

# **TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

**Warner Unified School District**

## **PARENT/STUDENT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK**





**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY FOR CHANGES IN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES!**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The information contained in this handbook concerns your child's participation in the Warner Unified Union School District's Transportation program.

The policy of the District is to provide home-to-school bus transportation for students who live within the established transportation areas. Students will be able to participate in home-to-school transportation services sponsored and operated by the District free of charge to families. Based on transportation areas, the District will be operating 4 general education bus routes in the morning and 3 routes in the afternoon. The District will provide transportation services to and from school on school days.

Before children go back to school or start for the first time, it is essential that adults and children know transportation safety rules and regulations. The purpose of the following information is to make both parents/guardians and students aware of the rules and regulations involved in safe transportation.

**Student transportation aboard a school bus is a privilege.** Seats on a bus may be limited. Students will be required to utilize the bus stop closest to the student's registered home address ***no exceptions***. Residency must be approved by the district. **Parent/Student Conduct Contact must be filled out for each student, each year.**

Bus Route/Stop Schedules will be available at the Warnerpalooza.

Please remember that on minimum days, morning schedule pick up times do not change, but afternoon drop off times are approximately 2 hours prior to regular day drop off time.

Please visit [www.warnerusd.net](http://www.warnerusd.net) for handbook which is available to download. You may also stop in the District Office for paperwork. If you have any additional questions please call the Transportation Coordinator at 760-419-8181.

## **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY/CONDUCT**

### **Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right.**

Students will be required to comply with rules and regulations regarding student transportation.

Section 14103 of the California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, governing pupil transportation states:

“14103. Authority of Driver.

- (a) Pupils transported in a school bus or in a school pupil activity bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway or road. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation. A bus driver shall not require any pupil to leave the bus enroute between home and school or other destinations.”

To prevent any misunderstanding regarding transportation rules and regulations, students should be instructed that they may do the following:

- 1. Get on and off the school bus at their designated stop only**
- 2. Sit only where the driver instructs them**
- 3. Use the passenger restraint/safety belts correctly on buses that have them**
- 4. Talk quietly with the person sitting next to them**

Each student must behave in a satisfactory manner, allowing the driver to direct his/her undivided attention to driving. While we strive to make each ride a pleasurable experience, the school bus ride cannot be mistaken for socializing playtime. In order to keep the driver and students from being distracted, strict guidelines are necessary for the safety of all students, drivers and the public. The school bus is an extension of the school campus. Therefore adherence to the District’s Policies surrounding student behavior are extended to all persons aboard the school bus and/or at a designated school bus stop. As in the classroom, abusive body contact will not be tolerated. This infraction will result in immediate suspension of transportation for the remainder of the school year. When a student is serving a “Denial of Transportation” this will include **all** school buses, including field trips and “extended day” buses.

On buses that have passenger restraint/safety belts, **ALL BUS RIDERS MUST WEAR THEIR PASSENGER RESTRAINT/SAFETY BELTS CORRECTLY AT ALL TIMES WHILE RIDING IN THE BUS.** If the passenger restraint/safety belt is not worn correctly a citation will be issued and disciplinary action will be taken.

Any destruction/damage to the bus will lead to that student(s) riding privilege being revoked for the remainder of the school year.

A student who accidentally or willingly gets on the wrong bus will be returned to school where parents will be called to arrange pickup of their child. Every effort will be made by the drivers to have each student exit his/her stop.

## **DISCIPLINE**

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

### **FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF THE BUS DRIVER AT ALL TIMES**

- 1. Remain properly seated at all times. Sit facing forward, keeping aisles clear and all parts of the body inside the bus.**
- 2. Respect the rights of others inside and outside of the bus.**
- 3. No eating, drinking, gum chewing on the bus.**
- 4. No vandalism on bus, treat the bus as a valuable piece of property.**
- 5. No fighting or pushing. Keep your hands to yourself.**
- 6. No use of cell phones or other electronics.**
- 7. No glass. Bring only those items on the bus which are safe and will fit easily on your lap.**

School Bus Drivers have the authority to assign seating to pupils.

Violation of the rules and regulations will result in the loss of bus riding privileges. The School Bus Driver may issue a Bus Referral or Major Incident Notice to those students violating established safety rules while aboard the bus or at the loading area. In most cases, the Driver may first issue the student a verbal warning, notifying him/her of the violation. Students must provide the driver with their correct name, including spelling upon request. The Bus Referral is turned into the Transportation Department and the School Administration and determination is made on what disciplinary action will take place. Copies of the Bus Referral are also sent to the parent/guardian. In most cases, for a first offense, a “Warning” will be issued affording the parents the opportunity to discuss the situation with their child; reminding them of the importance of obeying the School Bus Safety Rules and reinforcing that riding the school bus is a privilege and receiving additional citations will result in suspension of transportation for the remainder of the year.

