

# Mill Creek Community School Corporation

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## Transportation Handbook

Reviewed/Revised

**7/10/2024**

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## Community Relations

Many times our bus drivers are the first and last impressions left with students and families. It is important that a driver conduct himself/herself in a manner which establishes a good relationship among students, teachers, administrators, and parents. There may be times when obscene language and/or action may cause a driver to want to respond. Do not respond in kind. Report any such confrontation to the Director of Transportation; including any unkind words or gestures from any conversation. Always keep your hands to yourself.

Please keep in mind the school bus has the name of our school corporation and bus number on it. The address and telephone number of the school district is no secret. Always represent your employer in a professional and courteous manner.

As representatives of the school district, bus drivers are in a position to support Mill Creek Community Schools through their daily contacts. Drivers are expected to be positive in their school community relations. In addition, cooperation between bus drivers, transportation office, administrators, mechanics, principals, and building staff is essential in operating an effective system of transportation. The key to this cooperation is communication.

## License

All drivers are required to hold a VALID Indiana CDL class B license with “P” (passenger) and “S” (school bus) endorsements and a yellow certification card issued by the Indiana Department of Education. Every driver must complete the on-line certification renewal given by the Department of Education every year. It is the driver’s responsibility to keep your license renewed and your physical current. A copy of your current license and physical must be given to the transportation office. All school corporation drivers hired after June 1, 2011 must have air brake endorsement.

A driver who receives a traffic citation (not parking) or a reportable accident in or out of a school bus must notify the transportation office immediately as points are assessed against your CDL. Mill Creek Community School Corporation may obtain a copy of your driver’s license from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

## General Rules and Regulations

Mill Creek Community School Corporation transportation employees shall be subject to all appropriate rules and regulations of the State of Indiana, the Department of Education and such rules and procedures as may be promulgated by the Mill Creek Board of School Trustees and the district’s administrative staff.

## Personal Habits

A driver should keep himself/herself neat and clean in clothing and speech while operating a school bus. If we are treated as professionals, we must look and act as such. Clothing items that are not acceptable... sheer/see through fabrics, pajama bottoms or tops, clothing with holes, rips, or tears. T-shirts, shirts, or jackets that promote violence, sexual innuendos, alcohol, drugs, or smoking are all unprofessional and unacceptable. Shorts must be of appropriate length (no shorter than 1 inch below fingertips.) Drivers must wear shoes that have a back to them, no flip flops or backless sandals.

Mill Creek Community Schools is a tobacco free environment. The use of tobacco by Mill Creek School Corporation staff in/on corporation buildings, athletic/recreational facilities, property, and vehicles is prohibited. Tobacco is defined as cigars, cigarettes, pipes, snuff, E Cigarettes, Vapes (Dabs, thumbdrives, etc.) or any other substance containing tobacco.

## Driver Do's and Don'ts

1. Drivers should not permit anyone to tamper with their bus.
2. Drivers shall report any problems with their bus to the bus garage immediately.
3. All drivers are responsible for keeping their buses clean, inside and out.
4. Side windows on buses shall only be lowered half way (one fourth open).
5. Eating and drinking on buses may occur only with driver approval.
6. Drivers shall not back buses in school loading areas without assistance when students are present.
7. Drivers may only pick up or discharge students at their designated loading or unloading points. Emergency exceptions are only approved by the building principal and communicated directly to the transportation department for notification to the bus driver.
8. Drivers are not to leave bus engines unattended when students are present. Remove keys from the ignition switch when leaving the bus.
9. Drivers shall complete discipline reports when necessary and give to the appropriate principal.
10. Drivers must make an interior walk-through of the bus after each bus run.
11. Drivers are to be in their respective bus at dismissal time and are responsible for the conduct of students on their bus.
12. Bus idle time is 5 minutes if the temperature is 32 or higher. If it is colder than 32 the idle time is 15 minutes.
13. Only use your strobe light when you cannot see more than 300 feet ahead of you. Do not use it when it is raining.
14. If a student is not visible for your morning pick up, make a complete stop and then wait for 10 counts before proceeding.
15. Drivers will not use cell phones or any other electronic/wireless device while driving or while students are on the bus. Use only for an emergency if the radio on your bus is not functional. Turn your phone off when driving so it is not a distraction.
16. Driver will motion student to cross in front of the bus when traffic has safely stopped.

