

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This information brochure will acquaint you with the rules and procedures governing school transportation. Your assistance and cooperation are necessary in order for us to maintain timely, reliable and safe bus transportation service.

Your comments and suggestions can help the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) improve transportation service. Contact your school administrator or the Ventura County Office of Education Transportation Department (805-383-1918) if you have a suggestion, complaint or comment. Sincerely,

Marc Sattler, Transportation Coordinator

SCHOOL BUS SERVICE GUIDELINES

DESIGNATED PICK-UP TIME: Parent/Guardian are responsible to have their children ready to board the bus at their designated stop ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled time. The bus will not leave before the scheduled pick-up time but will only wait **TWO** minutes, then depart.

LATE BUS: Late buses are often unavoidable. In the event that the bus is late, Parent/Guardian should wait ten (10) minutes with their child after the scheduled time before calling First Student (805-228-5542) to inquire about a late bus. The pick-up and delivery times of each bus should be consistent within approximately ten minutes, although buses may be late due to weather and traffic conditions. First Student will attempt to telephone residences if delays exceed 20 minutes.

TRAVEL TIME: Throughout the school year routing changes may become necessary. Parent/Guardians will be notified of any route changes. Overall route travel time will vary depending on school and home location. To the extent feasible, the VCOE attempts to ensure that each student's riding time is no longer than one hour in each direction. However there are some students who may be scheduled to ride more than one hour each way.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: If your son/daughter moves during the school year, you are required to notify the school of attendance and/or District Special Education office at least ten (10) days in advance to ensure continuous transportation service.

CHANGE OF CONTACT NUMBERS: A change in telephone number as well as emergency address must be recorded with the school of attendance and Transportation Department. In writing. No changes will be taken over the phone by First Student.

TEMPORARY CHANGE OF SERVICE: Any request for change of service time or location must be initiated through your child's school and cannot be of a temporary nature (e.g. one time, once a month, etc.). Daycare addresses must be within the resident or receiving district and be the same for all five days during the week. With prior approval (24 hours) from School and Transportation Coordinator a student may use an existing stop on the same route other than assigned as an alternative.

DELIVERY LIMITATIONS: If the parent/guardian or designated adult is not present to meet the student, First Student will contact the emergency address and attempt to deliver there. If this is unsuccessful, the child will be returned to their school site, or if after school hours, to the local law enforcement agency. It is the parent/ guardian's responsibility to be at the assigned drop-off location at the designated time. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to monitor changes in pick-up and delivery time based on their school calendar (e.g. minimum day, late start). To release a student without a designated adult or age appropriate sibling present, there must be a signed *"Release of Responsibility"* form on file at the school and VCOE Transportation Office.

EMERGENCY ADDRESS: Each student must have a designated emergency address (ideally located within one mile of residence) in the event a designated adult is not at home to receive the student. This is an individual that you designate to receive your child (e.g. neighbor, relative). Providing a cell phone or other contact number is also acceptable so long as the individual can meet

the student within ten (10) minutes of the call. Service may be delayed until one is provided.

TRANSPORTATION OF MEDICATION: All student medication and/or supplies are to be kept in a sealed envelope or other container with identifiable information in addition to the bottle or container holding the substance. The envelope or container must be labeled with the student's name and school. The package is to be given to the driver. Under no circumstance is the student allowed to keep medication in their possession. The driver will deliver the package directly to the school staff or parent/guardian.

ILLNESS: If your child will not be going to school, please place the colored placard (available from the driver) in a window visible to the street signifying to the driver not to wait. If your child will not be riding for several days, please call First Student, VCOE Transportation, and the school to temporarily stop service and again when ready to resume. If a student does not ride for 5 consecutive days, service will stop. You must call First Student the day before to resume service. Students not riding will be dropped from the route after 30 days. Should your child become sick at school you are responsible for transportation.

LOST ITEMS: Parent/Guardians should contact First Student (805-228-5542) about items left on the school bus. Neither the driver, First Student, or school will be responsible for student's personal belongings.

