

VISTA CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

601 North Fairview Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703
T: (714) 881-7407 | F: (714) 988-2747
www.vistacharterpublicschools.org

Collin Felch, Ed.D., Superintendent
Karen Amaya, Assistant Superintendent



BOARD POLICY #: 2025-06-23-01
ADOPTED/RATIFIED: JUNE 23, 2025

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

Because VISTA CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS (“VCPS” or the “Charter School”) provides transportation to or from a VCPS school activity, the VCPS Board of Directors (“Board”) approved the following transportation safety plan, which contains procedures for VCPS personnel to follow to ensure the safe transportation of students. A copy of this Plan will be kept at each VCPS school and will be made available upon request to an officer of the Department of the California Highway Patrol. Students shall be informed that any violation of VCPS policies and procedures, including violation of safety procedures on a school bus or school activity bus, could result in discipline pursuant to the VCPS discipline policy.

Definitions

- “*School bus*” is any motor vehicle designed, used, or maintained for the transportation of a VCPS student at or below the grade 12 level to or from VCPS or to and from VCPS activities. “School bus” does not include a passenger vehicle designed for and when actually carrying not more than 10 persons, including the driver, except any vehicle or truck transporting two or more students who use wheelchairs.
- “*School activity bus*” is any motor vehicle, other than the school bus, operated by a common carrier, or by and under the exclusive jurisdiction of a publicly owned or operated transit system, or by a passenger charter-party carrier, used under a contractual agreement between VCPS and carrier to transport VCPS students at or below the grade 12 level to or from a VCPS activity, or used to transport students from residential schools, when the students are received and discharged at off-highway locations where a parent or adult designated by the parent is present to accept the student or place the student on the bus.

Determining Whether a Student Requires an Escort

If the school site or school activity destination is located on the opposite side of the street of the actual bus stop, then VCPS and California Vehicle Code section 22112(d) require the student to be physically escorted by the bus driver across that street and under the bus drivers’ direction and supervision. The bus driver will be required to activate the school bus red flashing crossover lights and if so equipped, the stop arm, and physically get out of the bus to assist the students safely across the street. VCPS requires ALL students who cross the street, be physically escorted by the bus driver with crossover lights and signs being activated.

Procedures for Kindergarten through Eighth Grade Students Regarding Boarding and Exiting the Bus

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VCPS has created the following procedures to govern the safe entry and exit of kindergarten through eighth grade students to and from the school bus. VCPS is not required to use the services of an onboard school bus monitor in addition to the driver to ensure these procedures are followed.

Boarding:

1. Students shall board or exit the school bus ONLY at their assigned bus stop or school activity destination.
2. Students shall board in an orderly manner and utilize the handrails for their safety while loading and unloading.
3. Students are to find their seat as quickly as possible and sit down facing the front of the bus.
4. Students are to remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
5. Students are to maintain a noise level which will allow the bus driver to hear approaching traffic.
6. Students are to follow the directions of the bus driver while they are aboard the bus.
7. Students are responsible to follow all rules and regulations.

Exiting:

1. Students shall stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Once the driver has stopped the bus completely and opened the door, students are to unload seat by seat starting with the front of the bus and continuing seat by seat until the bus is empty.
3. Students remaining on the bus are to remain seated until the bus stops at their assigned bus stop or school activity destination.
4. Students will unload in an orderly manner using the handrails.
5. Students shall exit the bus only at their assigned bus stop or school activity destination. Exceptions will only be allowed when the student presents the bus driver with a note signed by the student's parent and endorsed by the School Principal.
6. Students are to move away from the bus as they unload. Students shall not get underneath the bus to retrieve a book, paper or some other article. The student should always tell the bus driver and have the bus driver get the article for them.
7. Students should always use crosswalks and controlled intersections when available and should not cross in the middle of the block.
8. Students must avoid trespassing on other people's property, and stay on sidewalks when possible.

Procedures for All Students to Follow as They Board or Exit a School Bus at VCPS or Other School Activity Location

VCPS has created the following procedures to govern the safe entry and exit of all students at VCPS or other school activity locations.

Boarding Buses at School Site or School Activity Location:

1. The school bus driver may not activate the flashing amber warning light system, the flashing red light signal system, and stop signal arm at any school.

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2. The driver will monitor the students' entry onto the bus to ensure an orderly and safe entry for all students.
3. The group of students, along with the teacher(s) and any other adult personnel attending a school activity, shall assemble in an area away from the school bus to wait. When the students are ready to load, the VCPS staff shall inform the driver, and the driver will begin the boarding process.
4. Upon completion of the boarding process, the driver will proceed with the bus evacuation and safety presentation, described below. This shall include an explanation and demonstration of all emergency exits, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, etc. [MB1]
5. Upon completion of the presentation, the driver shall have the VCPS teacher or head chaperone sign a trip sheet, acknowledging the presentation has been given. The driver will then depart when safe to do so.