## Drug/Alcohol Free Workplace

The use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs on school grounds and/or buildings, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school related event is prohibited. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance as defined by Schedules I through V of Section 20 of the controlled Substance Act.

## ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCESS

### Supervisor of Transportation:

Upon receiving notification from the bus driver that an accident has occurred, The Director or Assistant Director of Transportation will:

1. Notify the appropriate police department or call 911.
2. Contact the school corporation administrative office and notify the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of the accident location, the bus number, driver's name, nature of injuries reported at the time and the school(s) the students attend.
3. As soon as possible relay the names of students on the bus to the building principal.
4. School nurses will examine those students who are released to go to school.
5. The Assistant Director of Transportation will remain at the office to monitor the base radio and answer the telephone with transportation assistant.
6. The Director of Transportation will go to the scene of the accident.

### Driver's Response:

1. Remain calm.
2. Turn off engine.
3. Quickly assess the situation and contact dispatch. Advise them of your exact location and repeat the location. Advise them of any injuries or specific hazards created by the accident.
4. Render first aid to injured students if you are qualified to do so.
5. If there are any injuries, as soon as possible after tending the injured, create a list of all students on the bus at the time of the accident that are injured. If any students are transported from the scene, record who they are and where they are being taken.
6. If the accident does not involve injuries and there is no danger posed by doing so, have students remain in their seats. Create a diagram listing which students were on the bus and where they were seated at the time of the accident.
7. In the event of an accident, all radio traffic will be limited to emergency only.
8. Updated student list on bus at all times.

Following the Accident:

1. List witnesses if possible: Request name, address, and phone number.
2. Arrange with your supervisor to submit to a post-accident drug and alcohol test.
3. Follow the pre-recovery mental health protocol.
4. Do not discuss the incident with any private investigators or attorneys without first being cleared to do so by your supervisor. If you are approached at a later time by a person who is not in uniform and claims to be investigating the accident clarify their position. In some cases, private investigators have presented themselves as police investigators to obtain interviews. If in doubt, ask the individual if he/she is a certified law enforcement officer and request identification. You are under no obligation to discuss the accident with a private investigator or attorney.
5. Within five days the Director of Transportation will be asked to render a written opinion if the accident was avoidable or unavoidable and recommend action to help prevent future accidents.

Superintendent or designee:

1. Upon notification that an accident has occurred make sure each Board Member is informed of the most current and accurate information.
2. If injury is reported, go to the scene of the accident.
3. Work with the media, if any are present at the scene of the accident.
4. Provide Board Members with updated information.

Principals/School:

1. Notify the school nurse/clinic assistant of the accident.
2. If students were enroute to school the school nurse will check each student prior to returning to classes.
3. Upon receipt of an accurate student list from the Director of Transportation, instruct the appropriate staff to notify parents of students on the bus at the time of the accident by telephone. The staff will be instructed to read the following statement:

*“The school bus your child rides was involved in a minor accident. The appropriate police and medical personnel have responded. Your child is at (or) enroute to school (or) home. If required, another bus will transport students home (to school). If your child complains of any injuries when they get home, please inform the school nurse at \_\_\_\_\_.”*

Telephone Numbers to Remember:

- |  |                   |                   |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Richard Settles, Director of Transportation     | Office – 539-9242 | Cell 317-437-0107 |
| 2. Terry Caudill, Asst. Director of Transportation | Office – 539-9205 | Cell 614-332-9912 |
| 3. Dave Estes, Facilities/Transportation Assistant | Office – 539-9241 | Cell 317-714-7190 |
| 4. Administrative Services Center                  | 539-9200          | 539-9212          |
| 5. Transportation Office                           | 539-9241          |                   |
| 6. Tony Short, Mechanic                            | Office – 539-9248 | Cell 317-410-0061 |

REMEMBER – DRIVE DEFENSIVELY AND WATCH OUT FOR THE OTHER PERSON!

## Tornado Procedure

In the event of a tornado or other threatening weather, drivers should be aware of the following tips. Drivers should familiarize themselves with these tips and review them periodically.

