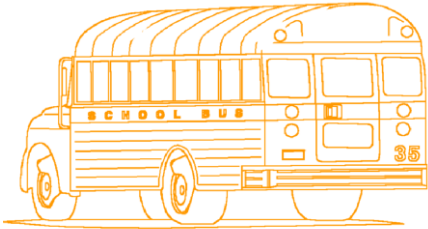


# Central Consolidated School District



# SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

## Department Policy and Procedures

Revised/School Board Approved: August 2016

# Preface

Rules and Regulations set forth in this policy are to insure safe, reliable, and efficient bus transportation for each Central Consolidated School District student.

The Central Consolidated Board of Education recognizes and accepts all rules and regulations promulgated by the New Mexico State Department of Education, Transportation Division.

All persons involved with the CCSD pupil transportation program are responsible in becoming thoroughly familiar with all policies and procedures.

*A copy of this signed document will be placed on file showing that the CCSD Transportation employee received a copy of these procedures.*

*Employee* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Supervisor* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

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## DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

1. Route bus assignment will be according to type of route, road condition, passenger number and rotation of fleet. All drivers must be capable of driving any bus in the fleet.
2. Lounge areas provided at each location are for driver convenience. It is each driver's responsibility to assist in keeping these areas neat and clean. Telephones, computers, and printers located in the lounges are for business purposes only. Internet usage is limited to business purposes only. Refer to District Policy. Therefore, personal calls will be limited to a maximum of two minutes. Inform family, friends and creditors that the lounge and office numbers are business numbers. Failure to adhere to these procedures will result in removal of telephones and printers located in lounge areas.
3. In-service Training sessions will be set up throughout the calendar year. Drivers are required to attend a minimum of **eight (8) hours per semester** with a total of **sixteen (16) hours per school year**. Drivers not completing required training will not be eligible for re-employment. It is the drivers/aides responsibility to maintain and monitor **training requirements**.
4. Buses will remain parked in assigned spaces until they are ready to leave the lot.
5. Weekly mileage reports are due every Friday. Trip drivers will submit documents by the end of the next business day. If credit cards are used, attach receipt(s) to trip ticket(s) and submit to the foreman/secretary by the end of the next business day. **Credit card users will enter unit number and signature on each receipt in a legible manner.**
6. Employees will make every effort to schedule medical appointments and conduct personal business between routes. School Board Policy allows supervisors to require doctor statements for extended or frequent use of sick leave.
7. Respective field offices will obtain substitutes to insure route coverage. Leave requests will be submitted **five days in advance**. Supervisors have the right to refuse leave when job requirements are not completed or if route coverage is not available. **Drivers are not to assign substitutes for coverage.**
8. Drivers will complete and document a thorough daily Pre-trip inspection prior to transporting students and a Post-trip inspection at the completion of each route. **NOTE: Post-trip consists of three items.** Drivers will adhere to department guidelines in completing these procedures. Drivers observed not completing these inspections are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination or dismissal.
9. NM State Regulation 6.41.4.11, Section C, Item 5 states: "The driver shall, as part of each post-trip inspection, ensure that no student remains on the vehicle/bus at the conclusion of the trip." Failure to complete this procedure will result in termination or dismissal.
10. Bus Attendants will clock in **five (5) minutes** prior to route departure time.
11. Route drivers will update and maintain; maps, bus stop route schedule time, seating charts, and student registrations **every quarter or as** needed. Route information must include number of students by at each stop and if bus stop is an "off" or "on" road stop way. A daily attendance is required and due at the end of each month.

12. **Usage of two-way radios is limited to official or emergency use only.** Insure that the frequency is not in use before attempting to transmit. If possible, avoid transmitting names of students. **FCC regulation requires the use of English language. Refrain from unnecessary comments/salutation.**
13. Transportation personnel will not use school vehicles to conduct any type of personal business during duty hours.
14. Driver pay is set per District approved salary schedules. Only the Transportation Coordinator may approve pay for layover or waiting time. Routes and hours of pay are subject to change at any time due to student loads and/or re-routing for efficiency.
15. Overtime pay rates will apply to any hours worked over 40 in a week. If school is not in session and you are not needed to transport students, your work hours will be reduced.
16. New CDL trainees will receive pay for successful completion of “22 hours of Classroom” and “Behind-the-wheel” training after 90 days from the date of hire.
17. Bus drivers and attendants are to dress properly for the duties performed. Halter tops/spaghetti straps, spandex or cut-offs will not be allowed. Modest and appropriate shorts (no more than one (1) inches above the knees) are allowable. Clothing that references sex, tobacco, violence, alcohol, and drugs in any manner whether directly or indirectly is not appropriate.
18. Drivers and attendants are required to wear closed-toe shoes on both feet and must be of the type that will not slip off easily. Thongs or slip-on shoes without a back or heel strap or any other footwear that could limit the use of foot controls are not appropriate.
19. The driver will submit a work order via school dude and report to the supervisor or mechanic deficiencies found on any vehicle. The vehicle will remain inactive until the deficiency is fixed.
20. To insure safety, **only shop personnel are allowed in restricted areas of the shop.**
21. **Head/Earphones, Portable Electronic Devices/Cell phones Usage:**
  - Bus Drivers and vehicle operators transporting students will not use headphones or earphones. Drivers observed using them are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination or dismissal.
  - Bus drivers will not use cell phones or portable electronic devices - even those equipped with hands-free devices to text or make calls while driving a school bus. **These devices are also prohibited while supervising the loading and unloading of students.** The only exceptions are emergencies or job related communication where radio coverage is sporadic or non-existent. Park and secure the bus in a safe location if phone usage is necessary. Turn off the portable electronic device and cell phone when not in use. Violations will lead to termination or dismissal.
22. Designated transportation personnel will fuel route buses. Activity or field trip drivers must make sure they have fuel before leaving on trip and also mark the whiteboard at the completion of their trip.

23. Driver's Children
- Drivers can transport one (1) child over the age of eighteen (18) months up to school age on a route. Drivers will not place additional children on another route.
  - Priority is for regular bus riders before own child. Violations or problems with this procedure will result in loss of this privilege.
  - Children cannot stay in the lounge while a driver is on route. CCSD Transportation does not provide childcare services.
  - Drivers will supervise children brought to the yard at all times. Children will not move about the yard without parental supervision. Failure to adhere to this procedure will result in loss of this privilege.
24. **Shop personnel will lock the yard gates at the end of the regular business day.** Drivers entering and leaving the yard after hours and on weekends will secure the gates.
25. Open Routes:
- open routes will be advertised for five (5) business days,
  - route assignment is the sole responsibility of the supervisor: driving skills, ability, work performance and seniority are factors in assignment,
  - only two (2) transfers per year are permitted,
  - regular route assignments are subject to change due to route conditions and or efficiency
26. Activity Trips:
- Activity trip driver pay is calculated and paid at the district rate. In compliance with DOT regulations, driver on-duty time is set at 15 hours within any 24-hour period of which 10 hours can be driving time with a one-hour break. Driver pay starts and ends with performance of the Pre / Post trip inspections. A trip driver will receive overtime pay whenever a trip results in time exceeding 40 hours in one week.
  - Meal breaks must be taken after eight (8) continuous hours on duty time. This is a FMCSA regulation for D.O.T. vehicles.
  - If possible, all daytime activity/field trips are to be scheduled between morning and afternoon routes. The transportation office must receive trip requests a minimum of ten days in advance. Trips are scheduled in the order received. Scheduled sports trips have priority over classroom trips due to advance scheduling of athletic programs.
30. Open Enrollment (*Approved 7/18/00*)
- The Board of Education adopts this policy pursuant to the terms of SB 64 of the 1998 New Mexico Legislature, also known as the Open Enrollment Act, amending N.M.Stat.Ann. § 22-1-4, as amended by HB 46 of the 2000 New Mexico Legislature.
- The Open Enrollment Act requires that a free public school education be available to any school-age person who is a resident of New Mexico and who has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent. This policy does not apply to students who are not New Mexico residents. The Board retains the discretion to determine whether the School District has sufficient accommodations to offer enrollment to students who are not New Mexico residents.
- Attendance Area: The attendance area of each school within the District shall be established annually by the Board of Education.
  - Enrollment Priorities: In state shall be enrolled or re-enrolled in each District school according to the following priorities:
    - a. First, persons residing within the attendance area of the school;

- b. Second, persons who previously attended the school; and
  - c. Third, all other applicants for enrollment at the school.
- Transportation shall be provided by the District for transportation-eligible students residing within the attendance area of the school they attend. Transportation of students residing outside the attendance area of the school they attend shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian or student.
31. A visual bus inspection will be conducted every quarter between the Transportation Supervisor or Mechanics and the bus driver. The bus driver will be required to sign a form acknowledging receipt of the visual bus inspection. Any deficiencies found and not reported will result in disciplinary action



## **SECTION 1: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING**

### **1. Job Duties:** All school bus drivers are required to perform, at a minimum, the following duties:

- safe and efficient operation of the school bus in accordance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations;
- a daily, thorough pre-trip and post-trip operational check of the school bus and special equipment unless completed by other qualified personnel;
- maintaining orderly conduct of passengers, good public rapport, and public image;
- conduct emergency situations in accordance with established federal, state, and local operating procedures;
- effective communication with students, the employer, school staff, and the public;
- proper completion of required paperwork;
- satisfactory completion of all required training programs;
- implementation of maximum safety procedures for all passengers while on the bus and during loading and unloading activities;
- other duties as assigned by employer of local district;

### **2. Age:**

No person under the age of twenty-one will be employed as a school bus driver. A local board of education may establish, by board policy, a minimum age higher than established by law and may require retirement consistent with policies governing other school employees.

