

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Background

The Division believes that it has a responsibility to ensure that transportation services provided for students are safe.

Procedures

1. The ability of the bus driver is the prime factor in providing a safe transportation system.
 - 1.1 The Transportation Manager shall be responsible for granting and/or revoking approvals of bus drivers of Division-owned buses.
 - 1.2 Bus drivers will ensure that they are not under the influence of any substance which could affect performance of their duties during hours of work. Without restriction, the foregoing "substance" includes alcohol, legal or illegal narcotics or other drugs, and also includes any prescription or non-prescription medication which carries a warning of the possibility of drowsiness, reduced vision, decrease in hand-eye coordination or other motor functions as a result of the use of the said medication.
 - 1.3 If a driver requires a substance that will adversely affect performance of duties, the Transportation Manager shall be notified as soon as possible so that a spare driver can be dispatched.
 - 1.4 If a driver is found under the influence of any substance which affects performance of duties, the Transportation Manager will take appropriate action.
 - 1.5 If a driver is found to have violated any National or Provincial Highway Statutes or Board policies or administrative procedures, the Transportation Manager will take appropriate action.
2. Satisfactory student conduct and discipline is essential to safe student transportation.
 - 2.1 The bus driver shall be responsible for maintaining satisfactory discipline on a school bus.
 - 2.2 Bus drivers shall immediately report a student who is a persistent or serious discipline problem to the principal of the school the student attends, and to the Transportation Manager.
 - 2.2.1 If a student discipline problem arises on the afternoon bus run the bus driver may suspend the student from riding the bus for the following day. The bus driver must advise the student and the student's parents that their child may not ride the bus for the following day. The bus driver must then notify the principal and Transportation Manager by the following morning.

- 2.2.2 If the student discipline problem arises on the morning bus run the bus driver may suspend the student from riding the bus for the remainder of that day. The bus driver must advise the student that they may not ride home that day. The bus driver must immediately advise the principal and Transportation Manager that the child has been suspended for that day. The principal will advise the parents of the suspension.
 - 2.2.3 The bus driver can recommend to the principal that the student be suspended from riding the bus for longer than one day. The principal will enforce the appropriate discipline.
 - 2.3 The bus driver may refuse to transport any student who he/she feels will present a threat to the safety and welfare of the student him/herself, or to the other students on the bus. When this does occur, the bus driver shall inform the student's parents, the principal, and the Transportation Manager as soon as possible.
 - 2.4 If, at any time, the bus driver finds the behavior of a student to be uncontrollable, he/she is to use whatever means necessary to inform the principal of the school involved in the situation, who will inform the Transportation Manager. In extreme cases or where no other assistance can be obtained, the RCMP may be called in. The bus driver is to remain with the students until such a time as relief arrives. The bus driver shall not put a student off the bus between home and school for disciplinary reasons.
 - 2.5 If the Transportation Manager becomes aware of a student who is frequently a discipline problem on the school bus, he/she may recommend to the principal that the student be suspended from riding the bus.
3. The condition and maintenance of the bus fleet is vital to a safe transportation system.
 - 3.1 A bus accident is defined as any incident in which a school bus is involved in injury or damage to: a student, a second vehicle, a building, property, other persons, or objects.
 - 3.2 Each and every bus accident involving a Division bus driver, no matter how minor, MUST be reported as soon as possible to the Transportation Manager as well as to the appropriate police authority (see also Form 165-6).
 - 3.3 Failure to report a bus accident to the office of the Transportation Manager will be considered a serious offense, and will result in suspension and/or recommendation for dismissal of the bus driver as determined by the Transportation Manager.
 - 3.4 The Transportation Manager will conduct an investigation into each bus accident and shall file a written report to the Chief Financial Officer, with a copy to the bus driver concerned.
 - 3.5 When the investigation of a bus accident involving a Division bus driver reveals that the accident involved potential or actual injury to a student, and that the bus driver was either charged and convicted of a driving offense and/or deemed by the Transportation Manager to be primarily or totally responsible, the Transportation Manager will take appropriate action.

