**Procedures for Boarding and Departing the School Bus**

- Bus Drivers are required, by law, to assign your child a “designated place of safety” where the student waits for the bus to pick them up. The designated place of safety will be in a place clearly visible where the driver and your child are able to see each other, outside of your home or car and away from traffic in a safe spot. Students are to be in the place of safety at least 5 minutes prior to bus's scheduled arrival time. When departing the bus at the end of the day, students must remain at the “designated place of safety” until the bus has departed the bus stop or when your child can see the tail lights on the rear of the bus.

- The law requires bus drivers to use hand signals and your child’s bus driver will teach your child the proper hand signals in order to safely board and depart the bus. Please assist your child in obeying the hand-signals.

- When picking up students in the morning, the drivers hand will be palm out and straight up in the window, visible to the students waiting to board. The driver will check traffic and when it is safe to cross, will make eye contact with the student and lower the hand straight down. This is the signal it is safe for your child to cross the street. Once the driver gives the hand signal but before going into the street, the child needs to look both ways for themselves, then cross the street. If your student is door side or there are students waiting to board on the door side of the bus, your child will line up and the driver will signal (once traffic has been checked again) for door side students to enter the bus.

**WE REQUIRE SOMEONE TO MEET STUDENTS IN PRE SCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN AT THE PM BUS STOP. 1ST GRADE-12TH GRADE should know what to do when he/she arrives at the bus stop. It is extremely important that you and your child have a plan in place.**

- When children depart the bus in the PM, they must again obey the driver’s hand signals. Your child, if crossing, will depart the bus and stand door side of the bus, 10 giant steps in front along the curb and look up at the driver. The driver will have hand up straight up, palm out and visible to the crossing students. The driver will check the traffic and when safe, make eye contact and drop the hand straight down. Students should cross to the center of the street (still at the front of the bus) and look both ways themselves and if safe, cross to the “driver designated place of safety”. The student is to remain there until the bus has departed. If the driver honks the horn, the child should look back at the driver for further instruction. The driver must count students as they depart and again before moving the bus. Do not take your child away from the stop until the bus leaves the stop. This is Ohio law and our drivers obey these laws. Please assist the driver in helping your child understand the importance of remaining at the designated place of safety.

- If you and/or your child are late to the bus stop and the bus door has been shut to pull away from the stop, do not allow your child to run up to catch the moving bus. This is extremely dangerous as the driver may not see you or your child. There is a 10 foot area all the way around the bus that is considered the danger zone. School buses have blind spots like any long vehicle and your child should be taught to stay out of the danger zone unless the driver has signaled them.

**Safe Bus Riding & Rules for New Bus Riders**

- Please have your child at the “driver designated place of safety” at least 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. It is recommended that you stay with your child until he/she boards the bus. When your child returns in the afternoon, your child must wait in the “driver designated place of safety” until the bus has departed in order for the driver to be assured all children are in a safe spot away from traffic and the bus before the bus pulls away from the stop.

- Teach your child not to talk to strangers and if someone approaches them, have them tell you or the bus driver right away.

- Behavior at the bus stop must not threaten life, limb or property so please help your child to understand proper behavior at the bus stop. If other students are present, have your child line up with the other children and don’t allow them to play around.

- There should not be alcohol, tobacco products or drugs used at the bus stop by anyone.

- Once your child boards the bus, he/she will be assigned a seat and they are required to sit in that seat every day unless a new seating chart is made by the driver. The bus driver assigns the child’s seat.

- Your child must sit down with--- back on back---seat on seat---feet on the floor or toward the floor. Students must remain seated keeping exits and aisle ways clear. There are no seat belts on the bus and sitting properly is the only way to ensure the child’s well being if a crash were to occur. Please talk with your child about the importance of staying seated at all times.

- Students must use their inside voice and not be loud so the driver can hear the 2-way radio, traffic noise and any student who may need assistance.
❖ When riding a school bus, children are not allowed to eat, drink or chew gum so it’s best to leave it at home before going to the bus stop. No alcohol, tobacco or drugs are to be used while riding a school bus.
❖ Please cut off any long or dangling straps from your child’s book bag or clothing so it can’t be caught in the handrails or door.
❖ Do not send any prescription or over the counter medications to school on the bus. If your child needs medication at school, you will need to transport the medication to/from the school yourself unless it is prescribed by a doctor and you have filled out a form for self carry.
❖ Electronic devices of any kind (cameras, cell phones, hand held games, laser pointers, etc.) are not allowed to be used in grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade. We will not be responsible for theft if you allow these items to be transported.
❖ Teach your child if they drop something near or under the bus, not to go get it unless they tell the bus driver first. Your child’s safety is more important than the loss of any belonging and the bus has blind spots.

Daily Bus Pass Use
❖ Parents are strongly encouraged to have a family member, friend or neighbor pick up the child at the bus stop instead of changing the student’s daily bus service.
❖ Bus pick up at an established bus stop will be permitted providing the student has a note signed by the parent or legal guardian providing there is an available seat. It would be wise to call the Transportation Department @ 773-4321 to be sure there is room for your child.
❖ Requests in writing from parents or legal guardians for non-regular bus service (daily bus pass) for students wishing to go home with another student who is normally bussed should only be done in an emergency. Such requests must be made directly to the building principal, his/her assistant, or building secretary and signed by the student’s parent or legal guardian and may be approved at our discretion. Approval is subject to bus overload.
❖ Requests for more than one student to go home with the same student for parties, sleepovers, etc. will not be approved. Requests by phone for a transportation change will be considered only in emergency situations. Emergency bus service may be approved at our discretion with approval being subject to bus overload.
  ✔ A phone call must be received from the parent or legal guardian stating the emergency to the building principal, his/her assistant, or the building secretary requesting emergency bus service. At the time of the call, proof of identification must be provided when asked.
  ⇒ Requests will be denied for non-emergency daily service such as; play dates, parties, staying overnight with friends, school projects, etc. These events should be dealt with in advance and students would be best served to use their normal bus service with parents providing transportation later in the day.

Transportation Plan Forms
❖ If you need your child picked up and/or dropped off at a location other than their assigned home bus stop on a permanent basis for childcare or shared parenting, an alternate transportation for shall be filled out and turned in to the Bus Garage. Multiple stops for the same student will not be approved. The only exception will be shared parenting and then must be the same days each week. We are unable to take varied schedules or every other week schedules. If a varied schedule is your practice, parents will need to pick one or the other address for the permanent stop location. We accept one (1) alternate transportation form per student for the AM and/or one (1) alternate transportation form for the PM route.
❖ Transportation Plan forms are available at the Transportation Department/BOE @ 719 E Ash St, any school building, or the school website: www.piqua.org On the website, click district and then Transportation. These forms need to be filled out and taken back to the Transportation Department no later than August 12th @ 5:00 PM. NO CHANGES will be accepted from 5:00 PM August 12 through September 8.

School may be delayed or released 2 hours or 3 hours early due to weather conditions. Should this happen, please make sure you have a contingency plan in place for these occurrences so your child knows what they are to do before it happens.

PHONE NUMBER FOR TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT IS: 773-4321 EXT 6411