunds will be made for days a student does not ride or when the bus cannot make its regular run. If a student is not going to ride the bus for a month, the bus driver and the office must be notified in advance. Since the student is reserving a seat on the bus with payment, the monthly charge remains the same whether the student rides the bus one way or both ways. (GGS Policy #7045)

## **Bus Conduct**

Behavior on the bus is a matter of safety not only for your child, but also for the other passengers. Distracting the bus driver could lead to unnecessary accidents. The Board authorizes the use of video cameras with sound on District school buses to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors on District school buses. Notification of video and sound surveillance will be posted on the school bus.

The District may choose to make video recordings a part of a student's educational record or of a staff member's personnel record. Bus video recordings will be with sound. The District will comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention.

Students who become a serious disciplinary problem on the bus may have their riding privileges suspended.

## **Student Responsibilities**

### **Prior To Loading:**

- Be on time at the designated loading zone five minutes prior to scheduled stop.
- Stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the bus.
- Wait until the bus is completely stopped before moving forward to enter.
- If you must cross a highway, cross at least ten feet in front of the bus.
- Enter the bus single file and immediately go to assigned seat and be seated.

### **While on the Bus:**

- The driver is completely in charge and must be obeyed.
- Observe all rules of classroom conduct.
- Students are to be respectful.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.

- After entering the bus keep head, hands, and arms inside the bus at all times.
- Do not litter on the bus or throw anything from the bus.
- Keep books, packages, coats, backpacks, and all other objects out of the aisle.
- No flammable or hazardous materials are allowed on the bus.
- No animals are allowed on the bus unless permission is received from the bus driver in advance. Animals must be in a proper container.
- No alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or mind-altering products are allowed.
- The offender will pay for any damage done to the bus equipment or bus seats.
- Do not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- Yelling, cursing, obscene language, scuffling, and fighting are forbidden.
- Any action, loud talking, or horseplay that might distract the driver is forbidden.
- In case of an emergency, students shall follow emergency evacuation procedures.
- No personal audio equipment or cell phones on the bus.
- No drinking or eating on the bus. Snacks purchased afterschool at the snack cart can be consumed before boarding the bus or after the student gets off the bus at home.

### **Leaving the Bus:**

- Do not get up to leave the bus until the bus has stopped.
- Cross the road, when necessary, at least ten feet in front of the bus.
- The driver is not to discharge students at places other than their regular stop or at school unless the driver has proper authorization from parents.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

- Helping your child be a responsible bus rider will help keep everyone safe. Help them to be on time for their bus, and to take the safest route to and from the bus stop.
- Help them learn all of the bus rules and explain the importance of following the driver's instructions.
- Get to know your child's bus driver and let the driver know of any problems or concerns you may have.
- Please remember that there are two sides to every story. If your child has been disciplined or is suspended, try to be understanding and listen to both sides of the issue. Your bus driver may assign seats on the bus. Seating may be changed by the driver periodically.
- Drivers are there to deliver your child(ren) safely to and from school. That is why all rules must be followed. Bus drivers will explain rules, expectations, and consequences to students monthly, or as needed.
- Please inform the school, and/or your driver, of any changes to your student's normal routine. If your child will not be riding the bus for a given time, a note is greatly appreciated.
- No student will be allowed off the bus at any location other than their regular stop, unless prior arrangements have been made, or they are released to a parent or guardian. If a regular bus rider brings a friend, then the parent of the friend **MUST** write a note.
- Make plans for weather emergencies should school be dismissed early.

- Be sure the school has a home, work, and emergency phone number where the parent/guardian can be reached.

## **Student Discipline on the Bus**

A fair, consistent, and firm discipline procedure is of great importance in maintaining a safe and secure environment for all passengers on the bus.

Control of student behavior on the bus will be the responsibility of the bus driver. Student behavior must be such that it does not endanger the safety of the driver or other passengers. Your child needs to know that riding the bus is a privilege, not a right, and as such can be revoked if his/her behavior on the bus is unacceptable.

Drivers will utilize behavior/conduct slips when necessary to report unacceptable behaviors to homeroom teacher and/or Principal.

### **Disciplinary actions:**

- Verbal Warning to a student.
- First warning - reminder of the expectation and procedures of the bus.
- Second warning - Bus driver will change student seating arrangement and notify Bus Director and/or Principal and classroom teacher.
- Third Warning - Bus driver will contact parents, classroom teacher, and Principal about continuing behaviors.

Parents questioning bus discipline may request a conference with the driver and/or the Principal.

## Bus Rules

Please read through the rules listed below and stress to your child that these are reasonable expectations for their behavior on the bus.

1. Students must obey the school bus driver and refrain from doing anything which distracts the driver's attention from his/her driving.
2. Students will remain in their assigned seats at all times and will sit facing forward with their feet on the floor in front of them. They will not kneel, stand, or sit backwards in their seats.
3. Students must not put any part of their bodies out of the bus windows, or throw anything out of the windows.
4. Shouting or using inappropriate language will not be allowed.
5. No students will threaten or harm any other student while on the bus.
6. Parents will be held responsible for costs resulting from any damage to the school bus by their child.

As you can see, these simple rules are aimed at ensuring your child's safe transportation by eliminating sources of distraction. Students choosing not to follow these rules will not be allowed to ride the bus.

Please sign the slip below and return it to your school bus driver as soon as possible. This helps us emphasize the importance of your child's behavior on the bus. Thank you.

*Please sign and return the bottom section to your child's bus driver.*

\*\*\*\*\*

I have discussed the bus rules and rider manual with my child, \_\_\_\_\_  
and feel that he/she understands the importance of appropriate behavior on the bus.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date