

Gillett School District

Bus Handbook

2024-2025



GILLETT TIGERS

Be SAFE  **Be RESPECTFUL**  **Be RESPONSIBLE**

Be PROUD to be a TIGER!

208 West Main Street

Gillett, WI 54124

Phone – (920) 855-2137

Fax – (920) 855-1502

General Information

This bus handbook will be reviewed and published annually and covers the rules established by the school district in conjunction with Lamers Bus Lines, Inc. for the safety and welfare of all students being provided bus transportation. A copy of this booklet will be given to each student on the first day of school. The bus driver will be responsible for giving a bus handbook to all new students who begin to ride the bus during the school year. Note: If there are any questions concerning the policies in this handbook, please contact the school before 4:00 pm at (920) 855-2137.

A Note to Bus Riders:

Riding a bus is a privilege, not a right. Riding the bus to school and home is an extension of the school day and is overseen by the school district. Each student who is provided transportation services by the school district is expected to obey the rules established within this handbook. Behavior on the school bus should be comparable to the type of behavior required in the classroom except that reasonable visiting and conversation are permissible. Any action contrary to what is outlined in this handbook may result in a conference with the parents, suspension of the student's bus riding privileges for a period of time, possible school consequences and/or law enforcement involvement, if necessary.

A Note to Parents/Guardians:

Because we are a rural school with individual student pickups on isolated roads, the school and bus company request that you contact the bus company (call or text) and the school (call) if your child is going to be absent from school. Please contact the bus company prior to 6:00 a.m. to help prevent unnecessary travel and possibly reduce energy costs. Bus riders should be ready and out at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the estimated pickup time. This will help keep the buses running on schedule.

Student Contact Information

Parents/guardians are requested to update the school office and or the bus company as soon as possible when any contact information changes. This includes new physical addresses, phone numbers that may include home, work and cell, email addresses, as well as emergency contact information. This information is vital in making contact with parents and guardians for a variety of reasons.

Shared Placement Schedules

In the event that there is a shared placement for students who ride the bus to or from school from multiple locations, that calendar should be shared with both the bus company and school office.

Bus Pass

So the school district can maintain student accountability, students will board and leave the bus at their designated bus stop and only ride the bus to which they are assigned. Any request for an exception to this rule must be made in writing or via phone by the parent/guardian to the school office. Permission must be granted by the parent of the student who is changing buses and the parent of the student whose house they are going to. The school office will issue a bus pass to notify the bus driver of the change. School approval must be according to board policy and is contingent upon such conditions as available seating, safety factors, time schedules, etc. Bus passes should be requested at the beginning of the school day.

4K – 1st Grade Student Busing Requirements

For the safety of our 4K-1st grade students, the Gillett School District does not let students off of the bus at a residence where there is not an adult or responsible older sibling visible to the driver. If the driver does not see this person the following steps will be taken:

1. The bus company will notify the school office and attempt to make contact with parents or other individuals listed on the child's emergency forms.
2. Once the route has been completed, if the bus company is unable to make contact with the parents, the driver will be instructed to take the child back to school where the parents will need to pick them up.
3. If contact cannot be made with a parent or an individual on the emergency form by 4:30 pm, the Oconto County Sheriff's Department will be contacted to assist in locating the parents and returning the child home safely.

General Bus Behavior

When Getting On The Bus in the Morning

- Be careful in approaching bus stops. Walk on the left toward the oncoming traffic.
- Do not move toward the bus until it has come to a complete stop. The crossing arm on the front of the bus will also be out and the red lights will be flashing.
- ***If you must cross the road to get on the bus, do so at least ten feet in front of the bus and only after the bus driver has determined it is safe and signals you to cross. Watch the driver's hand signals to indicate when you are able to cross safely.*** Do not cross the road prior to the arrival of the bus. Parents, please abide by the bus driver's signal as well if you will be crossing the road to walk with your child.
- Go directly to the seat assigned to you after boarding the bus. Remain seated in your assigned seat during the entire trip.
- Remove headphones or earbuds completely when boarding the bus.