### **3. Background Investigations (*Revised 11/16/99*)**

Applicants recommended for employment with the District are subject to work history, education history, and reference investigations, including but not limited to substitutes and temporaries.

Individuals recommended for employment will be subject to a criminal background investigation, including mandatory fingerprinting, at the candidate's expense, as a condition of further consideration for employment. Public School Code 22-10-3.5 requires fingerprinting.

All offers of employment are contingent upon the satisfactory completion of background investigations. Criminal convictions will not automatically bar an applicant from obtaining employment with Central Consolidated School District, but pursuant to the Criminal Offender Act, NMSA 1978 " 28-24 and 28-2-5, may be the basis for refusing employment.

The administration may also conduct a background investigation of current employees if it becomes aware of facts, circumstances, or conduct that give rise to a reasonable suspicion that undisclosed aspects of the employee's background might disqualify him or her to continue in employment with the District.

Information from background investigations will not be disclosed to persons not directly involved in the certification or employment decision affecting the applicant or employee.

### **4. Personal Background**

Any person initially applying for full or part time employment with CCSD to operate a school bus or school owned activity vehicle used to transport students will not be eligible to operate such a vehicle if they have:

- been convicted for driving a vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs (DWI or DUI) within three (3) years of the date of application;

- been convicted for DWI beyond three (3) years from the date of application unless they provide written verification from a licensed counselor or physician that they successfully completed an alcohol or drug abuse program;
- been convicted two (2) or more times for DWI or DUI;
- had their drivers' license suspended or revoked within the previous five-years for serious traffic offense;
- been convicted of more than three (3) serious traffic offenses within three (3) years since the date of application;
- been convicted of any felony within the previous ten (10) years since the date of application;
- a conviction for any violation of the Controlled Substance Act [ 30-31-1 to 30-31-25, 30-31-26 to 31-28, 30-31-30 to 30-31-40, NMSA 1978];
- been convicted of child abuse pursuant to Section [30-6-1, NMSA 1978];
- been convicted of any criminal offense in which a child was a victim as required by the offense;

All drivers will be of good moral character and conduct themselves in such a manner as to exercise a positive influence over their passengers. The drivers will be clean and neat in appearance, and will not use vulgar signs or language.

## **5. Serious Traffic Offenses**

Serious traffic offenses mean a conviction of any of the following offenses contained in the Motor Vehicle Code [Articles 1 through 8 of Chapter 66 NMSA 1978]:

- speeding in excessive of 15 miles per hour above posted speed limit;
- reckless driving;
- careless driving
- passing a school bus;
- following too close;
- operating a commercial motor vehicle without holding a valid Commercial Drivers License (CDL) along with the proper endorsements;
- racing on a highway;
- homicide or greatly bodily harm by vehicle;
- injury to a pregnant woman;
- failing to stop after an accident involving death or personal injury;
- operating a vehicle after suspension or revocation of a driver's license.

## **6. Physical qualifications:**

Before transporting students, a school bus driver, activity driver, substitute driver and bus assistant are required to have a physical and have it renewed as specified by a licensed physician. All Physical examinations are to be on a certified DOT form. Physical Examination Forms must be turned in two (2) weeks prior to expiration date. If not, driver may be deemed ineligible for re-employment. The local school district and/or the State Transportation Director have the right to require re-examination or verification by a licensed physician in a specialized field as a condition of employment.

One or more of the following deficiencies by medical determination will disqualify a person as a school bus driver:

- a speech reception threshold, corrected or uncorrected, in the better ear outside of the hearing range of 40db;
- addiction by medical determination for use of narcotics, habit-forming drugs, or the excessive use of alcohol;

- any indication of coronary, heart ailment or high blood pressure likely to interfere with safe driving, (Electrocardiogram is required when other findings indicate desirability);
- loss of foot, leg, hand, arm, or other defect or limitation of movement likely to interfere with safe driving;
- any mental, nervous, organic or functional disease likely to interfere with safe driving, such as paralysis, diabetes, or abnormal blood pressure;
- epilepsy or other episodic (paroxysmal) periods of unconsciousness, unless the condition is arrested;
- use of any medication which the examining physician determines is likely to interfere with safe driving;
- poor general health as determined by a physician.

*Controlled Substance and Tobacco Restrictions:*

- all school buses will be alcohol, drug and tobacco free areas;
- the driver or the bus assistant will not use alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, prior to or during duty hours which would impair the drivers ability to drive the school bus or the bus assistants ability to perform required duties;

## **7. Instructional Programs for School Bus Drivers:**

### Certification (Pre-service Training) for First-Time Bus Drivers

- a School Bus Driver Instructor certified by the State School Transportation Director will conduct instruction;
- a new driver who has not been previously employed or certified as a school bus driver in New Mexico shall be required to successfully complete thirty six (36) hours of Pre-service training. Instruction on transportation as a related service shall include the following:
  1. Classroom- Twenty-two (22) hours (2 hours shall be on familiarization with the bus and equipment), classroom instruction shall include a review of the Standards for Providing Transportation Services to Eligible Students, district and/or employer safety policies and regulations, general motor vehicle operating procedures, passenger management and Homeland Security.
  2. Behind the Wheel – Six (6) hours of instruction will be in the same type and size of bus the driver will operate. Drivers must know how to operate any vehicle in our fleet. Instruction will be given in the specific handling characteristics of each vehicle. The instruction will be under the supervision of a school bus driver trainer with no student passengers on board. The instruction will include:
    - familiarization with the bus and equipment while operating a school bus;
    - use of warning and stop lamps and other traffic control devices;
    - procedures for loading and unloading students at bus stops;
    - entrance to and departure from loading and unloading areas at school buildings;
    - railroad crossing procedures for school buses;
    - actual driving tasks that the driver will experience;
  3. Observation Time – Two (2) hours of observation time includes riding a school bus with a regular, licensed school bus driver on a regular route, or in observation of other trainees under the supervision of a school bus driver trainer. This shall also include actual route orientation with a regular licensed driver.
  4. Defensive Driving Course Trainee must complete an eight-hour Coaching the School Bus Driver course.

5. An approved First Aid Course including CPR six (6) hours to be completed within 60 calendar days of employment.

#### Training Requirements for School Bus Drivers

- A driver who had previous certification and employment experience as a school bus driver in New Mexico, but who has not been employed as a school bus driver for two (2) or more years, will take an eight (8) hour refresher course, to include at a minimum two (2) hours behind the wheel instruction, observation time and classroom instruction. The driver will complete the required (four (4) hour's in-service training per semester) for a total of twelve-sixteen (12-16) hours of training during the first year of re-employment.
- To remain qualified, school bus drivers and/or bus assistants will complete a total of eight (8) hours in-service training per semester during the school year or four (4) hours per quarter. In-service for new drivers should be pro-rated for the number of quarters employed during their first year. Quarters during the year are as follows: January 1 – March 31; April 1 – June 30; July 1 – September 30, and October 1 – December 31;
- Training records on each driver will be kept; they will indicate date, course title, number of hours and instructor. These records are subject to inspection by the State Transportation Division.

#### **8. Substitute Drivers**

A regular substitute is any person certified by the Transportation Department to operate a school bus on a regular to-and-from route. This person will be required to meet all qualifications and licensing requirements of the regular driver.

#### **9. License Requirement**

A monthly license check is completed through the New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority - SAMBA.

The state motor vehicle department has a twelve-point program on licenses. Any driver who acquires six points will no longer be able to drive until the points are removed.

Pursuant to the Motor Vehicle Code, an operator of a school bus will possess a Commercial Driver License (CDL), Class B with the appropriate P & S endorsements.

School bus drivers are required to meet all current Motor Vehicle regulations.