WHEELCHAIRS: Parent/Guardians with students in wheelchairs are responsible for maintaining the chair in good working order. Wheelchairs shall be equipped with seatbelts with a metal-to-metal connector and push button or lift cover release. A 3-inch heavy plastic buckle is also acceptable. Velcro held restraints may be utilized for additional support, but not in place of the lap belt described above. For your child's safety, if the chair is deemed to be unsafe (e.g. brakes are inoperable, seatbelt) the student will be denied transportation until the repair(s) are made.

STUDENT CONDUCT: To provide safe transportation to and from school VCOE has established rules of conduct for the school bus.

The School Bus Driver is responsible for informing students of the safety rules/expectations at the beginning of each school year. However throughout the school year, other students may enroll, routes change, etc. Therefore, each driver will also have posted a listing of the School Bus Safety Rules inside the School Bus.

Safe Riding Expectations are to be followed by each rider:

- Enter/Exit the bus safely (e.g. use the steps, walk down isles)
- Remain seated throughout the ride (bottom to bottom, back to back, feet on the floor) and all body parts in the bus.
- Ask Driver permission before opening the window.
- No physical playing or rough conduct is allowed at any time.
- No eating, drinking, gum chewing, or smoking.
- No throwing or passing items on the bus or in/out the window or doors.
- Follow any direction given by the Driver or paraeducator/aide/bus assistant.
- Respect the rights of others inside and outside the bus.

Students will be disciplined for disobeying bus rules based on the same standards as misconduct on the school campus. Malicious damage to the bus or persistent infraction of rules may result in denial of VCOE bus service to the student.

PARENT LIABILITY: Parent/Guardians are responsible for any vandalism to a school bus committed by their child and required to reimburse the bus company for damages. The Parent/Guardian will be notified by the school if their student has been involved in behavior leading to damage of a school bus.

REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR: When a student's behavior is unacceptable, the Driver will file a written report with the school administrator.

The School Administrator or designee will investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and take appropriate action.

When a student's misconduct is of a nature that does not jeopardize the safety or welfare of other students or interfere with the safe operation of the bus, positive behavioral interventions and/or counseling may be appropriate. Suspension is considered when restorative interventions and counseling have not been successful, or there is a safety concern, or when a student damages the bus.

School Bus Service may be terminated if a student's behavior threatens the safety of other passengers or operation of the bus. The parent/guardian will be notified of disciplinary action taken by the School Administrator or Transportation Coordinator.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

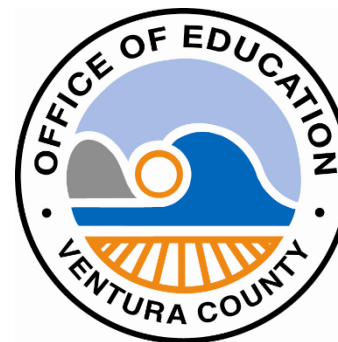
Buses used for the VCOE program are tracked using global positioning satellite (GPS) technology for student safety and accuracy of timing.

School Bus Transportation is rated by the National Safety Council as the safest form of passenger transportation. Each school bus driver completes classroom and road instruction before certification. They are finger printed and background checked. Candidates are then tested by the California Highway Patrol. The VCOE requires all Drivers to complete first aid instruction, attend regularly scheduled safety meetings, and additional training sessions (e.g. positive behavior support) to maintain the skills necessary to safely transport special needs students. First Student and VCOE use the Child Check electronic and visual systems to ensure no student is left on the bus at the end of each run.

All buses are inspected daily by the Driver and annually by the California Highway Patrol to ensure that buses meet safety standards. In addition, certified mechanics perform comprehensive inspections at frequent intervals.

VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Information About Your School Bus Service



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Office of Education
Transportation Department
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Camarillo, CA 93012
(805) 383-1918
email: transportation@vcoe.org**

**Stanley C. Mantooth
Ventura County Superintendent of Schools**

"Commitment to Quality Education for All"