### **Referral Process**

The driver may give an oral and/or written warning prior to the issuance of the first citation. This will be sent home on the Bus Warning Notice or delivered by telephone and/or email to the parent/guardian. A “warning” may be suspended at the driver’s discretion if the student’s behavior is intentional and creates a dangerous situation on the bus. The bus driver may issue a Bus Referral, to be effective the following day of the violation.

In the event a student continues to violate the safety rules:

- Minor Offenses will result in suspension of bus riding
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Referral will result in a “Denial of Transportation” for 1 school day
- 6<sup>th</sup> Referral will result in a “Denial of Transportation” for 3 school days
- 9<sup>th</sup> Referral will result in a “Denial of Transportation” for 5 school days
- 12<sup>th</sup> Referral will result in a “Denial of Transportation” for 10 school days

Parents will be notified of all transportation suspensions. Per Ed Code Section 48200, the parent still has an obligation to observe compulsory education laws.

### **BUS AND BUS STOP ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are entitled to ride only on a designated bus to and from a designated stop before and after the regular academic day. If an emergency arises and a student is required to go home with another student, the parent **MUST** contact the district office by 1:00 pm on regular school days and by 10:00 am on Early Release days. Changes to bus stops will only be allowed in rare cases of emergency and only in there is room on the bus. Changes regarding assignments to buses and stops are at the sole discretion of the administration department.

Students are required to utilize the bus stop closest to the student's registered home address. If a parent is unsure of the bus stop closest to the student's registered home address, district personnel will make that determination after review of home address. Under no circumstances will there be a "chasing" of the bus if a student has missed the bus at their designated stop. This creates both a safety hazard for the driver and students. If the student has missed the bus at their designated bus stop, the parent/guardian will be required to drive their student(s) to the school. If the student is dropped off at an undesignated bus stop, the student will receive a bus citation.

All drivers will stop at each designated stop on their route. Students are to be at their designated bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the pick up time.

### **Late Buses**

Late buses are often unavoidable. It is nearly impossible to notify parents of late buses. In the event that buses are running late in the a.m./p.m., it is suggested that parents wait for/with their children until 15 minutes after the scheduled stop time. If the bus has not arrived by that time, call your students school office to find out the cause of the delay and the estimated time of arrival. Modifications to home-to-school transportation may be required due to inclement weather, mechanical breakdowns or other unanticipated causes of delay. In the event of inclement weather, the district office will send an "all-call" to the emergency number for each student.

### **Sports Equipment, Special Projects, Etc.**

No item will be transported aboard a school bus that is unsafe/unsecured (i.e. in a student's backpack, book bag, and separate bag). Baseball bats, skateboards, sharp objects, etc. are not permitted on the school bus. Bus aisle and emergency exits must be kept clear of all items. Parents should make other arrangements to get such items to their student's school. Live animals, including insects, are strictly prohibited aboard school buses by law. Glass containers and other breakable containers are strictly prohibited. Medication of any kind is strictly prohibited aboard school buses.

Any student at a bus stop with disallowed items will be directed to return home, if a parent is home; or instructed to leave the article at the bus stop.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

All persons, including chaperones, riding a school bus for a school sponsored field trip , or other extracurricular activity are required to follow the same safety rules as students on home-to-school buses.

It is the responsibility of the school site administrator to assure all “Parental Permission Slips” forms are on file for each student attending the activity. Parents may be allowed to ride the bus as chaperones if they have received prior consent from the school site administrator.

*Children not registered in the Warner Unified School District, including siblings of Warner Unified School District students, **may not ride the school bus, even if accompanied by parent/guardian.***

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY**

Parents are responsible for assuring that their child’s behavior at the bus stop is appropriate. Continued misbehavior, resulting in complaints of damage, destruction or mayhem at a stop may result in the stop being moved or removed. Children arriving late for the bus must be on the same side of the street as the bus. Do not cross the street while the bus is loading. If you need to board the bus, it is safest to have your student get out of the vehicle on the same side as the bus is stopped. When driving in neighborhoods with school zones, watch out for young children who may not be thinking about their safety. Watch for children walking in the street. Parents are responsible to have their children ready to board the bus at their designated bus stop, 5 minutes prior to the pick up time. The driver **WILL NOT** return to a stop to receive a student who was late and missed the bus. The driver will not leave a stop prior to the pick up time. All drivers will stop at each designated stop on their route sheet. Parents of a K-5 student that requests a “MUST BE MET” at their student’s bus stop must be on time to pick up their student. It is requested that you be there five (5) minutes before the stop time. When a student is not met at their bus stop, they will be kept on board the bus and returned to the After School Program (760-782-3517 Ext 255). Parents of “must be met” students should call 760-782-3517 to find out where they are to receive their student. Chronic problems will result in transportation privileges being suspended and/or denied until proper arrangements are made by the parent.