All bus driver and vehicle activity drivers will be drug tested for controlled substances as requirements of the Controlled Substances and Alcohol Use and Testing in accordance with 49 CFR Part 32.

## **SECTION 2: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Accidents and emergencies:**

The term vehicle is used in this section to refer both to a school bus and to school-owned vehicles used to transport students to and from school and school-sponsored activity trips.

#### **Reasons for emergency evacuation**

- Fire or danger of fire; the vehicle shall be stopped and evacuated immediately if any portion is on fire. Passengers shall move a safe distance away from the vehicle and remain there until the driver of the bus has determined that no danger remains.
- Unsafe position; If a vehicle is stopped, the driver shall determine immediately whether it is safe for passengers to remain in the vehicle or to evacuate, the driver shall evacuate if the vehicle stops in the path of any train, or the stopping position of the vehicle is subject to change and thus increases the danger to passengers, or the stopping position of the vehicle is such that there is danger of collision.

**Responsibilities of the driver:** In the case of any accident involving a school bus or a school-owned vehicle, the driver's first responsibility is to the safety of the passengers. In addition, the driver shall:

- Stop immediately
- Maintain control of passengers
- Protect the accident scene
- Remain at the scene of the accident and not move the vehicle
- Render reasonable assistance to any person injured in the accident
- Notify police and the school district administrator and if appropriate the local transportation provider
- If it is necessary to evacuate passengers, make certain that all passengers are in a safe location away from traffic and that they are not permitted to leave the scene of the accident on their own
- Place reflectors appropriately to warn traffic
- Obtain information such as names, license numbers, registration numbers, location, time, road, and weather conditions, and a listing of all passengers including their seating locations.
- Make no admission of liability or assume responsibility for the accident.
- Comply with local policy and procedure in reporting the accident.
- Adhere to any vital emergency medical information provided.
- Report all school bus accidents in accordance with local district and state accident reporting procedures.
- Do not talk to the media, reporters, etc. Protect students from the media.

### **2. Post Accident:**

It will be the employee's responsibility to report any accident to a supervisor who shall initiate the testing process. In the event that an employee fails to contact the appropriate parties within the required period, it will be considered a refusal to take the tests unless injuries prevent such from happening according to D.O.T regulations.

### **3. Plan of Action for Emergencies:**

Each school bus driver will have a plan of action in case of an emergency. This plan should include both breakdowns and accidents and should incorporate procedures for evacuating the bus, using the emergency door and other exits. Practice evacuation drills on school property, will help to avoid panic in case an emergency does arise and must be done at least twice per year. Evacuation drills will be documented and verified by school personnel, and kept on file.

#### 4. Emergency Exit Drills:

Student emergency drills or adequate alternate instruction shall be conducted twice a year for school buses. Student emergency drills or adequate alternate instruction shall be conducted prior to departure on school-owned vehicles use for activity trips. Types of drills are:

- Everyone exits through the rear emergency door.
- Everyone exits through the front service door.
- Students sitting in the front half of the bus exit through the front service door and students sitting in the back half of the bus exit through the rear emergency door.
- If emergency doors are located mid-bus, students exit through the closest door.
- On buses with roof hatches, give instruction on their proper use.

#### 5. Reasons for Actual Emergency Evacuation:

- Fire or danger of fire. A bus or vehicle will be stopped and evacuated immediately if the engine or any other portion of the bus is on fire. Passengers should move a safe distance away from the bus and remain there until the driver of the bus or vehicle has determined that no danger remains. A bus or vehicle that is located near an existing fire and unable to move, or is near the presence of gasoline or other combustible material should be considered in "danger of fire," and students should be evacuated immediately.
- Unsafe position. If a bus or vehicle is stopped due to an accident, mechanical failure, road conditions, or human failure, the driver must determine immediately whether it is safer for passengers to remain in the bus/vehicle or to evacuate.
- The driver must evacuate if:
  1. The bus stops in the path of any train or adjacent to any railroad tracks.
  2. The stopping position of the bus is subject to change and thus increases the danger to passengers; for example, if a bus/vehicle should come to rest near a body of water where it could still move and go into the water or over a cliff, it should be evacuated, the driver should be certain that the evacuation is carried out in a manner that affords maximum safety for the students.
  3. The stopping position of the bus/vehicle is such that there is danger of collision. In normal traffic conditions, the bus/vehicle should be visible for a distance of 300 feet or more in all directions; a position just over a hill or around a curve, where such visibility is limited, should be considered reason for evacuation.

#### 6. Important factors pertaining to School Bus Evacuation Drills:

- Safety of students is of the utmost importance and must be considered first.
- All drills should be supervised by the local school principal or by persons authorized by the district administration to act in a supervisory capacity.
- The bus/vehicle driver is responsible for the safety of the students; however, in an emergency, the driver might be incapacitated so that he/she would not be able to direct the student emergency evacuation. School patrol members, appointed students, or adult monitors should therefore, direct these drills, and it is important to have regular substitutes available.
- Student qualifications:
  1. Mature student & Good Citizen.
  2. Live near end of bus route.
- Student should know how to:
  1. Turn off ignition switch, set emergency brake & set triangular reflectors.
  2. Kick out windows if needed.
  3. Open and close doors, account for all students passing his/her station.

4. Help small students off the bus. Summon help when and where needed. Perform other necessary assignments

- Written consent from parents should be obtained before assigning a student as an emergency evacuation drill leader.
- School bus drills should be held on school property and not on the bus route.
- The driver should stay in the bus during emergency evacuation drills. Be sure that the emergency brake is set, ignition is off, and the transmission is in gear.
- Do not permit students to take lunch boxes, books, etc., with them when they leave the bus. Getting the student off the bus safely in the shortest time possible and in an orderly fashion is the objective of a school bus evacuation drill.
- The students should move a distance of at least 100 feet away from the bus in an emergency drill and remain there in a group until given further directions. The driver, aide or sponsor will stay with the students.
- All students should be given an opportunity to participate, including those students who only ride a bus on special trips.
- Each student should be instructed in the proper safety precautions while riding the bus and in the drill procedure. This can be accomplished by assembly, classroom activities, or video presentations.
- Students should be instructed in how and where to get help, instructions and telephone numbers should be posted or carried in the school buses or vehicles.

#### **7. Procedures when Approached by Authorized Emergency Vehicles:**

The following procedure is developed to eliminate possible accidents involving school buses and emergency vehicles. In order to protect all parties concerned, it is necessary for everyone to exercise due caution. Children generally become very excited when emergency vehicles approach, and many will do things they normally would not do.

***When a school bus driver observes an emergency vehicle approaching, with emergency equipment in operation, the following action should be taken:***

- When the school bus is in motion, the driver should yield the right-of-way and immediately drive to a position parallel to, and as close as possible to, the right hand edge or curb of the roadway, clear of any intersection and will stop and remain in such position until the emergency vehicle has safely passed except when otherwise directed by a police officer. In the case of a school bus operating on a narrow road, the driver must make sure he does not pull off in an area that would constitute a hazard to his vehicle or passengers, such as an unstable shoulder. In the case of a volunteer fire department, if the bus is in a safe spot, it should remain there until the driver is reasonably sure that all volunteer vehicles have passed before pulling back into the roadway.
- If a school bus is stopped in the roadway, loading or unloading students, the following procedure should be used:
  1. If stopped in the roadway with school bus flashers in operation to unload students and they have not started to depart from the bus, the service door should be kept closed, the school bus flashers turned off and the emergency equipment waved by. If students are already out of the bus, keep the flashers in operation until they have safely crossed the roadway. The emergency vehicles should not pass the stopped bus until safe to do so.
  2. If the bus is stopped to load students and the flashers are in operation and students have started to cross the road or highway, leave the flashers on and get students loaded as quickly as possible. When the driver is sure that there are no students running toward the bus, turn off flashers and wave by the emergency equipment. In instructions to students on safe loading and

unloading, the driver should caution them about emergency vehicles and to stay on the edge of the roadway so they can pass safely.

3. At no time should the driver leave the seat of his bus.

## **8. Pupil Management:**

It is the duty of the school bus driver to enforce all regulations governing the conduct of students from the time the students enter the bus in the morning until they depart from it at the school building, and from the time they enter the bus at the school building until they depart at their regular assigned stop.