- 3.6 Bus accidents where there is no potential for student injury will also be investigated by the Transportation Manager and the response to the bus driver will be at the discretion of the Transportation Manager.
4. The reduction of hazards due to climatic conditions is important to transportation safety.
 - 4.1 Rural school buses shall not run when the temperature is below -40 degrees Celsius or it is below -45 degrees Celsius with the wind chill factor.
 - 4.2 When severe or inclement weather exists, the bus driver shall make a decision about whether or not it is safe to transport students. If the bus driver deems it unsafe to operate his/her bus, the driver/ contractor shall:
 - 4.2.1 Notify the Transportation Manager by 6:45 a.m.
 - 4.2.2 Call only the GX94 local radio station by 6:30 a.m. that the bus will not run. If a bus does not run the morning route due to climactic conditions, it is understood that the bus will not run the evening route either.
 - 4.2.3 Notify the principal of the bus route closures that affect his/her school by no later than 9:00 a.m. and the principal is to advise the Director or designate.
 - 4.3 In situations where severe weather conditions occur or weather conditions have deteriorated after the students have been transported to school, no school bus shall transport students home until the regular dismissal time.
 - 4.4 If the conditions are such that it is not safe for the buses to take rural students home, it is the responsibility of the principal and staff to alert parents to the situation, and where necessary, to arrange for local billeting of students and /or their accommodation at the school. Schools are to obtain emergency contact numbers and alternative emergency contacts and billets for students at the time of registration.
 - 4.5 The bus driver's remuneration shall not be reduced as a result of a decision not to operate a school bus due to inclement weather and/or hazardous conditions if the Transportation Manager is satisfied that such conditions did in fact exist.
 - 4.6 In the event that circumstances dictate early departures of bus students from school, bus coordination must be arranged with the Transportation Manager prior to the departure of any buses.
 - 4.7 Bus drivers shall ensure that they arrive at their first receiving school not more than twenty (20) and not less than ten (10) minutes before school opening time, except as where otherwise directed by the Transportation Manager.
 - 4.8 In the afternoon, bus drivers must be at their first school of pick-up not later than five (5) minutes before the school's dismissal.
 - 4.9 Bus drivers shall not depart from a school until seven (7) minutes after the school dismissal time unless the bus load is complete.
 - 4.10 If a bus driver is early at a student pick-up without prior notice, he/she must wait until the regular pick-up time. Bus drivers must use their discretion when determining how long to wait for tardy students. If a student is within sight, the bus driver is to wait. Students who are frequently tardy shall be reported to the

principal, who shall warn the students. If they continue to be tardy, they may be suspended from the bus.

- 4.11 In the event of an emergency situation, students may be taken to school or be taken home, by any satisfactory conveyance available, at the discretion of the bus driver or the Transportation Manager.
 - 4.12 Students riding on a school bus must be properly dressed during the winter season. The bus driver may refuse to transport a student to school who does not have appropriate footwear, head-gear, coat and gloves or mitts.
 - 4.13 Before refusing to take a student because of inappropriate attire on a morning pick-up, the bus driver must contact the parent and/or the principal to explain the reason the child will not be picked up in the future when inappropriately dressed. No student shall be left at school because of improper dress on an afternoon run from school to home.
5. The reduction of hazards due to equipment is important to transportation safety.
- 5.1 To provide reasonable safety to passengers and bus driver, while allowing accessibility to school programs to all students, the bus driver shall determine what articles can or cannot be transported on a bus.
 - 5.2 Musical instruments may be transported on a daily basis, providing that:
 - 5.2.1 Instruments are enclosed in cases;
 - 5.2.2 Instruments are stored safely under the seats, or held firmly on the passenger's lap;
 - 5.2.3 Large instruments are held firmly on the lap of the student and his/her seatmate(s). Those persons carrying instruments shall occupy the front seats of the bus, to minimize the possibility of injury to other students while loading and unloading the bus.
Failure to observe these rules may result in denial of the privilege of carrying musical instruments on the bus.
 - 5.3 Skates may be transported on a daily basis, but **MUST** be equipped with guards at all times or carried in a closed equipment bag.
 - 5.4 Hockey sticks may be transported only at the start and end of the hockey program at the student's school.
 - 5.4.1 A new hockey stick may be transported on an occasional basis.
 - 5.4.2 Hockey sticks must be stored away under the bus seats.
 - 5.5 Where luggage or equipment is being transported in connection with trips authorized under these procedures and provision cannot be made outside of the passenger area, the luggage or equipment shall be distributed throughout the bus, preferably under the seats, in such a manner that it will not:
 - 5.5.1 Block the aisles or emergency exits; or
 - 5.5.2 Be dislodged to move about the bus in case of an accident, application of the brakes, or acceleration.

- 5.6 Ball gloves, clothing, books and school lunches may be transported on a daily basis, but must be handled in a responsible manner so as not to jeopardize the safety of other students on the bus.
 - 5.7 For the safety of all students on the bus, other items, especially of a heavy, sharp, or solid nature, shall not be transported at any time.
 - 5.8 Transportation of animals of any kind on the bus is forbidden.
6. There may be occasions when students who do not ordinarily ride the bus may be transported on regular routes (visits to friends, etc.)
 - 6.1 Requests will be considered only for drop off points along the regular bus route. Requests for other points can only be approved by the Transportation Manager.
 - 6.2 The family being provided regular service must make the request to the bus driver, giving as much notice as possible.
 - 6.3 The bus driver may grant approval provided that there is adequate space on the bus to accommodate the additional passenger(s).
 - 6.4 The students being provided the complementary service are subject to all rules that pertain to regular bus students.

Legal Reference: Section 85, 87, 108, 109, 110, 194, 195, 196, 197 Education Act
Highway Traffic Act

Updated: October 1, 2007
January 21, 2011
April 4, 2018