

709.1 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PROCEDURE

I. Operating Rules and Procedures

A. Use of Signals, Loading or Unloading.

1. The driver shall activate the flashing 8-light system of the bus at least 300 feet before stopping to load or unload students when outside an incorporated municipality, and 100 feet when operating within an incorporated municipality, and shall not extinguish such lights until loading or unloading is completed and persons who must cross the roadway or highway are safely across.
2. Bring the vehicle to a complete stop in the right hand lane of the roadway parallel to the centerline.
3. Prior to discharging students, open door, activate red flashing lights and extend the stop arm. Discharge students only after all traffic (front and rear) has come to a complete stop.
4. Keep door open and 8-light system operating until all students have been loaded or unloaded safely.
5. The driver should avoid loading or unloading students where the view is obstructed to other motorists for 200 feet in either direction.
6. The driver will not permit students to stand or get on or off the bus while it is in motion.
7. The driver will bring the bus to a full stop and disengage gears by shifting gearshift lever into neutral position or selector into neutral or park position before loading or unloading students.
8. Buses shall load and unload students only at designated locations. Buses will not operate on private driveways and cul-de-sacs. Bus stops will be located to provide maximum number of students boarding at each stop. Stops will be a minimum of 450 feet apart.
9. The pickup and drop-off bus stop should not vary from day to day. If there is a change, parents will inform, in writing, the transportation coordinator and student's teacher a week in advance. No more than two different locations are allowed and must be scheduled in advance in writing.

B. Crossing Highways and Streets.

1. Students shall pass approximately 10 feet in front of the school bus so as to be seen by the driver and cross the road only upon receiving a hand signal from the driver, or
2. The student shall pass approximately 10 feet in front of the bus so as to be seen by the driver and be conducted across the road by the school bus patrol, or
3. The driver shall personally conduct the students across the road after following required procedures for disabling the bus.
4. The driver shall visually ascertain that students getting off the bus who do not need to **cross the road are a safe distance from the bus before moving the vehicle.**

II. School Bus Driver Training

A. Pre-Trip Inspection

Both new and experienced drivers must be familiar with the elements of the mandatory pre-trip inspection required under Minnesota law including:

- a. The engine compartment — belts, valves, fluid leaks
- b. Engine start, warning lights, gauges, horn
- c. Fuel level
- d. Brakes — pedal reserve and air/vacuum gauges
- e. Interior — seats, floor, lights
- f. Electrical charging system
- g. Emergency door
 - (1) smooth latch operation
 - (2) alarm buzzer
- h. Entrance door operation
- i. Lift door operation and alarm
- j. Lift equipment for wheelchairs
- k. Wheels, service brakes, emergency brake
- l. Exterior Lights — headlights, brake lights, market lights, turn signals

- m. Exhaust system
- n. Windows, windshield, and inspection sticker
- o. Eight-light system and stop arm
- p. Emergency equipment — first aid kit, bodily fluids clean-up kit, flashlight, reflectors, two-way radio

B. Fundamentals and Techniques of School Bus Driving

The driver training program must include:

- a. Relevant laws
- b. Rules of the road and school district safety policies
- c. Defensive driving
- d. Driving in inclement weather conditions
 - (1) reduced visibility — rain, snow, fog
 - (2) wet roads
 - (3) icy roads
- e. Dealing with pedestrians and students in traffic
- f. Operation of the manual or automatic transmission
- g. The use of the drive train for stopping the school bus
- h. Situations where the hand brake will and will not stop a moving bus
- i. Steering and turning techniques
- j. Right and left turn maneuvers
- k. Gauging the speed of other vehicles on cross streets
- l. Use of mirrors
- m. Merging into traffic
- n. Visual perceptions
- o. Safe following distances

- p. Safe passing procedures
- q. Safe backing procedures
- r. Use of the eight-light system and School District policy regarding its use
- s. Loading and unloading procedures
- t. Knowledge of the danger zone concept
- u. Policies and procedures for grade level railroad crossings
- v. Emergency use of the public address system
- w. Response to an approaching emergency vehicle while unloading
- x. Procedures for leaving the bus unattended at school sites

C. Special Education Transportation

Special education transportation requires skills and abilities that exceed those required to provide normal school bus service. Drivers will be familiar with:

- a. What to do in a medical emergency
- b. Handling wheelchairs
- c. Operating lift equipment
- d. Proper use of wheelchair securement devices
- e. School District policies on the use of seat belts on designated students
- f. Handicapping conditions
- g. Responsibilities of the bus driver and the bus aide
- h. School District policy in situations where a responsible person is not available to receive a student

D. Emergency Procedures

Drivers must be prepared to deal with emergency situations while operating on routes and field trips. Included in these emergency situations is mechanical breakdown, fire, accident, or passenger injury. Drivers are to receive training in:

- a. Identifying the degree of an emergency before beginning an evacuation
- b. Identifying a safe evacuation unloading area