- A school bus driver should not knowingly permit a student off the bus at any point other than at their regular assigned stop without the permission of proper school authorities.
- The driver will not permit students to place heads, arms, or other parts of their bodies out of the bus; nor will any person be permitted to ride on the outside of the bus.
- The driver will report all serious discipline cases to the proper administrator in accordance with the local school district policy. All state and local disciplinary regulations will be observed. The driver should not attempt to correct a student while the bus is in motion, and a student will not be put off a bus while en-route for misconduct unless the student is endangering the bus, bus driver and/or other students on the bus or off the bus. If this action becomes necessary, an immediate report to the school administration is required. Corporal punishment will not be administered by the driver, nor should the driver physically harm a student for disciplinary reasons unless for the protection of the driver or other students.
- The driver will not permit any passengers to occupy any area in front of the passenger-seating area while the bus is in motion. Standees are not permitted.
- The driver will assign seats to students, and a copy of a current roster will be on file in the transportation office as well as in the bus. This will be updated quarterly or as needed.
- Student Safety:
  1. The driver and/or assistant will meet all needs identified in a student's IEP.
  2. No vehicle shall carry more than the rated seating capacity. All students will be seated when the bus is in motion.
  3. The driver will not carry on any unnecessary conversations with student while driving.
  4. The driver will not permit the transportation of firearms, knives, explosives, breakable glass, skateboards, or other dangerous objects, reptiles, or animals, except those animals authorized by an IEP.
  5. Be responsible for the safety and orderly conduct of the passengers on their assigned bus routes.
  6. Bus Drivers will train their

## **9. School Bus Inspections:**

- The semi-annual D.O.T, any other state, or local inspections do not relieve the owner or operator of regular daily scheduled inspections and maintenance to ensure that each bus is in continual safe operating condition.

## **10. Pre-trip and Post-trip Inspection:**

All school bus drivers and activity vehicle drivers must perform a pre- and post-trip inspection before departure and upon return. All drivers are required to perform, at a minimum, the following duties: (Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to termination/dismissal).

- Safe and efficient operation of the school bus in accordance with Federal, State, and Local Statutes and Regulations.
- A daily, thorough pre-trip operational check of the school bus and special equipment unless completed by other qualified personnel. A documented pre-trip inspection shall be conducted which shall cover at a minimum:



Outside the vehicle:

- a. Wheels, tires, lug bolts and nuts for serviceability.
- b. All exterior lights for serviceability and operation.
- c. All glass, mirrors, windshields (clean and unbroken and mirrors adjusted for the driver).
- d. Exhaust system for leaks, looseness, etc.
- e. Open engine and battery compartment when conducting pre-trip inspection: Oil, water, and any other fluid leaks (power steering, power brakes, transmission, differential, etc.).
- f. Service door, emergency exits, and buzzers.
- g. Stop arm and signs.
- h. Engine compartments for serviceability, battery, belts, wiring, proper oil and water levels.
- i. Lift system for those vehicles equipped.
- j. Fuel filler cap.

Inside the vehicle:

- a. All gauges, seats, and interior lights.
- b. Horn and windshield wipers.
- c. Emergency equipment i.e., first aid kit, fire extinguisher, reflectors, and body fluid clean-up kit.
- d. Emergency exits and buzzers.
- e. Parking brake and service brake.
- f. Interior mirror.
- g. Cleanliness of vehicle.
- h. Heaters and defrosters.
- i. Post trip inspection consist of: tires, wheels, lugs, drain air tank, and check for students.
- j. Proper interior bus cleaning shall be compensated for one half hour each pay period during the school year at the drivers hourly rate

**11. Wear safety vest**

- 12.** The driver will not operate any bus/vehicle that does not meet the pre-trip inspection requirements. The district shall establish written procedures for immediate replacement of buses/vehicles, which fail to meet pre- and post-trip inspection requirements.

The driver will, ensure that no student remains on the bus/vehicle at the conclusion of the trip. If the driver leaves a student on the bus, the driver will face disciplinary action, which may include termination/dismissal.

## **SECTION 3: SCHOOL BUS OPERATION REGULATIONS**

### **1. School Bus Operations and Equipment:**

#### Route Requirements:

- On morning routes or mid-day pickups, a complete stop will be made at all established school bus stops whether students are present or not, unless a parent or guardian, school administrator or transportation provider has notified the driver that the student will be absent. **The driver will not wait for students unless they are observed making a hasty effort to reach the bus or unless otherwise specified and justified in the student's IEP.**
- The bus will be brought to a complete stop with the park brake activated and bus in neutral before taking on or letting off students. The driver will use good judgment and not impede traffic unnecessarily.
- The driver will close all doors before the bus is put in motion except when crossing railroad tracks.
- School buses will not be driven faster than the posted speed limit or whatever the road conditions allow. A driver receiving a traffic citation while driving a bus will be subject to disciplinary action. **All moving violations, in any vehicle, must be reported to the respective Supervisor within ten (10) days.** DUI or DWI must be reported immediately. Disciplinary action will be taken if not reported.
- The driver will not leave the driver's seat without stopping the engine, setting the park brake, putting the bus in neutral and removing the keys. If a bus is equipped with a diesel engine and/or automatic transmission, the driver will follow the manufacturer's recommendation for parking in gear.
- The driver will keep the bus clean, well ventilated and properly heated when necessary.
- The driver, if traveling in convoy, will stay on the same route as the lead vehicle and will maintain proper distance between vehicles.
- The driver will not permit the use of the bus outside regular-to-and-from transportation or a school-sponsored activity without the approval of the school district administrator.
- The driver will obey all traffic laws, ordinances and rules of the road. The driver will not operate the bus in such a manner as to cause on-board accidents by jerking, stopping suddenly or swerving unnecessarily. Report all hazards, whether potential or existing, on the route and all causes for failure to operate on schedule to the school district administrator or designee.
- School buses will not turn right on a red light.
- The school bus will not be filled with fuel while the motor is running and/or while students are on the bus.
- **Five (5) days notice will be required to reconfigure a route after the IEP committee has decided upon the type of transportation services needed.**

### **2. Bus Stops:**

All school bus stops will be established by a coordinated effort among the school district administrator and when appropriate the IEP team. The local public safety organization having jurisdiction will also be included whenever necessary. Services will be designed safely, efficiently, and economically transport a student in a manner, which supports the student's educational program.

- The local school district will review for safety each school bus stop on a school district approved cycle. The review cycle will not exceed five years.
- No school bus stop will be established where the views is obstructed to motorists for 500 feet in either direction. If because of natural conditions, a stop must be established with a view of less than 500 feet, the State Highway Department or other agency having jurisdiction will establish special highway signing and operational procedures.

- No school bus stop will be established on any interstate highway with a controlled access. If necessary, stops will be established on service or frontage roads adjacent to the interstate.
- School bus stops will, whenever possible, be established so that students do not have to cross the roadway.
- No school bus stop will be made at:
  1. A streetcar crossing, or railroad crossing used exclusively for industrial switching purposes, within a business district as defined in Section 66-7-1 NMSA 1978;
  2. A railroad grade crossing where a stop-and-go traffic light controls movement of traffic;
  3. An abandoned railroad grade crossing, which is marked with a sign indicating that the railroad is abandoned;
  4. An industrial or spur line railroad crossing marked with a sign read “EXEMPT CROSSING”;  
or
  5. Within 25 feet of any intersection.
  6. Undesignated stops, such as: business, Day Care, out of boundaries.

### **3. Loading and Unloading at Schools:**

- When loading and unloading, it is recommended that buses be parked bumper-to-bumper or as close as possible to avoid pupils from going between the buses and in a single file. In loading, buses will be parked (5) minutes prior to dismissal time, if possible. School buses will be parked into position in the order that they arrive at the school.
- Whenever possible, loading and unloading at schools will be completed on school premises, away from regular vehicular traffic and playground areas. All school bus loading zones will be properly marked by use of signs and pavement markings. The bus-loading zone will be adequately staffed with administrative personnel or designee to monitor the loading and unloading of students.
- If loading or unloading on the street, the bus will be stopped parallel to the curb bumper-to-bumper or as close as possible to avoid pupils from going between the buses and in a single file on the side of the street nearest the school. Alternating flashers will not be activated unless the bus is stopped on the traveled portion on the roadway. A school bus driver shall not pass another bus while loading or unloading.
- The school bus engine must be off, bus placed in neutral and the park brake activated while students are loading and unloading from school buses. Should the driver be required to leave the driver’s seat, the keys will be removed from the ignition switch.
- The driver will stay with their bus and will allow students to load as soon as they come to the bus.
- The local school district will review for safety on each school bus loading and unloading area at each school on a school district approved cycle. The review cycle will not exceed five years.

### **4. Loading and Unloading on Route:**

- Buses will be loaded or unloaded at established school bus stops only, unless an emergency dictates otherwise **at established bus stops only**.
- No school bus stop will be changed or time schedule altered by the school bus driver without the approval of the school district administrator or designee. Failure to follow this procedure will result in disciplinary actions.
- Drivers will not grant permission for a student to load or unload except at the student’s regular stop without written approval from the school district administrator or designee.
- Loading and unloading will occur, whenever possible, off the traveled portion of the roadway and so that students do not have to cross the roadway.
- When it is impossible for a bus to completely pull off the roadway, the driver will remain on the roadway and use procedures outlined in Subsection C. of 6.41.4.12 NMAC.

