



Manara Academy Charter School

Transportation Handbook

2016- 2017

Dear Parent(s),

Manara Academy is proud to be able to offer transportation to and from school for all families needing or wanting this service from selected locations. The service is provided by Durham Transportation Services

As an Expeditionary Learning School, Manara Academy students will participate in several field studies throughout the school year. These field studies are an integral part of the curriculum and parents will be asked to sign permission slips for each field study. The field studies will take place in and around the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and transportation will be provided by Durham Transportation Services.

This handbook was designed to give you a better understanding of school bus transportation for Manara Academy. The districts within the allowable attendance zone encompass many square miles over several counties in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. The buses travel several thousand miles per school year transporting over two hundred students per day. Regarding vehicle accidents, passengers in school buses are one hundred and seventy times safer than in automobiles. School bus transportation is reliable and convenient for parents. We encourage your children to ride the bus to school.

School bus transportation is a cooperative manner involving the school, parents, students, and community.

Parents and staff encourage us to improve the atmosphere and safety on our buses on an ongoing basis. The transportation of the children is an important assignment. Manara Academy faithfully accepts this assignment but knows that the success of a safe transportation program requires a high level of parental cooperation and support. Student and parent expectations have been put into place. Students behaving inappropriately will receive disciplinary consequences. The transportation services offered by Manara Academy are available to students residing within the two mile attendance boundaries.

Thank you for this opportunity to inform you about student transportation for Manara Academy. Please review the following material carefully.

The following procedures have been adopted to ensure the safety and security of our students while on a school bus. We are sharing this information with you so you will be an informed parent and/or staff member.

Student Conduct on Buses

1. Any misconduct by a student, which in the opinion of the bus driver, or school official is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus, shall be sufficient cause to suspend the transportation privilege of that student. Suspension or revocation of transportation privileges is from all daily school bus routes.
2. Rules of conduct for students riding buses include but are not limited to:
 - a. The driver has full authority of the bus and students. The students must obey the driver's instructions promptly and willingly when such instructions are consistent with policies in this Transportation Handbook.
 - b. Students shall ride their regularly assigned bus at all times, unless permission has been granted by school authorities to ride a different bus as per appropriate parent/guardian request in advance.
 - c. No student shall be permitted to leave the bus except at his/her regular stop, unless by permission of school authorities as per appropriate parent/guardian request.
 - d. Each student may be assigned a seat. Permission to change seats is given by the bus driver.
 - e. Students must remain seated at all times.
 - f. Students are expected to maintain a level of voice that is safe and non-distracting to the bus driver.
 - g. Students are to assist in keeping the bus clean by keeping their waste paper and other trash off the floor. Students must also refrain from throwing refuse out the windows.
 - h. Eating on a school bus is NOT permissible except when specifically authorized and supervised.
 - i. Students shall not use vulgar or obscene language or gestures.
 - j. Students may lower the windows to the red or black marker with the Bus Driver's permission..
 - k. Head, hands, or arms must stay inside the bus at all times.
 - l. Students must not have anything in their possession that may cause injury to another, such as sticks, heavy, sharp, bulky objects, glass jars, or other breakable containers; any type of firearms, straps, laser pens; or pins extending from their clothing. No live species such as: bugs, reptiles, animals, etc. are permitted on the bus at any time.
 - m. Special permission must be granted by school authorities to transport large items.
 - n. Students must see that their books and personal belongings are kept out of the aisle and off of the emergency exit window ledge of the bus.
 - o. Students may not talk to the bus driver when the bus is in motion, except in the case of an emergency.
 - p. No student shall sit in the driver's seat, nor shall any student be to the immediate left or right of the driver's seat.
 - q. Students shall leave the bus in an orderly manner when given permission by the Bus Driver.
 - r. Students shall not cross the street without verifying that it is safe to proceed and/or until given consent by the driver.
 - s. When boarding or leaving the bus, students must stay out of the Danger Zones at all times. Danger Zones are defined as ten feet from all sides of the bus.

