

# Azle ISD Transportation School Bus Rider Safety Handbook 2022–2023 School Year



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# Azle ISD Bus Rider Safety Handbook

Azle ISD provides free bus service to all regularly enrolled students who meet the bus at designated stops and abide by the rules and regulations for bus riders and students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted on the Traversa Ride 360 app. Parents should check the Traversa app regularly for updates to student routes.

For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

Students may be required to walk up to .5 miles (2,640 feet) to a bus stop.

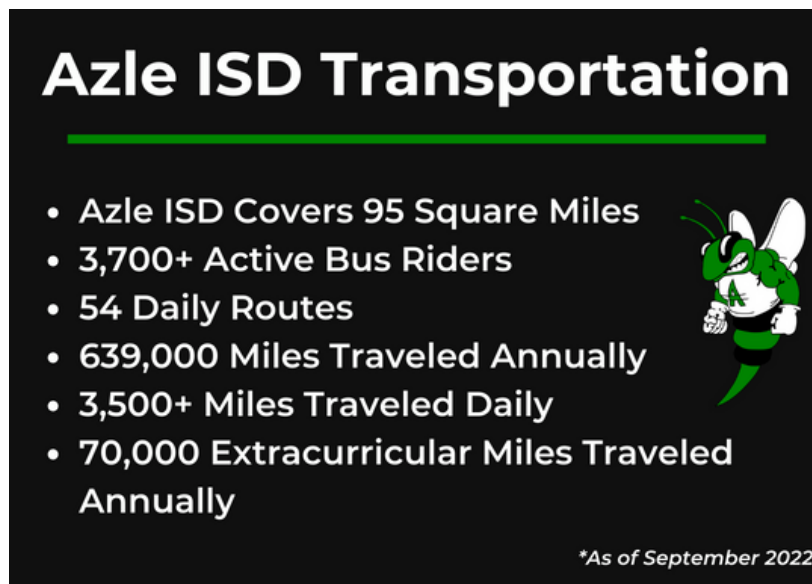
Bus stops will be located on primary residential streets only, not businesses. Bus stops are designated after a careful study of demographics, walking distances, and ridership in the area. The overall safety of stop placement is the most important factor considered.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct.

The following rules have been approved so that students may be transported to and from school in an orderly and safe atmosphere. These rules will be enforced for the safety of all children. We ask that parents help by informing their children of the importance of abiding by these rules.


If a student disobeys any of the rules for riding the bus, they may be disciplined by the bus driver and referred to the campus principal. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and may include loss of bus riding privileges.

The campus principal and Director of Transportation will have the final authority on all discipline decisions regarding students that violate the Student Code of Conduct for Azle ISD transportation.



**Azle ISD Transportation**

- Azle ISD Covers 95 Square Miles
- 3,700+ Active Bus Riders
- 54 Daily Routes
- 639,000 Miles Traveled Annually
- 3,500+ Miles Traveled Daily
- 70,000 Extracurricular Miles Traveled Annually



*\*As of September 2022*

# Safety First

## Waiting for the Bus

Students should:

- Arrive at the bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time and allow an additional five minutes after the scheduled arrival time.
- Stand on the sidewalk or a safe distance from the roadway when no sidewalk is available.
- Form a line when the bus approaches and wait for the bus to come to a complete stop with the **RED** loading lights flashing.
- Never approach a moving bus.
- Never run after or chase a bus.

Parent/driver conferences cannot take place at the bus stop. Parents should contact the Azle ISD Transportation Department at 817-444-1322 to schedule a conference.

## Loading the Bus

Students should:

- Use the handrail and steps while entering the bus.
- Not push or shove others while entering the bus.
- Go to their assigned seat\* or the nearest seat available. (\*Driver may assign seats.)

The bus will not move until all students are safely seated.

## Unloading the Bus

Students should:

- Remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Use the handrail and take one step at a time while exiting the bus.
- Get clear of the bus as soon as possible by walking.
- Always cross in front of the bus and never behind the bus.
- Always be alert for vehicles if they must cross a street.
- If something is dropped or rolls near or under the bus, students should not try to retrieve it without asking the driver for help and making sure the driver sees them.

## Crossing Streets/Highways

- All students crossing to the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 10 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
- **After the signal from the driver**, students should check both directions and walk directly across the street.
- Students should never cross behind the bus.
- Students should use caution and be alert for moving vehicles that do not stop for the **RED** loading lights on the bus.