**5. Proper Procedures for Loading or Unloading Students on the Traveled Portion of the Roadway:**  
**Subsection C. of 6.41.4.12** (Always use loading lights).

- Use rear view mirrors to check traffic.
- Reduce speed.
- Activate the amber flashers not less than 300 feet nor more than 1,000 feet in rural areas, or not less than 100 feet nor more than 300 feet in urban areas to warn motorists that the bus is about to stop. The alternating red flasher lights will be activated automatically when the service doors are opened.
- Bring the bus to a full stop, put bus in neutral, and set the parking brake before opening service door to load or unload students.
- Check rear-view mirrors, etc. and all traffic lanes to ensure that all required traffic is stopped before allowing students on or off the bus.
- Students required to cross the road will walk a distance of approximately 8 to 10 feet in front of the bus before starting to cross. They should not cross until they have checked traffic and the driver has indicated it is safe to cross. The driver will again check rear-view mirrors and all traffic lanes to ensure all required traffic is stopped before signaling students to proceed. The driver will check to be sure that all students have crossed the roadway safely, by use of the crossover mirror and student count.
- The driver will shut the service door, disengaging the alternating red flashers, only when all the students have either boarded the bus and are seated, completely crossed the roadway, or moved a safe distance from the sides of the bus, The bus will then be put in gear and parking brake released to resume travel.
- If a bus is following or meeting another bus stopped to load or unload students, with school bus flashers in operation, it is permissible for bus not unloading or loading students to use school bus flashers.

**6. Loading and Unloading on Multiple or Divided Roadway:**

Whenever possible all loading and unloading will be done off the traveled portion of the roadway.

- If stopping on the roadway is necessary, the bus will stop in the right-hand or outside traffic lane.
- When stopped on the roadway, buses will load or unload in the right lane of the roadway. In no event will students be loaded or unloaded in a designated turn lane or in a lane immediately adjacent to a designated turn lane.
- On a highway with divided and/or multiple traffic lanes in each direction, school buses will load and unload students only on the side of the highway on which they live.

**7. School Buses Operating on Interstate Highways:**

On interstate highways, school buses will be operated according to the following procedures:

- The bus will not make any stops except in an emergency, nor will any pupil load or unload while the bus is on the interstate. All loading or unloading will be done at points off the interstate, either at an interchange, service, or frontage road.
- No school bus will cross over to the opposite roadway or make any other similar maneuver except at interchanges and then only in a manner consistent with the proper procedures at any given interchange.
- School buses using portions of the interstate will operate only as “express” or “through” buses between two given points.

**8. Railroad Crossings:**

The following procedures will apply at railroad crossings:

- When students are on board the school bus driver will, before crossing any track or tracks of a railroad, activate the four-way hazard lights and will bring the bus to a full and complete stop not less than 15 feet or more than 50 feet from the rail nearest the front of the bus. If the school bus is required to stop after the school bus has crossed the railroad tracks, the rear portion of the school bus will not be positioned less than 15 feet from the rail nearest the bus.
- When stopped for a railroad crossing, the driver will carefully observe traffic and reduce speed in advance of the stop. On multiple lane roadways, all stops will be made in the extreme right traffic lane.
- While completely stopped, the driver will fully open the service door and will listen and look in both directions along the track or tracks for approaching trains or other vehicles. The service door will remain open until the rear of the bus clears all tracks.
- The side window to the driver's immediate left will be opened, and all noisy equipment (radio, fans, etc.) will be shut off until the bus has cleared the railroad crossing.
- If the view in either direction is unclear or is obstructed in any way, no portion of the bus will be moved onto the tracks until, by personal visual inspection, and after parking and securing the vehicle, the driver is certain that no train is approaching. In no instance will a signal indicating safety be considered as conclusive or serve to abrogate this precaution.
- Drivers will, in every instance, cross in a gear that does not necessitate changing gears while traversing the railroad crossing, and will not under any circumstances shift gears when the bus is actually crossing the railroad tracks.
- In the event a train has just passed through the crossing, no bus driver will drive the bus onto the track or tracks until the train has sufficiently cleared the crossing and the driver is certain that no other train is approaching on an adjacent track.
- In stopping at any railroad track at which there is no operational flashing red lights and/or bell, the driver will not proceed across the track unless by direction from a law enforcement officer or railroad personnel. The driver is still responsible for the safe movement of the bus.
- If a stop and go traffic light controls the movement of traffic at the railroad crossing, the driver need not stop unless the traffic light indicates to stop.
- No school bus driver will drive the bus through, around, or under any crossing gate or barrier while the barrier is closed or in the process of being opened or closed unless instructed to do so by the proper authority.
- No part of the bus will be placed near the tracks until the driver knows conclusively that the crossing can be made safely.
- When a bus stops adjacent to a railroad track, the driver will not proceed until all passengers are silent.

#### **9. School Bus Alternating Flashers Will NOT Be Used:**

- When the school bus is completely off the traveled portion of the roadway or on school grounds to load or unload students.
- At railroad crossings, traffic lights or at any other time the bus is required to stop except to load or unload students on the traveled portion of the roadway.
- Note: Pursuant to section 66-1-4 (15N), NMSA, 1978 "roadway" means that portion of a highway improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular traffic, exclusive of berm or shoulder.

#### **10. School Bus Safety Equipment:**

All school buses used to transport students on regular to and from routes and district-sponsored activities will meet New Mexico School Bus Construction Standards and the New Mexico School Bus Inspection requirements.

- All school bus drivers will use the seat belt at all times when the vehicle is in motion. Seat belts are required of students only on buses of Gross Vehicle Weight of 10,000 pounds or less, or when a specific student requires a seat belt.
- Each school bus will carry a first aid kit with contents as specified in New Mexico School Bus Construction Standards.
- Each school bus will be equipped with at least one UL-approved pressurized dry-chemical fire extinguisher complete with hose. The fire extinguisher will have a total rating of 2A10BC or greater and meet New Mexico School Bus Construction Standards. The extinguisher will be kept in the driver's compartment, fully charged, and in good working condition. Each driver will be familiar with operating the fire extinguisher.
- Each school bus will be equipped with a minimum of three triangular warning reflectors, and the driver will be knowledgeable as to their operation and proper placement.
- Each driver will use reflectors in the event of prolonged stops on the roadway as follows:
  1. Place at approximately 100 feet in front and back of the disabled vehicle in the center of the traffic lane occupied by the disabled vehicle.
  2. Place at the traffic side of the disabled vehicle, not less than 10 feet from the front or rear.
  3. If the vehicle is disabled within 500 feet of a curve, crest of a hill, or other obstruction to view, the driver will place the warning device in that direction to afford ample warning. The warning device must not be less than 100 feet or more than 500 feet from the disabled vehicle.
- The hazard mode warning lights will be used when necessary to stop on the shoulder or the traveled portion of the roadway if the bus is temporarily disabled or it is necessary to stop for any reason other than loading and unloading operations. Hazard mode warning lights will also be used when the speed of the bus is less than one-half of the posted speed limit.
- No item that will block the aisle or exits will be permitted on the bus.
- In transporting musical instruments, shop projects, or other school projects, the following will apply:
  1. No item will occupy needed seating space.
  2. No item will be placed in the driver's compartment.
  3. All items carried by students will be under the control at all times and carried on their laps or between seats. The aisle and exits will not be blocked.
- The emergency door and/or windows will not be fastened or wired in any fashion as to prevent opening from the inside or outside while the vehicle is in operation.
- Loose items such as tools or brooms, etc. will be securely stored or fastened if carried inside the bus.
- Trailers will not be attached to a school bus at any time.

### **11. Lighted Headlamp:**

It is required that the low beam headlamp be displayed during daylight hours when transporting students on routes or activity trips.

## **SECTION 4: SCHOOL ACTIVITY TRIP REGULATIONS**

### **1. School Activity Trips:**

Local - Field trips which do not require students to be away overnight may be approved by the school building administrator.

Extended - Field trips requiring one or two nights away from home must be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Unique - It is the policy of the board to discourage field trips requiring extensive travel, extended absences from school and/or excessive cost.

Field trips requiring more than two nights away from home, or of a unique nature in destination or activity will be referred to the board for approval.