Exiting Buses at School Site or School Activity Location:

1. Upon arrival at VCPS, the driver shall take the bus to the designated student drop off area.
2. Upon reaching the designated area, the driver will park the bus and open the door when it is clear and safe to do so. The flashing red signal lights will not be activated.
3. Upon arrival at the school or school activity destination, the driver will select an area where the bus can be lawfully parked and the boarding/exiting of students can be reasonably controlled.
 1. The driver will confer with the VCPS teacher/head chaperone regarding the time and location where the group will assemble to reload the bus.
 2. When it is clear and safe to do so, the driver will have the students disembark the bus. The flashing red signal lights will not be activated.
 3. When the VCPS teacher/head chaperone has confirmed all students are accounted for, the group may proceed to the trip.
4. Students exiting the bus at either VCPS or a school activity location should do so in an orderly, respectful, and appropriate manner, following all instructions from VCPS staff and the bus driver.

Procedures for School Staff to Ensure a Student is Not Left Unattended on a School Bus or School Activity Bus

VCPS staff members should always be involved and active in the supervision of the loading and unloading of students at VCPS and on activity trips to ensure no student is left unattended on the school bus or school activity bus.

To do this, VCPS staff shall adhere to the following procedures:

1. Before leaving the school site for a school activity, the VCPS teacher/head chaperone for the trip shall ensure they have a copy of the class roster with all student names.
2. Once the bus reaches the destination, a VCPS teacher/head chaperone shall be the first person off the bus and will note each student who exits the bus by comparing the exiting students against the class roster.
3. A VCPS staff member/chaperone shall be the last person to exit the bus at each stop to ensure no students are left on board. Before exiting the bus, the staff member/chaperone will walk up the aisle, checking each seat and area on the floor by each seat to ensure no students are present.

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4. Once all students and staff/chaperones have exited the bus, but before leaving for the designated activity, the VCPS teacher/head chaperone will conduct another roll call by calling out each student's name and waiting for verbal and visual confirmation from the student of being present.
5. The VCPS teacher/head chaperone will discuss with the bus driver a way to contact each other in the event it is later discovered a student is still on the bus.

Procedures and Standards for Designating an Adult Chaperone, Other than the Bus Driver, to Accompany Students on a School Activity Bus

VCPS shall follow its applicable policies and procedures, including its visitor and volunteer policy, for designating an adult chaperone other than the school bus driver to accompany students on a bus or a school activity bus. All appropriate background checks will be conducted on any chaperone prior to the chaperone's attending a school trip or school activity bus.

Instruction in School Bus or School Activity Bus Emergency Procedure and Passenger Safety

VCPS shall ensure that all students who are transported in a school bus or school activity bus receive instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety.

Instruction for Students who were not Previously Transported in a School Bus

Upon registration, the parents/guardians of students who were not previously transported in a school bus or school activity bus and who are in kindergarten through grade 6, inclusive, shall be provided with written information on school bus safety. This information shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A list of school bus stops near the student's home. [MB2]
2. General rules of conduct at school bus loading zones, such as:
 - a. While waiting for the school bus to arrive, students must stand single file in an orderly and well-behaved line.
 - b. Students are not to play in or be in the street or private property.
 - c. Students shall be on the proper side of the street before the bus arrives at the bus stop.
 - d. Students should arrive at their bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled leaving time.
 - e. If the student is late and needs to cross the street that the bus is stopped on, the student must wait for the bus driver to escort the student across the street.
 - f. Students should not approach the bus until it comes to a complete stop at the stop;
 - g. Students should board and exit the bus in an orderly fashion, with no pushing or shoving.
 - h. Students should understand the bus driver is in charge at all times, and students should follow the bus driver's directions.
 - i. The driver will immediately activate the red flashing crossover lights and stop arm if so equipped.
 - j. Animals, birds, reptiles, fish, insects, breakable containers, weapons, or any object or substance that could be hazardous will not be transported on the bus.
3. Red light crossing instructions, consistent with this Plan.

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4. School bus danger zone(s).
5. Walking to and from school bus stops.

Instruction for all Students Prior to Departure on School Trip

Finally, prior to departure on a school activity trip, VCPS shall provide safety instruction to all students riding in a school bus or school activity bus. This instruction shall include, but not be limited, to the following:

1. Location of emergency exits; and
2. Use of emergency equipment.
 1. Instruction may also include responsibilities of passengers seated next to an emergency exit.
3. Instruction on how to use the passenger restraint systems, including but not limited to the following:
 1. Proper fastening and release of the passenger restraint system;
 2. Acceptable placement of passenger restraint systems on students;
 3. Times when the passenger restraint systems should be fastened and released; and
 4. Acceptable placement of the passenger restraint systems when not in use.

Operation of School Bus or School Activity Bus when Visibility Reduced to 200 Feet or Less

Pursuant to Vehicle Code section 34501.6, VCPS is required to adopt procedures that limit the operation of school buses and school activity buses when atmospheric conditions reduce visibility on the roadway to 200 feet or less during regular home to school transportation service. Bus drivers of school activity buses shall have the authority to discontinue school activity bus operation if the driver determines that it is unsafe to continue operation because of reduced visibility.

For purposes of this Plan, the procedures for school bus drivers shall be as follows:

1. The school bus driver will notify the Transportation Coordinator that atmospheric conditions have reduced visibility to 200 feet or less.
2. The Transportation Coordinator, along with the Principal and/or Superintendent may consult with legal counsel as needed.
3. The Transportation Coordinator, Principal, and/or Superintendent may direct that school bus activity will be suspended or delayed for a minimum of one (1) hour through an indefinite suspension or delay if required by the conditions. The length of time for the suspension or delay of school bus services shall be at the discretion of the Transportation Coordinator, Principal, and/or Superintendent.