While Riding on the Bus

- Be considerate of others on the bus and use appropriate language.
- Follow the instructions of the bus driver and/or chaperone.
- Help make the bus ride safe and pleasant by keeping noise to a minimum. Loud noises could distract the driver and cause an accident.
- Treat the bus and equipment properly to prevent damage and unnecessary wear to seats, windows, padding, etc. The cost associated with any damage done to the seats or other bus equipment will be reimbursed to the bus company by the student's parent/guardian.
- Reach your seat on the bus without disturbing or crowding other students.
- Keep the aisle of the bus clear by holding personal belongings or placing them under the seat.
- Do not stand or move about the bus while it is in motion.
- Do not extend your head, arms, or hands out of the windows.
- Be courteous to pedestrians, motorists, fellow pupils, and bus drivers. Do not shout from windows or make insulting gestures.
- Help keep the bus clean by placing trash in the waste receptacle as you leave the bus. Throwing articles out of windows or putting garbage between the seats or gum on the seats is a state and school violation.
- If an emergency should occur, remain seated until given instructions by the bus driver.
- No animals/pets are allowed on the bus.

When Leaving the Bus in the Afternoon

- Before exiting, remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Check to see that all belongings are taken along as you leave the bus.
- Move away from the side of the bus immediately.
- If you live on the same side of the road, proceed toward your home.
- ***If you must cross in front of the bus to get home, walk to the front of the bus and wait by the cross-over arm. The bus driver will give you a signal to cross when it is safe to do so.*** Parents, please DO NOT wave your child(ren) across the road! It is very important that they be watching for the driver's signal.
- Be alert to possible dangers at all times. You should also look for cars before crossing the road.
- Remove headphones or earbuds completely when exiting the bus.

Bus Rules

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Stay in your seat, sitting forward, and keep the aisle clear.
3. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself and inside the bus.
4. No shoving, fighting, swearing, or loud talking at any time.
5. No eating, drinking or chewing gum.

6. Windows may be open only halfway down.
7. Do not sit in the seats in the last two rows of the bus.
8. Students in grades 4k-5 will sit in the front of the bus followed by the middle school students and then the high school students.
9. Headphones/earbuds must be removed when students are boarding or exiting the bus

Bus Consequences

1st Violation: The driver will verbally warn the student, and the student will be assigned a seat closer to the front of the bus for a minimum of five (5) school days. The Dean of Students will contact the parents/guardians to inform them of the issue that took place on the bus.

2nd Violation: The students will be assigned a seat closer to the front for a minimum of ten (10) days. The bus contractor sends a bus conduct report or video to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will discuss the behavior with the parents and student. Based on the violation, the Dean of Students will issue a bus suspension for one day and/or possible school consequences.

3rd Violation: The bus contractor will send a bus conduct report or video to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will discuss the behavior with the parents and student. The Dean of Students will suspend riding privileges for up to five (5) days and will determine if school consequences and/or law enforcement referrals are necessary.

4th Violation: The bus contractor will send a bus conduct report or video to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will discuss the behavior with the parents and student. The Dean of Students will suspend the student's bus privileges for no less than ten (10) school days. The Dean of Students will determine if school consequences and/or law enforcement referrals are necessary.

Any Serious Violation: If a violation is serious or jeopardizes the safety of the other passengers or driver, (for example: physical assault, verbal assault, or the use of illegal substance, weapons, or fire-causing agents, etc.), the bus contractor will send a bus conduct report or video to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will determine what course of action will be taken, which may include riding privileges being suspended (a period of time to be determined for the remainder of the school year), school consequences (possible suspension or expulsion), and a possible law enforcement referral.

Bus Driver Responsibilities

The school bus driver is recognized as having the same jurisdiction over the children while en route to and from school as an instructor in a classroom. Therefore, the driver shall maintain order among the children at all times while they are being transported. Continued disorderly conduct or refusal to follow driver's instructions shall be sufficient reason for refusing transportation service to that student.

All students will be assigned to a seat by the driver. Students must remain in that seat the entire route unless permission is given by the driver to move. The driver has the right to make any changes they feel necessary at any time. Parents can request to have their child sit in a specific seat, but the final decision will be made by the bus company in cooperation with the school.

Extra-Curricular Activities Busing Requirements (Sports, Field Trips, etc.)

The bus rules apply to each student who rides a school bus at any time or for any reason. The only exception is that eating is allowed on activity buses, as long as the bus is kept neat and clean.

