

River Valley School District



Bus Handbook 2023-2024

(Updated 5.24.23)

Introduction

The River Valley School District is committed to provide an excellent and equitable education for all students. In order to do so, ALL students must have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum. The district uses the curriculum renewal and design process as a systematic way to consider a variety of issues concerning curriculum, instruction, assessment, and staff development planning.

At River Valley we believe...

- *Students are our number one priority*
- *Every student has the right to learn*
- *Instruction is rigorous and relevant*
- *Assessment is purposeful and drives instruction*
- *Learning is a collaborative process*

River Valley is a consolidated school district comprised of 12 towns and four villages (Arena, Lone Rock, Plain, and Spring Green) located in four different counties (Sauk, Iowa, Richland, and Dane) and is one of the larger geographic school districts in Wisconsin (296 geographic square miles). The district name was selected because the district boundaries are on both sides of the Wisconsin River Valley. Our district has a rich tradition of providing opportunities for all students to succeed. We take great pride in providing a variety of coursework and programs with varied instructional techniques that tap the needs and interests of our diverse student population. Please contact any school administrator to discuss our school system or to make recommendations for how we might better serve our students of "The Valley."

This document serves as a handbook for policy, processes and procedures for transportation services provided to students in the River Valley School District. This handbook is to guide our staff, and our contracted service provider, Lamers Bus Lines, as we work together to meet the changing needs of students, the community, and society. This guide provides direction, consistency, and stability to the process of providing safe and organized transportation to students during their school experience within our exemplary rural school district.

Important phone contact information:

- Lamers Bus Line: 608.588.2222 (press Option 2 for School Bus)
- River Valley Early Learning Center: 608.546.2228
- River Valley Elementary: 608.588.2559
- River Valley Middle School: 608.588.2556
- River Valley High School: 608.588.2554
- River Valley District Office: 608.588.2551

Dear Families,

Safety is the primary goal of our transportation services in the River Valley School District. To be successful in our efforts, it is essential for all of us—students, parents, school staff and bus drivers—to work together toward this same goal.

This handbook contains our policies regarding bus expectations, evacuation procedures, behavior consequences and other important information about bus transportation. Please read through this handbook carefully. Students and parents are responsible for knowing the information it contains.

Thank you!

***Lamers Bus Lines &
River Valley School District Administration and School Board***

State Regulations

Under Section 121.54(2), Wisconsin Statutes, a pupil attending a public elementary or secondary school, including four- and five-year-old kindergarten, is entitled to transportation by the public school district in which the pupil resides if the pupil resides two or more miles from the nearest public school the pupil is entitled to attend.

It is the policy of the River Valley School District Board of Education to provide transportation for those students, of any age, whose distance from their school makes this service necessary within the limitations established by State law and the regulations of the Department of Public Instruction or other appropriate agency. In accordance with this policy, the district contracts with Lamers Bus Lines to transport children who live more than two miles from their assigned school; or have transportation identified as a service in an Individualized Education Plan; or have an identified Unusually Hazardous Route per a plan approved by the school board.

A student's primary (or secondary in the case of dual families) must qualify for transportation. All students who qualify must be registered online via registration for home-to-school transportation.

School District Policy

The following policy documents are important to our district's process:

443.2 - [Student Conduct on School Buses](#)

722.3 - [School Closings](#)

722.3 Rule - [School Closings \(Rule\)](#)

751 - [Student Transportation](#)

751 Rule - [Bus Routing Guidelines](#)

751.2 - [Co-Curricular Transportation](#)

751.3 - [Bus Rules and Regulations](#)

751.3 - [Rule 1 - Bus Rules and Regulations - Discipline Procedures](#)

751.3 - [Rule 2 - Bus Evacuation Drill](#)

751.4 - [Use of Cameras or Recording Devices on School Buses or other Authorized Vehicles](#)

752.1 - [Student Transportation Agreement - Alternative Transportation](#)

834 - [Service Animals](#)

Everyone Has a Role in School Transportation

Role of the Bus Driver

- Transport students to and from school safely to the best of their ability.
- Assign seats to riders.
- Fairly and consistently enforce bus rules and regulations.
- Communicate bus issues to the terminal manager who will share with the principal.