- Approval of Intent by the Superintendent - Approval of intent must be received before announcement to parents and students and prior to fund raising activities. Request for preliminary approval must include:
  1. A statement of educational objectives of the trip.
  2. A proposed budget including costs to students and sources of finance.
  3. An estimate of the number of students participating.
  4. A general plan or schedule for the trip (ITINERARY).
  5. A time schedule listing time of departures, travel, arrival and activities.
- Final Approval by the Board of Education - Requests for final approval must be addressed to the Superintendent, be submitted before the second Tuesday of the month for approval at that month's School Board Meeting and include:
  1. A detailed itinerary of the trip including educational activities, accommodations and travel arrangements.
  2. Planned adult supervision.
  3. A detailed budget including receipts and disbursements anticipated.
  4. Assurance that the above details have been provided to parents and that written parental authorization for the trip has been documented.
- Conditions - The ability of a student to pay costs of the trip must not be a factor in determining participation in trips during school time. Schools may organize voluntary field trips outside of school time in which student ability to pay is a factor in determining participation.
- Arrangements for supervision of students on extended or unique field trips are subject to approval by the Superintendent.
- The written consent from parents must be obtained for every child participating in a field trip. Permission slips must inform parents of the following:
  1. Name, location and date(s) of the event
  2. Cost to the student
  3. Mode of transportation to be used
  4. Name of the supervisor overseeing the activity
  5. Parents' responsibility
- No student may participate unless a signed parent permission slip for the specific event is on file with the building administrator.
- The sponsor must provide the driver and/or chaperone a copy of the approved itinerary including the route(s) to be followed and a summary of their responsibilities. The itinerary cannot be changed without prior approval. For trips other than interschool athletics, supervision of one (1) adult per ten (10) students is required.
- Coaches, sponsors and drivers cannot take family members on activity trips, unless they are eligible participants.

- Whenever possible, bus transportation should be provided. A passenger manifest must be left at the school before departure for a field trip.
- The activity driver shall be responsible for the bus/vehicle at all times, including its care and operations and has the following additional responsibilities:
  1. Compliance with all Federal, State and Local Regulations.
  2. Completion of a trip ticket approved by the school district administrator when one is required.
  3. Assumption of safety responsibilities of all passengers while they are in the bus/vehicle.
  4. Obtaining prior approval from the school district administrator or designee for any changes in route or itinerary while the activity trip is in progress.
  5. Notification to the school district administrator of all emergencies that arise.
  6. Maintenance of all records pertinent to the trip, including trip tickets.
  7. Insuring that prior to departure and the return journey, the bus/vehicle is clean, completely serviced and inspected, noting the condition in writing on the appropriate form and signed by the driver.
  8. Only under exceptional circumstances when it is impractical to unload passengers, shall buses/vehicles be fueled while students are on board.
  9. Upon request, the activity driver shall show a properly signed Activity Trip Ticket to any State Police Officer, Department of Transportation Officer, or staff member of the State Department of Education.
- The use of private vehicles is not allowed.
- No transporting of students when pulling cargo.
- Only Board members or District employees may drive district vehicles with Defensive Driving Certificate on file.

## **2. Responsibilities of Sponsors:**

Activity sponsors shall be responsible for students on and off the vehicle and for the following:

- Preparation and submission of trip requests in accordance with the local board of education's policies.
- A trip request must be submitted in School Dude 10 calendar days prior to trip along with a trip itinerary and purchase order number and line item information.
- Notification to the school district administrator or designee of any schedule changes.
- Assurance that students are at the departure points at the appointed time.
- Activity/Field trip drivers will not be on the road between 1:30am to 5:00am.
- Supervision of the loading and unloading of the vehicle.
- Sponsor/chaperone shall monitor all students assuring orderly conduct and discipline of students for the duration of the trip.
- In an evacuation of the vehicle, supervision of students and maintain control of student passengers.
- All arrangements on overnight trips for meals and lodging, including the driver.
- The activity driver's lodging will include a separate room and relieved of all duty.
- Provision for adequate rest stops.
- Maintenance of a student roster and taking roll each time students disembark and return to the vehicle. Roster to include parent contact information.
- The person responsible for the group or activity shall not have the additional responsibility of driving the school activity bus.
- At the completion of the trip, the bus will be cleaned out by the students and the sponsor. If the driver has to clean the bus, a \$25.00 cleaning fee will be charged to the organization/P.O.



- No vehicle may carry more than the rated seating capacity and no standees or temporary seats are permitted.

### **3. Activity Trip Tickets:**

- Trip tickets must be signed by the transportation designee. Only school sponsored trips as defined above qualify for such trip tickets.
- Any vehicle on an activity trip without an activity trip ticket would then fall under the jurisdiction of the State Corporation Commission regulations, enforceable by responsible state agencies.
- When a trip is scheduled, the requester will be notified by email confirming the trip.
- A trip ticket will not be required to be issued by the school district if services are obtained from a commercial common carrier.
- A trip request is not complete if there is no trip number assigned.

### **4. Local Boards of Education on Activity Trips:**

Each local board of education will adopt policies covering the safety and welfare of students participating in school-sponsored activities. Policies must cover at least the following:

- Provisions for rest and relaxation for students and driver(s) during trip;
- Procedures governing the use of private vehicles for transportation of students to and from such activities;
- Policy regarding insurance coverage for personnel, vehicles, and student passengers;
- Provisions for off-duty time for the driver on any trip which requires in excess of ten hours continuous driving time;
- Provisions governing procedures to be followed if and when emergencies arise, including, but not limited to, notification of parents.

### **5. Activity Trip Assignment Procedures for Drivers:**

#### Assignment

- At the beginning of each school year, bus drivers that are interested in doing activity/field trips must submit a letter of interest to their respective office.
- At the beginning of the school year, trips will be assigned starting with seniority.
- Drivers requested must be available based on the rotational basis and qualification.
- A trip will not be taken from one driver and given to another driver once it has been assigned unless approved by the transportation office designee.

#### Driver's Pay

- Driver will be paid per district salary schedule for Activity/field trips.
- Time clock starts with pre-trip and ends with post-trip and the end of the day.

#### Responsibilities

- It is the driver's responsibility to adhere to on duty time and driving time.
- Drivers and sponsors must have an open line of communication.
- The driver should make sure the sponsor knows when they need to leave, etc.
- If there is a problem and it looks like you may go over on time, the driver needs to contact their area supervisor.
- If your area supervisor cannot be reached, contact any transportation supervisor.
- Drivers will be responsible for keeping accurate records of their driving time and mealtime, etc.
- Drivers need to clarify all expectations of the trips with the sponsor before leaving the school.
- Follow trip itinerary and have seating charts filled out before leaving on the trip.
- Drivers who do not adhere to procedures will not be given any more trips.

### Meals

- A meal break must be taken after eight (8) continuous hours of on duty time. This is a FMCSA regulation for D.O.T. vehicles.

### On Duty Time- Maximum Driving Time

- A driver operating a motor vehicle for the purpose of transporting students to or from a school sponsored activity shall not have more than 10 hours total driving time, or more than 8 hours continuous driving time.
- A driver shall not be permitted to be on-duty a total of more than 15 hours in a 24-hour period. If going over 15 hour limit, the sponsor will make lodging arrangements for a extra night stay and charged to activity fund.
- The following conditions shall be met in order for a driver to be considered off-duty:
  - a. The driver is relieved of duty and all responsibility for the care and custody of the vehicle, its accessories, or any cargo or passengers.
  - b. The duration of the driver's relief from duty is a specified, adequate period of time to allow the driver to rest and to pursue activities of his/her choosing off the premises where the vehicle is secured.

## **SECTION 5: REGULATIONS GOVERNING STUDENTS**

### **1. Student Regulations:**

- Student transportation is a privilege extended to students who qualify for transportation pursuant to statutes 22-16-2 and 22-164, N.M.S.A., 1978 Compilation. Students who do not obey the state and local regulations governing student transportation may have their transportation privileges revoked by the school district.
- Students who are compelled to walk a distance to meet the bus must walk on the side of the road to their left facing traffic, except on divided or multi-lane roadways.
- Students must be on time at their assigned bus stops; the bus will not wait.
- Students must wait in a safe place, clear of traffic and away from where the bus stops. Students will wait in an orderly line and avoid “horseplay.” When unloading, the students should clear the traffic area immediately.
- The driver is in full charge of students when they are riding on the bus. The students must obey the driver promptly. In cases where a teacher or school administrator is on the bus, they are also authorized to enforce student discipline.
- Students will not get on or off the bus while it is in motion. Students must remain seated and keep aisles and exits clear.
- Without the advance permission of a responsible school official, students will not be permitted to leave the bus on the way to or from school except at their regular assigned stop or school.
- Students must occupy the seats assigned them by the bus driver.
- Students will not be permitted in front of the passenger seating area while the bus is in motion.
- Students are not to carry on unnecessary conversation with the driver while the bus is in motion.
- Students will stay out of the driver’s seat and will not tamper with any equipment.
- Students will be courteous and obedient to the driver.
- Students must cooperate with the bus driver in keeping the bus clean.
- Rough or boisterous conduct will not be permitted in the bus; however, students are permitted to converse in a normal tone of voice while in the bus. Students should keep absolutely quiet when the bus is approaching a railroad crossing and remain quiet until the bus is safely across the tracks.
- Students will not use profane language or obscene gestures.
- Students will not eat any food or drink any beverages on the bus.
- Students should remember that misconduct or carelessness not only endangers their own safety, but also the safety of others on the bus.
- Students must not extend their hands, arms, heads, or objects out of the bus windows.
- Animals, firearms, knives, explosives, breakable glass items, or other dangerous objects are not permitted on the bus. No item that will block the aisle or is unsecured will be carried on the bus.
- Students must not open or close the bus windows without the permission of the bus driver.
- Students will not throw any items inside or outside the bus while boarding, riding, or leaving the bus.
- The use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances or possession of lighters and matches will not be permitted.
- Students will not ride on the outside of the school bus at any time or attach any item to the bus.
- Parents or guardians will be held responsible for malicious destruction to the bus.
- Any damage to the bus from any cause will be reported by passengers to the driver and the driver will, report it to the proper school official.
- Students who must cross the road after departing from the bus must pass far enough in front of the bus (approximately eight to ten feet) so that the driver can see them. Students will cross the road