Alert Signal:

Announcement over the radio of: "Tornado Watch – be prepared to take shelter if a tornado is reported" or "Tornado Warning – take shelter immediately."

If a tornado watch is reported, review procedures for tornado warning and take steps to be able to implement "Tornado Warning" procedures if needed. Remain alert to any visual sign of a tornado.

If a tornado warning is announced:

1. Locate the nearest structure that would afford protection from severe weather, ask permission to shelter your students there and evacuate students into the site. Notify the dispatcher of your shelter location.
2. Assist any individuals with special needs.
3. Take a roll to determine if anyone is missing.
4. Instruct all students to remain in the duck and cover position until danger passes.
5. Do not attempt to park under a bridge or underpass as this can intensify the effect of a tornado.
6. If a tornado is sighted close by and you are not near a suitable structure, evacuate students to a ditch or low lying area and instruct them to assume the duck and cover position.

## Evacuation Drills

Each driver is responsible for conducting at least one emergency evacuation drill per semester using the following procedures:

1. Select three responsible students to assist in the evacuation.
2. At a given signal, the student assistants shall exit through the back door. Two of them should station themselves on either side of the rear door, standing on the ground and helping each pupil jump down as they exit.
3. The third student assistant will go to a point away from the bus (about 25 feet) and gather the other students around him or her after they unload. This student must insist that all students gather around him or her and stay away from traffic and other dangers.
4. Drivers should instruct the students to leave all books, lunches, etc. (anything they are carrying) in their seats and to unload one seat at a time.
5. During the first semester drill, all students should exit through the rear door. During the second semester drill students riding in the front of the bus should exit through the front door while those in the back half of the bus should exit through the rear emergency door.
6. Before the drill begins, the driver should turn off the engine, turn on the flashers, and extend the stop arm.
7. After everyone has safely unloaded and gathered away from traffic, reload pupils and evaluate the drill with your students.
8. **INSIST** that everyone take the drill seriously. Do not allow the drill to be taken lightly.

## School Bus Safety

School bus drivers are responsible for operating school buses in a safe manner at all times. Drivers are expected to use good judgment at all times and are expected to comply with all appropriate statutes, rules, and regulations that apply to the operation of a school bus. Drivers should note the school bus danger zones.

## Unauthorized Passengers

Drivers shall be responsible for seeing that unauthorized passengers do not ride the bus on regular routes or extra-curricular trips. Authorized personnel would include adult chaperones, school employees, and students residing in Mill Creek Community School Corporation. No driver shall permit any person to drive his/her bus, occupy the driver's seat, and tamper with any controls or the engine. Parents are not allowed to board the bus during routine pickup and drop offs.

## Bus Backing

1. Never back up just to shorten your route. Before making any route changes, consult with the transportation office.
2. Never back up because you passed a stop.
3. Never back up on school grounds to get around another bus without an adult spotter.
4. Always load children on the bus before backing the bus or turning around. Always back the bus to do a turn around before unloading the children from the bus.
5. Back into – not out of.
6. Always use 4 way flashers.

## Student Discipline

School bus drivers are responsible at all times for student discipline and conduct. Drivers have the responsibility to establish reasonable rules and regulations for student conduct and will be supported by the administration in the fair application of these rules and regulations. Drivers should follow established procedures for referring discipline referral slips. The following rules and procedures should be enforced at all times:

1. Drivers must ensure that students are seated at all times – drivers have the option of assigning seats.
2. No pupil shall stand or move about the bus during the course of a trip.

3. Loud, boisterous or profane language or indecent conduct shall not be tolerated.
4. Scuffling and roughhousing shall not be tolerated.
5. Windows and doors will be opened or closed only by permission of the driver.
6. No passenger shall get on or off the bus until it has come to a complete stop.
7. Pupils should make every effort to be prompt at bus arrival and departure times and locations. Students should also be alert to late buses due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.
8. Drivers may suspend a student from riding a bus for one day without principal approval. A principal must suspend a student for more than one day. If a student rides the bus in the morning, he/she cannot be suspended for the afternoon. It must be for the next day. The driver must notify the suspended student's parents before a one day suspension begins.
9. Copies of all student bus conduct reports, issued by drivers, must be turned in to the appropriate principal's office.
10. Drivers will determine pick-up and drop-off locations for pupils.
11. Principals are to notify the transportation office of all students suspended from school.