- t. Students must arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes before stop time and must not stand or play on the roadway while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- u. In the event of an actual emergency, students must follow emergency exit procedures as prescribed by the bus driver.
- v. Students shall not tamper with emergency doors or equipment.
- w. The transportation company will be reimbursed by the parents for damage to school buses resulting from student misconduct.
- x. Students shall unload only at Manara Academy or the designated bus stop unless special permission is granted by school authorities.
- y. When a teacher or other staff members are assigned to accompany students on a bus, such person shall be responsible for the behavior of the students in his/her charge. However, the Bus Driver shall have final authority and responsibility.
- z. Students and/or parents are required to supply their correct name, address, and phone number upon request or may be refused transportation services.
- aa. No perfume, cologne, hair spray or scented products, etc. are to be used while on board the bus.

Progressive Disciplinary Actions

- I. The Bus Driver may give a student a verbal warning. Drivers are strongly encouraged to keep School Administrators informed of student's behavior regarding any misconduct issues. In conjunction with any disciplinary action, other than a verbal warning, it is recommended that a School Administrator will make an effort to contact parents/ guardians on the day of the incident.
- II. Students and parents should understand that discipline may be accelerated for misconduct when involving substitute employees or for repeated offenses. Major infractions are grounds for stronger disciplinary action and possible criminal charges.
- III. The District reserves the right to remove any student from transportation privileges whenever the District determines that student safety or security is at risk.

Minor infractions shall include but are not limited to:

- 1. Eating or drinking on the bus without permission
- 2. Lack of self-control
- 3. Excessive noise
- 4. Littering
- 5. Rising before the bus is stopped, or standing while bus is in motion
- 6. Extension of arms, legs, or head outside of window.
- 7. Obstruction of aisles.
- 8. Failure to load or unload the bus in a timely manner.
- 9. Crossing the road behind a school bus.
- 10. Possession of aerosol cans or compressed gases
- 11. Failure to obey the driver's instructions, when such instructions are consistent with policies described in this Transportation Handbook..

Major infractions shall include but are not limited to:

1. Use of vulgar language and/or obscene gestures.
2. Sexual harassment.
3. Pushing or tripping another student(s).
4. Possessing an object(s) which may cause injury to others.
5. Verbal assault.
6. Scuffling, roughhousing.
7. Ignition of flammable materials.
8. Fighting: Defined as physical contact with intent to harm.
9. Physical assault.
10. Shooting projectiles or throwing objects on or at the school bus or persons.
11. Use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
12. Vandalism of property or gang-type graffiti (exterior and/ or interior of a school bus) **NOTE:** Financial restitution for damages is the responsibility of the student and/or his/her parent/ guardian prior to reinstatement of riding privileges.
13. Harassment.
14. Theft.
15. Refusing to give correct name, address, or phone number to the Bus Driver or other School Administrator.
16. Possession of firearms or weapons of any kind.
17. Robbery.
18. Indecent exposure.
19. Any criminal offense.

Appeal Process

Suspension from the bus for less than ten school days cannot be appealed. Long term suspension will continue for a specified time unless the parent or guardian meets with the principal or his/her designee and the bus driver. An agreement must be reached as to the date the student will be permitted to ride the bus again.

LATE BUS

Parents find themselves concerned when buses are not on schedule and it appears their child has missed his or her ride. Please allow up to 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time before calling the school office. With fluctuating traffic patterns and unforeseen delays, buses are likely to be delayed on many occasions. A child riding the bus to school is never counted tardy. Please call the school office for information after you have heard the school message. If the cause of a bus delay is unknown, the school office will contact the transportation company, and then return your call immediately to inform you of the reason for the delay. Please check emails as often times these notifications are sent via email as soon as the school is made aware of delays.

CHILD MISSES BUS

If a child is late to the bus stop and misses the bus, it is the parent's' responsibility to take the child to school. The tardiness and/or absence will not be excused.

PARENT IS NOT AT BUS STOP

If a parent is not at the bus stop when the bus arrives to drop off the students, the child will be returned to the school and the parent will be charged the fee charged by the transportation company for the inconvenience.

BUS STOPS

Parents have the primary responsibility for the safety and well-being of their children while at the bus stop. Bus stops are generally established in a residential neighborhood, at an apartment or townhouse complex, or at a public place such as a business or government building. It is the parent's responsibility to be on time for scheduled bus pick-ups and drop offs. Excessive late pick-ups and drop offs can result in your child's riding privileges being revoked. Parents must stay with children until they are picked up by the school bus.

LOST ARTICLES

Lost articles are kept in the bus for a day or two and then returned to the school office.

PARENT CONCERNS

Parents with transportation concerns may email their student's respective school principals.