only when the driver signals all is clear. Students will not cross multi-lane roadways to meet the bus.

- Students will look both ways before crossing to the opposite side of the road.

## **2. Parent Responsibilities:**

For safe riding on a school bus by their child, parent responsibilities include the following:

- Insure that their child arrives at the designated bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival.
- Provide protection or supervision for their child when unusual conditions warrant precaution beyond ordinary circumstances.
- Cooperate with school officials and school bus operators regarding appropriate conduct of their child at bus stops and while walking to and from bus stops.
- Assist with implementation and enforcement of school bus rider safety.

## **3. Due Process:**

CCSD and NMAC 6.1.4 New Mexico Administration Codes for Schools guarantee due process rights for students and parents. School officials shall follow procedures for suspension and expulsion, as defined in NMAC 6.1.4 New Mexico Administration Code for Schools.

- The hallmark of administrative authority shall be fairness.
- Every effort shall be made by administrator and faculty members to resolve problems through effective utilization of District resources in cooperation with the student and his/her parent.
- In cases of a suspension a student must be given an opportunity for a conference if he/she or his/her parent indicate the desire for one in writing, or appear in person to request such a hearing.

## **4. Complaints:**

Every effort shall be made by administrators and faculty members to resolve problems through effective utilization of District resources in cooperation with the student and parent.

In the event that a problem is not resolved, the student and parent will follow the following procedure:

- A written complaint should be filed with the Transportation Administrator.
- The Transportation Administrator, parent/student or all of those named have the right to contact the Transportation Director. The Transportation Administrator for student complaints is the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary or Secondary Education.
- The Transportation Director maintains the right to ask that a complaint that falls under Title JIX, VI or Section 504 be placed in writing.
- The Transportation Director is to provide quick and fair resolution of any complaint. In the event a resolution is not reached through investigation, the Transportation Director has the authority to bring the complaint to the Superintendent and finally to the school board for the disposition of the grievance.
- All complaints will be kept on file in the office of the Transportation Director for student complaints.

## **5. School Schedule Changes Due to Emergency Conditions:**

Due to the complexity of the school district, it is very difficult to make a quick decision as to whether school schedules should be altered in case of inclement weather. Geographical considerations, large numbers of bussed students, early bus starting times, as well as difficulties in communicating with all individuals concerned must be considered in such a decision. The following procedures will maximize the information flow needed to make an early decision as to whether the normal schedule should be followed.

- School Delay/Closure Practices:  
Decision Timeline:  
3:30am to 5:25am Road Check by Transp. Coordinator and Director of Support Services  
5:30am Recommendation made to Superintendent  
5:30am TV & Radio Stations, CCSD Website contacted to post delay/closure  
6:00am to 9:00am Hourly reports to Superintendent  
9:00am Final Report for the Day
- Closure Recommendations:  
2" or more Slush on highway & dirt roads  
2" or more Fresh fallen snow on dirt roads  
All Ice  
All Electrical Storms  
Less than 25' Visibility as a result of Fog or Sandstorms
- Bad Weather Stops:  
When there is Rain, Mud or Snow on all dirt roads, school buses will stay on main road way.

Delaying the start of school:

- Delayed schedule will mean that every schedule will be delayed 2 hours. Consequently, the staff will arrive before the students, etc.
- Each principal will designate someone to arrive at school at the normal time to supervise students who arrive because of not being informed of the delay. It is possible that some busses, which picked up children before being notified of the delay, will arrive on a normal schedule. It is necessary, therefore, that someone be at school to supervise until school begins.
- Bus drivers must use extreme caution in returning any students home after picking them up and finding school has been delayed. Often times it is still dark and very cold. Parents may have driven students some distance to catch the bus, and will not be there to receive them when students are returned.
- Decisions on delaying school will be broadcast by geographical areas of the district. It may be necessary to only delay in the Newcomb area, Kirtland area, or the Shiprock area. If it is to be delayed district wide, it will be broadcast in that manner.

Early dismissal may become necessary due to the inclement weather:

- Notify Superintendent as early as possible. Information necessitating the early dismissal should be provided.
- The Superintendent or designee will make the determination to call for an early dismissal.
- The normal schedules will be set back two hours in every case
- The early dismissal will be broadcast on those radio stations mentioned previously.
- Each principal will designate someone to remain as per the regular schedule. This individual will supervise the students who normally are transported by parents that may not be aware of the early dismissal. This individual can also answer the telephone and act as a contact.
- Except for employees who work only on student days (e.g.) teachers, paraprofessionals, nurse, librarians, counselors, and classroom support personnel; all personnel will report to work as soon as practicable on emergency days.

## 6. Per Capita Feeder Routes:

The local board may provide per capita or per mile reimbursement to a parent or guardian in cases where regular bus transportation is impractical because of distance, road condition, or sparseness of population or in cases where the local board has authorized a parent to receive reimbursement for travel costs incurred by having a child attend school outside the child's attendance zone.

- The Board of Education will approve all agreement(s) made with parents or guardians for per capita feeder services. The agreement(s) will define the term of service, the contract amount, and the responsibilities of the parent. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport his/her student(s) to and/or from the nearest bus stop or home.
- A parent or guardian who has agreed to a per capita agreement must provide proof of insurance, current vehicle registration, and a valid driver's license to the Transportation Department and shall maintain the insurance for the term of the agreement. If the identity of the vehicle or driver changes, the Transportation Department must be notified. The district will not reimburse for transporting students during periods without insurance coverage.
- The Transportation Department will develop an accountability system to ensure that services are rendered according to the policy and agreement. Payment will not be made until services have been rendered.
- Contract will begin from date application is received at the Transportation Office.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to get application filled out and turned in.
- Monthly vouchers are due back in Transportation Office on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

## 7. Procedures followed upon student misbehavior on school bus:

- When a student misbehaves on a bus for the first time, the driver will explain to the offender the necessity for good behavior.
- If, after talks and warnings, the rider continues to violate the rules, the driver will inform the student that the rule violation will be reported to the principal. This report will include the use of a written form that lists the offense and the action taken by the principal.
- Upon receiving the complain and discussing it with the driver, the principal will then call the student to the office and warn the student that the parents must be notified that the student will be put off the bus if misbehavior reoccurs.
- If poor conduct continues, the driver will again report the incident to the principal. After discussion it will be decided whether to take the bus-riding privilege away from the student, and, if so, for how long.
- When a student is not allowed transportation by school bus, the principal will inform the parents of the penalty, the reason for it, and how long the penalty will last. In such cases, the parents become responsible for seeing that their child gets to and from school safely.
- A student who is put off one (1) bus will be refused transportation by all drivers for the specified period of time.

## 8. Student Drop-Off Procedures

Pre-school students, kindergarteners, and special needs students will be returned to the school if there is no one home to receive them. For all other elementary students, the bus drivers are asked to use good judgment when unloading students. If the bus driver deems that it is **unsafe** to drop a student off, they will return the student(s) to the school. For example. If there is an intoxicated parent/guardian receiving the student at the bus stop or if there is a person at the bus stop and the student(s) doesn't recognize them.

- Each student will be given a *permission to drop off form* to be completed by the parent/guardian each school year.