## **BUS SAFETY**

### **Video Monitoring**

Some buses are equipped with video cameras. The purpose of this is to assist the driver in monitoring student behavior. The tapes are reviewed as necessary by Transportation and School Officials.

### **Walking to and From School Bus Stops**

Students need to observe safe walking habits and be alert to traffic. Students will be held accountable for their behavior **on the bus and at their bus stop**. When the bus approaches, line up at a point that is at least twelve (12) feet away. Wait until the bus stops, the door opens and

the driver says that it's okay before stepping onto the bus. Students need to be at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. When leaving the bus, stay out of the DANGER ZONE. Be sure that the bus driver can see you and you can see the bus driver. If you must cross the street, wait for the driver to assist you, cross in front of the bus and walk across to the other side of the street. Never walk behind the bus. Walk at least twelve (12) feet away from the side of the bus. If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver. Never try to pick it up because the driver may not be able to see you. It is important to listen to your bus driver in case there are any special instructions for your bus ride.



### **Yellow Flashing Lights**

On approach to a school bus stop where pupils are loading or unloading from a school bus, the driver of the school bus shall activate an approved flashing amber warning system, if the school bus is so equipped, beginning 200 feet before the school bus stop. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.

### **Flashing Red Light**

The driver **shall** operate the flashing red signal lights immediately after stopping and at all times when the school bus is stopped for the purpose of loading or unloading pupils. The flashing red signal lights shall not be operated at any place where a traffic officer controls traffic. When a school bus is stopped for the purpose of loading or unloading pupils, the driver shall escort all pupils in pre kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 12 inclusive; that need to cross the

roadway. The driver shall use an approved hand-held STOP sign while escorting students. All students that must cross the roadway must walk in front of the bus as they cross the road.

### **What Does It Mean When The Red Lights Are Flashing On A School Bus?**

CALIFORNIA VEHICLE CODE OF CALIFORNIA SECTION 22454:

- (A) The driver of any vehicle, upon meeting or overtaking, from either direction, any school bus equipped with signs as required in this code, that is stopped for the purpose of loading or unloading any schoolchildren and displays a flashing red light signal and stop signal arm, as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of section 25257, if equipped with a stop signal arm, visible from front or rear, shall bring the vehicle to a stop immediately before passing the school bus and shall not proceed past the school bus until the flashing red light signal and stop signal arm, if equipped with a stop signal arm, cease operation.

This is the legal explanation but what does it mean?

IN SIMPLE TERMS:

School buses flash yellow lights when preparing to stop to let children off the bus. The yellow flashing lights warn you to slow down and prepare to stop. When the school bus flashes red lights (located at the top front and back of the bus), you must stop from either direction until the children are safely across the street and stop lights stop flashing. The law requires you remain stopped as long as the red lights are flashing. Keep in mind that older model school buses do not have the red stop sign that folds out. So as long as you see the flashing lights come on, you have to stop and wait when on the same side of the roadway. Remember as well, that not all children who ride the bus cross the street. This would be a red light escorted crossover and would be determined by the school district. And you would be able to see the school bus driver out in the open with a stop sign in the middle of the road with the red lights flashing escorting the children across the street.

### **SAFETY/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

If the road is closed or the bus cannot get through, students will be brought back to the Warner Unified School District Office. Students will be kept under district supervision until parents come to pick them up. Should an emergency situation arise, parents are requested to listen to local radio stations for transportation changes or school closures.

If your student becomes sick during the day, your student will be kept in the school office until contact is made with the parents. In the best interest of everyone, sick children will not ride the bus home. Medication will not be transported except by approval of the principal and transportation department.

**COMPLAINTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS**

Complaints, concerns, comments and questions regarding transportation matters, may be directed to the Transportation Supervisor Tom Vargas at 760-419-8181. All correspondence would be directed to:

Transportation Department  
Warner Unified School District  
30951 Highway 79,  
Warner Springs, CA 92086  
(760) 782-3517

**DISMISSAL SCHEDULE**

	<u>Warner Elementary</u>	<u>Warner Middle/High</u>
Regular Day	3:00 p.m.	3:05 p.m.
Min. Day	1:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.

See district website [www.warnerusd.net](http://www.warnerusd.net) for 2016-2017 Calendar for minimum days and non school days.

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Parent Information

**Transportation Office – Parent Call Number – 760-782-3517 ext 245**  
Transportation Supervisor – 760-782-3517 ext 245 or 760-419-8181  
Elementary Office (K-6)– Main Number – 760-782-3517  
High School Office (7-12) – Main Number – 760-782-3517 ext 252  
After School Program – Main Number – 760-782-3517 ext 255