



**Rockwood Area School District
Transportation Safety Guidelines**

The Rockwood Area School District's most important responsibility is to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff. This responsibility starts from the moment a parent or guardian sends their child on a District school bus, or when dropping a student off at school. The District's responsibility for student safety doesn't end until children have safely returned home at the end of the day. The following information is a summary of the practices and procedures that have been established to promote the safety and wellbeing of all students when traveling to and from school on a daily basis. The information is broken down into 3 sections.

1. Safety Equipment and Planning
2. Daily Procedures (School Buses and Parent Transportation)
3. Responding to Emergencies and Communication (FAQ's)

1. Safety Equipment and Planning

- a. School buses have been equipped with 7 high-definition cameras that record activity both inside and outside of the school bus. The video footage is recorded to hard drives to view by District administrators as needed.
- b. School buses and District offices are equipped with two-way radios which provide immediate communication between bus drivers and District staff as needed. The District radios are also capable of communicating directly with the Somerset County 911 Office.
- c. District administrators are equipped with portable digital radios that are programmed to communicate directly with the Somerset County 911 Office in emergency situations.
- d. Crisis Planning and Emergency Evacuations

2. Daily Procedures (School Buses and Parent Transportation)

Bus Stop Forms

For the safety of students, parents may choose to designate a secondary and emergency bus stop to be used by their child throughout the school year. These designated bus stops will be used as the only pick-up and drop-off points for your child other than the primary stop that is established near your residence. If your child is in need of a secondary or emergency bus stop, please update this form which is found under the parent tab on the District website.

Dismissal Requests:

Bus Changes - Parents are to request bus changes through signed notes sent to the building office.

Bus Notes:

1. Requests for bus changes made by telephone WILL NOT be permitted. Our goal is not to inconvenience you, but to ensure safe and proper transportation for your child.
2. Please limit bus changes. It is our priority to provide a safe experience at Rockwood Area School. Last-minute bus changes make it very difficult to properly account for each student.

When writing a bus change note, please include the following information:

1. FIRST and LAST NAME of the student.
2. NAME of Homeroom Teacher.
3. GRADE of Student.
4. DATE that bus change will occur.
5. DESTINATION that the excused child will be going to.
6. BUS # student will be changing to.
7. Printed Name and SIGNATURE of parent.

Due to the near-or at-capacity loads that our buses carry, it is very difficult to authorize temporary changes. Therefore, you are asked to refrain from requesting such changes except for unavoidable or emergency situations.

Parent Pick-up: Elementary Only.

Notes should be submitted for your child to participate in Parent Pick-up. Notes should include the following;

1. FIRST and LAST NAME of student.
2. NAME of Homeroom Teacher.
3. GRADE of Student.
4. DATE the child will be picked up.
5. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE for picking the child up.
6. Printed name and SIGNATURE or parent.

Student Pick-Up: (2:50 to 3:00pm)

- Please stay in the line of vehicles.
 - Do not park in the line or in the parking spaces.
 - If possible, pull all the way up to the cone on the sidewalk
- Please stay in your vehicle.
- All children should enter and exit the vehicle on the passenger side of the vehicle. Please have your child ready to exit when you near the cone or sidewalk.
- Please have your child enter and exit the vehicle when they are on the sidewalk.
- After dropping or picking up your child, please check your surroundings and move forward with traffic.
- Please be patient with staff and other parents in this process.

3. Emergency Situations:

If a student experiences any issues with dismissal, the parents are asked to contact the appropriate Building Office.

Rockwood Area Elementary School - 814-926-4688 Option #4

Rockwood Area Jr./Sr. High School - 814-926-4688 Option #3

If your child does not arrive at the appropriate bus stop;

Please ask the bus driver if they are on the bus. The bus driver will radio the Rockwood Area School District to notify the offices and the other buses in route.

- Office personnel will check with the teacher and other school staff to locate the child.
- The Building Principal and Superintendent will be notified.
- The individual buses will be contacted to immediately check for the child on the buses if needed.
- An all-call will be announced within the Rockwood Area School District.
- In the case the child is not located on the buses or in the building, the child's movements will be tracked through the camera system.
- In an emergency when a child can not be located, the Pennsylvania State Police will be contacted.
- Information related to the child, family, and school will be communicated to the Pennsylvania State Police.

If a child boards the wrong bus;

This should not happen due to the use of bus slips in the elementary school. If it does;

- Teachers in Kindergarten -2nd grade escort students to their buses for the first dismissal/early bus.
- Students are dismissed from the classrooms for late buses by bus number.
- The Bus Driver should identify the student.
- The Bus Driver should radio the appropriate building office.
- The parent is contacted.
- The student is transported back to the school or the bus garage for the parent to pick up.
- The school is notified by transportation staff when the child is picked up by their parent.

If a parent or adult is not at the bus stop;

For elementary students, an adult is to be at the bus stop to see that the child enters the home safely.

- If the bus driver notices something out of the ordinary about the bus stop/the adult is not there, the student will not exit the bus.
- The bus driver will notify the appropriate building office over the radio.
- The office will attempt to contact the parent or emergency contacts.
- The child will remain on the bus and be taken to the bus garage or school for the approved adult to pick them up.

Continued Bus Safety Improvements

- It has been respectfully requested by the Rockwood Area School District that primary age students be escorted to and from the bus each day.
- Bus safety trainings will be conducted each 9 weeks with all students in the RASD
- Bus drivers will attend a monthly safety meeting with the contractor to discuss bus safety or ways to improve bus stops and safety.
- An annual bus driver meeting will take place in August where all of Rockwood Transportation will meet with RASD administrators.
- Bus drivers will be monitored at random to observe safe driving practices.
- Vans may be equipped with dash cameras for additional safety.