#### Radio Communication

The two way radios installed on school buses are for emergencies and official business. The radios can be a very helpful tool in case of accidents, breakdowns, and other emergency situations. The radio assists in conducting official business such as field trips, route information, and student problems. If you have questions about a student's drop off arrangements, contact the school directly. If you are unable to reach anyone at the school, contact the transportation office.

Remember that many people are listening to the radio. Specific information about students should be avoided. Messages should be brief, to the point, and factual. In order to avoid being cut off, count to 4 before speaking.

The following codes are important to know:

- 900 Transportation office
- 902 Mechanic
- 903 ASC
- 906 Cascade High School
- 907 Cascade Middle School
- 908 West Elementary
- 909 East Elementary

## Attendance

Employees who are ill or using a personal day must notify the transportation office as far in advance as possible. If it is after office hours, please contact the Transportation Director on his cell phone stating your name, date, and name of your substitute driver. If you are ill for more than three days, you may be required to bring in a doctor's note.

## Substitute Bus Drivers

Substitute bus drivers for the corporation must meet all State of Indiana requirements for bus drivers and be approved by the Transportation Supervisor. The school corporation will maintain a list of qualified substitute drivers and regular drivers are responsible for securing their own substitutes from the approved list. Regular bus drivers are not to pay substitute drivers (no cash transactions) and regular drivers are to follow established procedures for securing and reporting substitute drivers for payroll purposes. When vacancies occur on bus routes, substitute drivers will be given first priority and consideration for those vacancies.

## School Closing Procedure

The Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for making the decision to close school. Typically when school is canceled all extracurricular activities for that day will also be canceled, although exceptions to this may be made by the Superintendent. When a decision to cancel school or to dismiss school early is made, bus drivers will be notified of this decision by way of the emergency notification procedure that will be distributed to each driver. Drivers are responsible for providing the Transportation Supervisor with telephone numbers where they can be reached in an emergency.

## Transportation Emergency Notification Procedure

Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent

Transportation Supervisor

Transportation Assistant

Drivers

## School Bus Routes/ Route Assignments

School bus routes and route assignments will be prepared annually by the Transportation Supervisor subject to the approval of the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. Adjustments of routes may be made from time to time during the school year by the Transportation Supervisor. The following procedures and policies are in effect:

1. Buses will travel on state and county maintained roads.
2. Pick-up and drop-off points for riders will be at designated places only. A reasonable distance between stops will be maintained. No student shall be picked up before 6:30 am.
3. When practical, children who board first in the morning will be dropped off first in the afternoon.
4. Children residing within town limits and who live within a mile of school may be required to walk.
5. Buses will not unload students at any school more than fifteen (15) minutes before school starts. Each principal shall determine the procedure for bus arrival and departure.
6. The Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent shall annually review all bus routes and make recommendations to the Board of School Trustees for modifications and/or additions.
7. The Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent, at their discretion, may deviate from the above policies and procedures when in their opinion such action is necessary or in the best interests of children or the school corporation.

## Extracurricular Trips and Additional Runs

The Transportation Supervisor will secure drivers for all field trips and extracurricular trips that have been approved by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. The Transportation Supervisor has discretion to select any qualified substitute or regular driver and any bus for an extracurricular trip or field trip with clear communication of the opportunity to all interested drivers. Additional runs develop based on unique transportation services required to transport student to and from school (i.e. Homeless students, pre-school, Central Normal Campus, Area 31, etc.) Additional runs are compensated based on the beginning and ending location determined by the Transportation Supervisor which is most advantageous to the efficient operations of the MCCSC. Additional runs are compensated based on total minutes run per day over a two week pay cycle. Once daily minutes for the entire payroll are totaled, the amount is paid in quarter hour increments, rounded up to the nearest quarter hour. Due to insurance regulations and advisement from the Office of Traffic Safety, we will not be transporting pre-school children in Mill Creek Corporation school buses, unless they are enrolled in a Mill Creek School program.