Role of Bus Terminal Manager

- Communicate family and student needs with the school district administration.
- Train, manage, and support bus drivers and bus fleet.
- Communicate emergencies (weather or accident) to families and the school district.
- Create and sustain bus routes based on enrollment and registration.
- Approves guest riders on the bus routes.

Role of the Student

- Follow safety procedures and wear seatbelts when available.
- **Ride only the designated bus**, and only enter and exit the bus safely at designated stops.
- Obey rules and be courteous.
- Refrain from using profanity, causing disruption, fighting, or destroying property.
- Always treat the bus driver and other riders with dignity and respect.

Role of the Parent

- Ensure the student is at the bus stop and ready to board the bus at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time. Also, only allow students to ride designated route.
- Patiently wait for a bus that may be late due to traffic and other conditions.
- Ensure their children's safety, well-being and conduct on the way to and from the bus stops, and until the bus arrives.
- Aid in ensuring the conduct of their children is appropriate while riding the bus.
- Cooperate with school and bus personnel regarding the transport of their children.
- Contact the Lamers Terminal Manager when they observe unsafe conditions.
- Call the bus terminal if a student is expected to be absent (588.2222 - Opt. 2)
- Register and update all contact information in case of emergency.

Role of the Administrator and Principal

- Oversee quality of the bussing program (District Office).
- Communicate with the terminal manager and parents regarding student behavior (principal).
- Communicate with terminal manager and parents regarding weather (District Office).
- Assign and communicate student discipline (Principal).
- Supervise students prior to boarding the buses while on school campus.

Riding The Bus!

Waiting at the bus stop...

- Be on time. Arrive 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to be there.
- Respect others and their property. Stay off lawns, do not block driveways.
- Stay away from the street, road or highway.
- Keep safety in mind...no shoving, running or pushing.
- School bus stops are not supervised by the school district or Lamers Bus Lines. Reports of physical or verbal violence, vandalism or other offenses will be referred to the school principal and the police. Parents must supervise as necessary.
- If you miss the bus, return home and notify your parents or guardian. Never accept rides from strangers! Never run after the bus!

While on the bus...

- Keep the hands and the head inside the bus at all times.
- Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary at all times.
- Remember that loud talking, laughing or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
- Treat bus equipment as you would treat valuable furniture in your own home. Damage must be paid for by the offender.
- Leave no books, lunches or other articles on the bus. If an item is lost, please notify the bus company as soon as possible. Keep books, packages, coats, etc. out of the aisles.
- **Eating on the bus is not allowed**, except when organized by a supervisor or coach.
- No illegal substances (alcohol, vape, tobacco, etc.) are allowed on school buses.
- Selling of candies, food items, etc. will not be permitted on the bus.
- Follow the direction of the bus driver in case of emergency.
- Do not throw anything out of the bus window.
- Always remain in your seats while the bus is in motion.
- Be courteous to fellow pupils, the bus driver, the driver's assistant and to passersby.
- Profane or indecent language will not be tolerated.
- The driver is responsible for controlling the bus riders. The students must obey the driver, and ride only their designated route.
- Electronic devices will be permitted if sound is controlled. Volume cannot distract the driver or cause problems. Video recording is prohibited.
- No skateboards are allowed on the bus.
- Carrying of weapons of any type shall not be permitted at any time on buses.

Leaving the bus...

