



## **Transportation Guidelines**

***The safety of your children while walking to, from, and waiting at the bus stop is the parent's responsibility.***

### **Student Bus Stop Assignment**

- Students are assigned to the stop closest to their home address.
- Change of bus stop for personal preferences such as, but not limited to, to getting on/off the bus sooner/later or being with other friends in the neighborhood are **NOT** allowed.
- Bus Pass: Cannot be issued for play dates, birthdays, Girl/Boy Scouts, weekend sleepovers or any other reason except for an emergency as determined by a school official.
- Emergency Situations: To obtain a bus pass parents' must notify the school in person and/or in writing with the following information:
  - Parent and student name, contact phone number and address of student your child is going home with (not a bus number).
  - Parent (requesting emergency transportation) must provide a contact phone number for verification.
  - Day of week and date(s) that you are requesting a bus pass not to exceed eight (8) consecutive school days. After eight (8) days new information must be provided.
  - Parent signature and date is required.
- Unscheduled stops for latecomers or unapproved exceptions are **PROHIBITED**. School loading zones are considered designated stops. Therefore once a bus has departed from a stop it must continue on its route to the next scheduled stop. All requests for deviation must be transmitted to Transportation for review and approval.

### **Bus Passes and Student Safety**

The Haralson County Schools Transportation Department provides basic transportation service for students to their assigned stops in the morning and afternoons. School administrators and transportation staff have determined that for safety reasons, changes in bus transportation will not be permitted in Haralson County Schools. Students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off the bus other than their assigned stop will be returned to the school where the parent may pick them up. Haralson County Schools does not allow 1<sup>st</sup> tier students (Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade) to ride with 2<sup>nd</sup> tier students (6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade).

Safety is our number one priority in providing bus transportation, and the practice of routinely issuing bus passes causes inconsistency and confusion for everyone; the student, the school staff, the driver and even the parent. Students are expected to learn their stop, understand their driver's expectations and practice safe riding, walking and waiting habits as they travel to and from school at their assigned stop. Drivers need to establish safe, orderly and respectful routines that include learning their students and developing positive relationships with them.

Please cooperate with the school and make car transportation arrangements whenever your student(s) need to be taken to any location other than their regular assigned afternoon bus stop.

We appreciate your support!

**Q. How are bus stops assigned to students?**

**A.** The assignment of bus routes and stops are made by the Transportation Department routing staff to effectively transport student to school on time. Students are assigned based on which route and stop that is closest and/or most appropriate for their residence. The safety of students is the first consideration when determining bus stop locations. However, the safety of any school bus stop is evaluated with the understanding that the parent or guardian will provide supervision for grades Pre-K through 5th at the bus stop. If parents/guardians are not present at the bus stop in the afternoons, the student(s) will be returned to the school where the parent/guardian may pick them up.

**Q. Why must students ride their assigned buses to their assigned stops?**

**A.** Haralson County Schools provides basic transportation services for students. Our goal of a safe, orderly and respectful transportation service can only be achieved when all partners (drivers, students, parents and school staff) develop safe, consistent habits and procedures concerning riding, loading and unloading, supervision at the stop and walking to and from the stop. The driver and student assigned to the bus develop a relationship that includes an understanding of expectations and requirements for safety on the assigned bus and stop.

When otherwise safe routines are disrupted, it may distract the driver, student or parent and place students at risk. Drivers must focus on the assigned students that are departing the bus to ensure their safety. Distractions already include traffic, pedestrians and students remaining on the bus. Drivers and students should not be required to deal with the added distraction of "checking passes and signatures" of guest riders or calling for "verbal authorization" from the school. It is a distraction from the job at hand, protecting students.

Additionally, bus drivers assign seats based on "regular expected riders" and often there is little or no room to provide seats to additional riders. It is not reasonable to expect "regular riders" to lose their seat or disrupt their routine for non-assigned riders.

Therefore, students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off the bus at other than their assigned stop will be returned to the school where the parent may pick them up.