- c. Pre-planning emergency evacuations for both conventional and lift buses
 - (1) front, rear, and both door evacuations
 - (2) evacuation of special education students
 - (3) evacuation of physically disabled students and students using wheelchairs
 - (4) placement of students in a safe location
- d. Cooperation in emergency evacuation drills
- e. Mechanical breakdowns
 - (1) stop bus in safe location
 - (2) keep passengers in bus if safe to do so
 - (3) take steps to warn motorists
 - (4) radio or call for assistance
- f. How to secure the school bus and place emergency triangles
- g. Use of the two-way communication system in an emergency
- h. When it is appropriate to evacuate the school bus
- i. How to supervise an emergency evacuation
- j. Emergency evacuation of the disabled
- k. Special considerations when evacuating a lift bus
- l. Lifting techniques for handling disabled students in an emergency situation
- m. Priorities when dealing with injured passengers
- n. How to use the school bus first aid kit
- o. Use and operation of the fire extinguisher
- p. Dealing with other motorists and the police
- q. Use of emergency reflectors and hazard lights
- r. Control of exposure to blood borne pathogens

- s. Use of body fluid clean-up kits
- t. School district policy on medical emergencies
- u. Recognition and handling of epileptic seizures
- v. How to respond if a passenger has a weapon on the bus

D. First Aid

All drivers must be trained in first aid, including the Heimlich maneuver, procedures for dealing with obstructed airways, shock, bleeding, and seizures.

E. Private or Confidential Student Information

All drivers should know the types of student data that are considered private or confidential under Minnesota Statutes.

F. Student Discipline

- a. Creating a positive attitude on the school bus
- b. Oral and visual communications skills between the driver and the passenger
- c. Dealing confidently with a disruptive student
- d. District discipline policy
- e. Developing and enforcing workable rules
- f. Incident report forms
- g. District policy on possession of weapons by a student
- h. District policy on sexual, racial and religious harassment/violence
- i. District policy on smoking

G. Human Relations

- a. Appropriate driver behavior
- b. Sensitivity to a diverse student population
- c. Sensitivity to handicapping conditions
- d. Relations with parents and school staff
- e. Working with a special education bus aide

H. Chemical Abuse

- a. How alcohol and/or drugs can affect driving skills
- b. Drug-testing programs
- c. State and federal requirements

III. **Emergency Procedures**

A. Fire.

In the event of a fire, the first priority is to evacuate the bus. Drivers will make certain passengers are safe before attempting to put out the fire.

B. Injuries/Medical Emergencies.

Drivers will be familiar with first aid and CPR procedures. Drivers should first contact the dispatcher to call 911 in the case of serious injuries. Drivers should administer proper first aid in accordance with their training and level of ability. In the event an injured passenger is taken to the hospital, record the student's name and the name of the hospital where the student is sent.

C. Tornado.

If there is likelihood that a tornado will hit a vehicle, and there is no escape route available or no time to drive to a safe location, the driver should evacuate the bus, taking the first aid kit. The driver will take the students to the basement of a nearby building or to the nearest depression or ditch upwind (toward the storm) of the bus far enough away from the bus so that the bus will not roll over on them and instruct them to cover their heads with their arms. If the students are wearing coats or jackets, these can be used to provide additional protection for their heads and bodies. Drivers should take only the first aid kit from the bus.

If drivers are on the road when they hear a tornado warning or spot a funnel, and there is no time to evacuate the students after stopping the bus, drivers should have the students assume the protective position, remaining in their seats, with their heads below window level.

D. Evacuation.

Drivers should evacuate buses only when there is a danger of fire, collision or other potential hazard. Drivers should inform passengers that there is an emergency, and in very calm and precise terms, tell them exactly what they are to do. When safely possible,

drivers will keep all evacuees a minimum of 100 feet from the bus. They should be loaded back onto the bus only when the driver has determined it is safe to do so.

E. Accident.

In case of an accident, the driver should immediately assess students for injuries and begin any emergency first aid procedures if necessary. The driver must also notify the School District and law enforcement of any school bus accidents immediately.

Upon providing emergency care and notifying the district, the driver shall:

1. In cooperation with police officer and/or ambulance service, assist with the care of students.
2. See that all injured students receive proper care.
3. Determine facts pertaining to the accident.
4. Call transportation/district staff to give a list of names and circumstances so they can begin calling parents.
5. Discuss the accident only with police and School District officials.
6. Record all students' names.
7. Not leave the scene of an accident until released by the driver's supervisor.

Before leaving for the day, the driver shall fill out an accident report. All bus accidents resulting in death, personal injury, or apparent property damage of more than \$4,400 will be reported to the Department of Public Safety. A school bus involved in such an accident may not transport pupils until it has been inspected by or has received a waiver from the State Patrol.

F. Cold Weather Stop.

If a driver is stuck or stalled in cold weather, the driver should call for assistance and wait for help. The driver should avoid relying on the engine to provide heat for the driver and passengers as long as possible. If it is necessary to run the engine to provide heat, the driver will make sure the exhaust pipe is clear of snow, open windows for ventilation, and check passengers frequently for headaches or drowsiness.

G. Dangerous Weapons.

If a driver observes or learns that a passenger may have a dangerous weapon on the bus, he or she should remain calm and call for assistance using a pre-determined code. The driver should give the location of the bus to the dispatcher, continue the route and wait

for assistance. The driver should not inform the passenger suspected of having the weapon that he or she knows of the weapon.

H. Lights.

In an emergency stop, the driver should turn on the four-way hazard warning lights, and running or clearance lights.

I. Getting Assistance.

Use the two-way radio communications system to get assistance. Drivers should report the location and number of the bus, the nature of the problem, and the status of the passengers. If the driver cannot use a radio to contact the dispatcher, ask a passerby or other motorist to do so from the nearest telephone. The driver should write out the number and location of the school bus, the nature of the emergency, and the status of the passengers.