- The chaperone-student ratio should be no greater than 1:15.
- A student who rides a school bus to an activity or event must return on that bus unless a parent/guardian or an approved adult assigned by the parent/guardian signs them out with the coach at the conclusion of the event.

Legal Notices

Harassment on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, disability, age, or group association is prohibited, as is direct or indirect retaliation against anyone reporting or thought to have reported harassment, or anyone providing information or assisting in the investigation of a harassment charge, whether or not a charge or informal complaint of harassment is substantiated. Harassment is prohibited by Policy 5517 - Student Anti-Harassment.

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student based on one or more of the student's Protected Class that:

- A. places a student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property.
- B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- C. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

“Harassment” also includes “hate speech”—the use of language, behavior, or images/symbols that express prejudice against a particular group or groups on the basis of any protected characteristic(s).

Examples are:

- A. making statements that promote violence toward a racial or ethnic group;
- B. drawing, displaying, or posting images or symbols of prejudice (e.g., swastikas).

Sexual harassment constitutes a specific form of prohibited conduct that occurs if the behavior is sexual and unwanted, if an individual's academic or work position is dependent on submitting to

or accepting such behavior, or if it contributes to an offensive, hostile, or uncomfortable working or learning environment.

Because harassment is a violation of state and federal law, victims of harassment have legal recourse in addition to school disciplinary action. Legal authorities will be contacted by school officials if school officials suspect that the alleged harassment constitutes a violation of criminal law. School officials will conduct their own investigation of all reported or observed incidences of harassment, and a clear discipline code with defined consequences will be implemented at every building level. The fact that someone did not intend to harass the individual is generally not considered a defense to a complaint of harassment. In most cases, it is the effect and characteristics of the behavior that determine if the behavior constitutes harassment.

The victim may tell the perpetrator to stop the behavior or choose to ignore the harassment. Students and employees of the Gillett School District are not required by law to talk to or confront the harasser. Confidentiality of individuals who report or participate in the investigation of alleged harassment will be protected, to the extent possible, provided such confidentiality does not interfere with the district's ability to investigate or take corrective action.

Due process will be afforded to those who are accused of harassment. Disciplinary action will be taken against those who knowingly make false allegations of harassment.

The Director of Special Education and the Elementary Principal are designated as the district-wide harassment officers who may be contacted by telephone at 920-855-2137 or by mail at PO Box 227, Gillett, WI 54124-0227. The alternate harassment officer will be the building principal. The harassment officer or alternate harassment officer will investigate all complaints and make a written response to findings within fourteen (14) calendar days of the filing of the complaint. If the findings support the complaint, the Superintendent and/or Building Principal and/or Board of Education will take the necessary action within thirty (30) calendar days of the finding to end the harassment.

Decisions of the harassment office or alternate harassment office may be appealed to the Board of Education by either the accuser or the accused, and the Board of Education will review the findings through a formal hearing process conducted within thirty (30) calendar days of the appeal.

A complaint may appeal a negative determination by the Board to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction within (30) days of the board's decision. A complainant also has the right to appeal directly to the State Superintendent if the board has not provided written acknowledgment within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the complaint or made a determination within ninety (90) days of the receipt of the written complaint. Appeals should be addressed to the State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 125 South Webster Street, Post Office Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707. Discrimination complaints in certain instances may also be filed with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 300 South Wacker Drive, 8th Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

Parents/Guardians:

Please review the Bus Handbook with your student(s). After reviewing, please sign and date below and return this page to the school. Your student(s) should also sign and date it to indicate they understand the contents. Thank you for your cooperation and time in reviewing the rules and expectations that come with the privilege of riding the bus.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Rider Signature

Date

Student Rider Signature

Date

Student Rider Signature

Date

GILLETT SCHOOL DISTRICT
REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN PICK UP/DROP OFF LOCATION
FOR BUS TRANSPORTATION

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____ Grade(s): _____

Physical Home Address: _____

Alternate Pickup Address:

Name: _____
Address: _____

Phone: _____

Alternate Drop-Off Address:

Name: _____
Address: _____

Phone: _____

Day(s): M T W TH F
 (please circle)

Days(s): M T W TH F
 (please circle)

Starting Date Request: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____