## Accidents/Emergencies

- Students should always follow the directions of the bus driver.
- Students should stay in a group if they must exit the bus.
- Students should leave all items behind when exiting the bus.
- The student closest to the door should open the door when the bus driver has instructed them to do so.
- Students should leave the bus in a single-file line as quickly and quietly as possible.
- Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the exit door.

## Prohibited Items

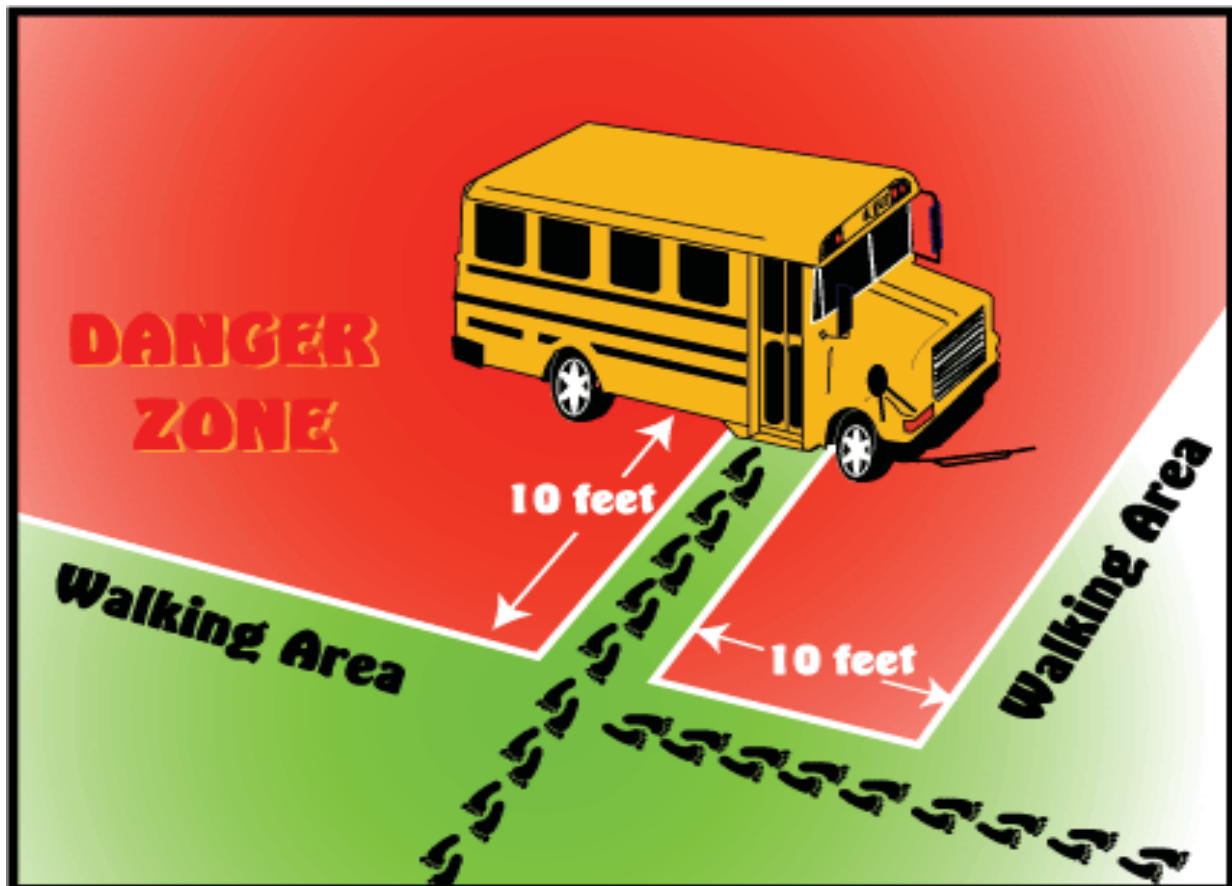
- Alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, and other illegal items.
- Glass containers.
- Any objects too large to be placed on a student's lap, including large band instruments. (If bus is at capacity or item will not fit in seat.)
- Live animals or insects.
- Yo-yos, laser lights, or pointers.
- Any other items listed in the Azle ISD Student Code of Conduct.
- Any other items that may be deemed unsafe by the bus driver.
- Pictures and videos are not allowed to be taken while on the bus.
- Personal hygiene products should not be opened on the bus.

## The Danger Zone

The most dangerous time for a student riding the school bus is the loading and unloading process.

It is critical that students are visible to the driver and out of the bus danger zones when the bus is in motion. This rule applies to loading and unloading both in neighborhoods and at schools.