- When it is necessary to cross the road after getting off the bus, cross at least ten feet in front of the bus, but only after the driver has given you the okay to cross the road.
- Be alert to the danger signal from the driver, which is a steady blast on the horn. Students are not permitted to leave the bus at any other stop than their regular stop unless permission has been given by the parent or school officials. Riders should not go to the mailbox until after the bus has left its stop.
- A parent or guardian needs to be present at the bus stop to greet the 4K/5K students. If no adult is present, the child will not be allowed to leave the bus. The driver will then notify the bus company and will continue the route while the bus company tries to contact the parent. If the parent cannot be reached the child will be returned to River Valley Elementary. Arrangements will be made for the child's pick up.
- Extra riders are not allowed to ride the bus home with students for parties or sleepovers.

Behavior Process and Procedures

When a student fails to conduct him/herself properly on the school bus, such misconduct shall be brought to the attention of the building administrator by the terminal manager. Due process procedures shall be utilized in disciplining students regarding misconduct on school buses.

Discipline Procedures

If a student does not follow the district expectations on a bus, the following steps will be taken:

1. The driver will attempt to resolve the problem. Bus expectations will be reviewed with the students.
2. A seat will be assigned in their age zone to better manage the student's behavior if a problem occurs.
3. When the driver is not able to manage a student's behavior, an incident report is written. This report is used to inform the parents or guardians of unsafe behavior. Principals and parents will receive information regarding all reports either by phone or written communication.
4. Dangerous or destructive offenses (i.e. the possession or use of weapons/illegal substances, tampering with emergency equipment or driver controls, vandalism, fighting, etc.) **will result in immediate suspension of bus privileges for students of all ages.**
5. Parents and guardians will be billed for repairs of property that has been damaged by vandalism. The length of the suspension will be determined by the degree of the offense. Parents will be notified of bus suspensions by the building administrator.
6. Levels of infractions are clearly stated in [Policy 751.3 - Rule 1](#).

Safety Regulations and Emergency Evacuation

There are three different evacuation plans:

1. Using only the front service door
2. Using only the rear or side emergency exits
3. Using both the service door & the emergency door

Evacuating the Bus

1. Be quiet and wait for instructions.
2. Be alert, move quickly and leave personal belongings on the bus.
3. Keep your feet out of the aisle, go out seat by seat, alternating sides.
4. Duck your head when going out the emergency door.
5. After you are out of the door, move away from the bus as this clears the way for others to follow.
6. Go a distance of at least 100 feet from the bus and remain there in a group until given further instructions by the driver.
7. Older students will be asked to assist other students when possible.

Safe Crossing of Roads- Stay out of the Danger Zone

1. Stay away from the side of the bus. Move to at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
2. Turn to the driver and make eye contact.
3. Wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
4. Walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus, stop to check for vehicles that might violate the stop arm.
5. When it's safe, complete the crossing.



Responsible	Respectful	Safe
<p data-bbox="233 222 553 296">Use KIND words towards everyone</p>  <p data-bbox="228 533 558 569">Cleaning up after yourself</p>  <p data-bbox="212 863 574 898">Follow the driver's directions</p>  <p data-bbox="266 1192 521 1283">Volume level 2 (conversation level)</p> 	<p data-bbox="618 222 997 296">Tell the driver when a student is not following the rules</p>  <p data-bbox="683 638 932 674">Sit in assigned seat</p> 	<p data-bbox="1068 222 1365 296">Keep hands and feet to yourself</p>   <p data-bbox="1052 821 1382 894">Stay in your seat - Seat to seat/back to back</p>  <p data-bbox="1117 1220 1317 1255">Keep aisle clear</p> 

Again, we want all students, families, drivers, and staff to remember that transportation is an important part of the school day. The more we work together, the more we can accomplish.

BUS HANDBOOK RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received and read the River Valley School District Bus Handbook and understand the provisions contained herein.

I understand that the terms described in the Bus Handbook may be altered, modified, changed, or eliminated by the district, with or without prior notice. Changes to the law may cause more frequent modifications that are in the best interest of the district.

STUDENT NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____