If students are crossing the street, they should move immediately out of the danger zone and proceed at least 10 feet in front of the bus before crossing the street. (See diagram below.)



## General Bus Conduct Rules

1. Obey all instructions of the bus driver.
2. The bus driver is responsible for all discipline on the school bus.
3. Load and unload the bus at designated stops only.
4. **If a student is needing to ride the bus home with a friend, a parent or guardian should contact the campus or Azle ISD transportation department *prior* to the date.** The student will be provided with a pink bus pass completed and signed by the administrator. **Without this pass, friends will not be allowed on the bus.** (Depending on the capacity of a bus or other factors, transportation may be denied to a guest rider.)
5. Students are to be quiet as the bus nears railroad tracks.
6. Remain seated while the bus is in motion. Do not change seats.
7. Students are responsible for the items they bring on the bus.
8. Keep all body parts inside the bus.
9. Do not make loud noises that may distract the driver. Normal conversation is permitted.
10. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus.
11. If a student does not ride the bus for three consecutive days, a parent must call the transportation department at 817-444-1322 or the bus may not come to their stop.
12. Due to limited seating, some personal articles may not be permitted onto the bus. Large items may be required to sit on the student's lap. Any band instrument that is too large to sit between a student's legs on the floor or in their lap will only be allowed on the bus on the first route of the week to school and the last route of the week home from school.
13. Bus drivers may confiscate any items that may be deemed as a distraction or safety concern.
14. Bus drivers have the authority to assign seats.
15. Scuffling, fighting, and the use of obscene, vulgar, profane, or offensive language and gestures are prohibited on the bus.
16. Emergency exits are to be used only during drills or an actual emergency.
17. Students should not mark on, cut, or scratch any parts of the bus. Vandalism costs will be billed to the parents of any student responsible for the vandalism of Azle ISD vehicles.
18. All students in grades 7-12 must wear their Azle ISD student IDs while on the bus.

## Driver Discipline Measures

Riding the bus is a privilege. Students being transported on Azle ISD school buses shall comply with the Azle ISD Student Code of Conduct. Any student who fails to comply with the established rules of conduct will be subject to disciplinary action and may be denied transportation service.

Discipline referrals will be sent directly to the campus principal. Students will be responsible for delivering referrals to parents. Any bus misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Punishment may include removal from the bus, detention, ISS, or DAEP placement.

### Minor Infractions (Not limited to the following)

- Using profanity, improper or offensive remarks, or gestures.
- Talking loudly or yelling.
- Bothering (poking, pushing, etc.) others.
- Failure to follow driver's instructions.
- Not staying seated in your seat, standing, jumping over seats, or crawling under seats.
- Leaving paper or other trash on the bus.

### Major Infractions\* (Not limited to the following)

*\*May be subject to immediate suspension from bus.*

- Accumulation of three minor infractions.
- Being defiant, disrespectful, or insubordinate to the bus driver.
- Fighting.
- Throwing objects inside or outside the bus.
- Vandalism or destruction of the school bus (students/parents may be required to pay for damages caused).
- Possession of prohibited items.
- Any unauthorized use of emergency exits.

### Driver Discipline Measures

- Verbal warning given by the bus driver for inappropriate behavior.
- 1<sup>st</sup> written report – Conference between student and bus driver; copy to the campus principal.
- Student will sign a Bus Conduct Report for the bus driver.
- Bus driver may assign the student a seat.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> written report – Transportation office will attempt to contact the student's parent(s).
- Repeated violations will be reported to the campus principal and may result in temporary removal from the bus.

## Suggested\* Discipline Ladder

### Grades K-4

- 3<sup>rd</sup> written report to principal – Campus consequences
- 4<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 1-3 days
- 5<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 3-5 days
- 6<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 10 days
- 7<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the semester
- 8<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the school year

### Grades 5-6

- 3<sup>rd</sup> written report to principal – Campus consequences
- 4<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 3 days
- 5<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 10 days
- 6<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the semester
- 7<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the school year

### Grades 7-8

- 3<sup>rd</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 3 days
- 4<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 5 days
- 5<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 10 days to one month
- 6<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the semester
- 7<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the school year

### Grades 9-12

- 3<sup>rd</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 5 days
- 4<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for 10 days to one month
- 5<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the semester
- 6<sup>th</sup> written report to principal – Student removed from bus for remainder of the school year

*\*Additional consequences may be assigned based on Transportation Director or principal discretion.*