**CCSD - TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
RIDERSHIP RULES AND REGULATIONS**

When a student is in non-compliance as a bus passenger, the following actions will be appropriate:

1. When a student misbehaves on a bus for the first time, the driver will explain to the offender the necessity for good behavior.
2. If, after talks and warnings, the rider continues to violate the rules, the driver will inform the student that the rule violation will be reported to the principal. This report will include the use of a written form that lists the offense and the action taken by the principal.
3. Upon receiving the complain and discussing it with the driver, the principal will then call the student to the office and warn the student that the parents must be notified that the student will be put off the bus if misbehavior reoccurs.
4. If poor conduct continues, the driver will again report the incident to the principal. After discussion it will be decided whether to take the bus-riding privilege away from the student, and, if so, for how long.
5. When a student is not allowed transportation by school bus, the principal will inform the parents of the penalty, the reason for it, and how long the penalty will last. In such cases, the parents become responsible for seeing that their child gets to and from school safely.
6. All drivers will refuse a student who is put off one (1) bus transportation for the specified period.
7. To assure safe transportation of all students, the following infractions could result in ten days suspension from all transportation as follows:
  - (a) Opening or playing with the emergency door.
  - (b) Throwing objects at the driver or other students.
  - (c) Throwing objects out the windows at pedestrians or other vehicles.
  - (d) Crossing four lane roadways or crossing in back of the bus before or after loading.
  - (e) Directing obscene language or gestures at the driver or others on the bus.
  - (f) Behaving in ways that disrupt the safe operation of the bus.
8. In the event of inclement weather, delays or closings will be announced to Media (TV & Radio Stations, CCSD Website)
9. Failure to return the enrollment form within five school days will result in suspension of bus riding privileges until the form is returned to the driver.
10. In the event that a student is brought back to the school three (3) times because no parent or guardian was present, the student will be suspended from the bus for one (1) week. This applies to Pre-school, and Kindergartners.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We are soliciting your understanding and cooperation in helping to maximize the SAFETY of all students while passengers on our school buses are solicited. Important rules and regulations exist which promote and help assure the safety of each passenger on a school bus. Please discuss the following rules with your children. Then complete the form on the opposite page and return to your child's bus driver. If you have more than one child, please fill out a form for each child. Only pupils regularly assigned to the bus for a particular route shall be allowed to ride.

1. Students are to be at the bus stop **five (5) minutes prior** to the scheduled bus arrival time. The bus will not wait.
2. While at the bus stop or pick-up point, students shall:
  - a. Conduct themselves in an orderly manner and stay out of the street.
  - b. Avoid littering and respect nearby property.
3. While a passenger on the bus, students shall:
  - a. Take assigned seats promptly after boarding the bus.
  - b. Remain seated at all times unless loading or unloading from the bus.
  - c. Talk in a low voice only with those students who share the same seat.
  - d. Obey the driver. The driver has the authority to discipline students on his/her bus. The school bus is an extension of the classroom.
  - e. Keep all portions of their bodies inside the bus.
4. While a passenger on the bus, students must not:
  - a. Use tobacco, drugs, alcohol or any controlled substances.
  - b. Eat food, drink beverages, chew gum or throw any objects or litter.
  - c. Use obscene language or gestures, be discourteous, disobedient or disturbing to the driver or other passengers.
  - d. Transport items which may endanger the health or safety of passengers.
  - e. Transport large items or musical instruments, which cannot be held on the lap. No articles can be placed in the driver's compartment or aisles. Articles may not block exits.
  - f. Open or close windows or emergency doors except when instructed to do so by the bus driver.
5. Students are encouraged to report any damages to seats or other parts of the bus to the driver. Failure to do so could cause students to be charged for the repairs. **The fee for Bus Seat Repair is \$75.00.**
6. Students exiting the bus shall always cross in front of the bus. After being signaled by the driver, they shall cross at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus and shall obey all traffic controls for street crossing.
7. **A student will not be allowed to change buses or bus stops without approval.** The school alternate stop form must be filled out by parents/guardians and signed by the principal or designee.
8. Students are to be on time to board the bus after school. The driver will not wait more than five (5) minutes after school is dismissed.
9. As per transportation policy, children must board the bus at their designated stops. If they miss their bus stops, parents must transport children to school. Avoid chasing the bus. Students will not be allowed to load or unload the bus other than at designated stops.

Ridership is a privilege not a right. Students, who persist in violating these rules and regulations, risk the loss of their riding privileges. It shall be the duty of the driver to notify the Transportation Department and the school principal or designee of bus misconduct. Upon notification students may be removed from the bus or lose his/her riding privileges. When students are removed from or lose their riding privileges, it will be the parents/guardians responsibility to transport them to and from school. If parents/guardians have any questions concerning their student's transportation, please contact the local Transportation Office.



## **SECTION 6: TRANSPORTING SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

*While the following rules and regulations may not cover all situations that may exist for the various exceptionalities, they do serve as guidelines to assist in the operation of special education transportation programs. These policies serve in addition to other rules and regulations outlined in this publication.*

### **1. Identification of Transportation needs for Student with Disabilities:**

- Transportation needs for students with disabilities who request transportation as a related service shall be determined and specified on a individual care-by-case basis by each student's Individual Education Program (IEP) committee. The committee shall utilize evaluation information from a variety of sources, including but not limited to: parent information, other related services assessments, medical information, assistive technology assessment, and other information from the student's multidisciplinary team evaluation.
- Decisions regarding transportation as a related service shall be guided by the principle of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Therefore, students with disabilities shall be transported with neighborhood peers who are not disabled unless restricted by health or safety considerations. When modification to standard transportation are necessary, transportation personnel shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the development of the IEP. The IEP document shall clearly state the transportation needs/modifications identified by the IEP team. If future circumstances require significant changes in services, any team member, including transportation personnel, may request that the committee reconvene to consider the student's transportation needs.

### **2. Provisions of Transportation for Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities who require transportation as a related service shall be transported with neighborhood peers who are not disabled unless restricted by health or safety considerations. Modifications to standard transportation services shall be required through the IEP process and shall be stated in the IEP document.

### **3. Student Behavior:**

- When a student's behavior endangers the safety of others, the student shall be suspended from the transportation vehicle according to the Local Board of Education's Policies and State Board of Education Regulations.
- Provisions for removal and reinstatement of transportation services for students with disabilities shall be specified in the local board of education's policies and in the student's IEP. In the interim, the student with the disability may require other means to access educational services. Any change in related service(s) transportation must be made through the IEP process, and the procedural safeguards specified in the State Board of Education Regulations shall apply.
- Significant medical problems should be documented, especially the possibility of seizures, etc.
- Alternate emergency drop-off points and telephone numbers of specified contact persons will be obtained.
- Late registration or placement of a student into a different program after school usually affects routing and time schedules of one or all students on the bus. Several days may be required before all adjustments are made and the start of transportation services for a particular student. A minimum of five (5) days planning time is usually required. Changes should not be made late in the school year unless absolutely necessary.

#### **4. District Administration Responsibilities:**

The designated school district administrator is responsible for implementing the policies set by the local board of education, and for promoting public understanding of and support for the school systems special education transportation program.

- Loading and Unloading:
  1. A.M. Unloading: Building administrator or designee will be on site at the a.m. unloading area. The bus driver or aide will not be allowed to leave special education students unattended.
  2. P.M. Dismissal: Building administrator or designee will have the students ready at dismissal time. The bus driver will not be required to wait more than five minutes. The driver and/or bus aide will not be allowed to leave the bus to search for unaccounted students. Once the bus has departed, the driver will not be required to return to the school. The building administrator or designee will be required to make other arrangements for the student to be transported home.
- The local school district will develop a policy relative to bus suspension procedures.
- Upon receiving a written complaint, the appropriate school official shall respond as soon as possible. An immediate response to a problem will be of great benefit to all concerned.
- Suspension from the bus does not mean that a student is suspended from school (The parent or caretaker will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school.)
- In the event that it is necessary to suspend a student from school as well the bus, the local board policy on long- and short-term suspension of handicapped students will apply.
- The building level administrator will be available at the school until all students have been properly delivered on their route; all drivers are to be informed of persons who have been designated to take custody of students. Building administrators will be responsible for providing the drivers or transportation department with names and phone numbers of these caretakers.

#### **Mid-Day and Regular PM routes** (Pre-school, Special Needs and Kindergartners):

1. If no one is home to receive a student, the driver will contact the transportation office or school in an attempt to contact the parents/guardians/care takers.
2. If unable to make contact, the transportation office will contact the school administrator and inform them that the student will be brought back to the school with an estimated time of arrival.
3. After completing the bus run the bus driver will deliver the student to the school.
4. At this time, the school administrator will attempt to contact the parent/guardian/care taker to pick up the child at the school or make other arrangements. (Due to the difference in PM bus schedules, mid-day students should not be placed on PM buses).

#### **5. Teacher Responsibilities (Specific duties of the teacher or aides are to):**

- Enhance a Safe and successful bus operation through regular and continuing education of all persons involved in the special education transportation process. The teacher, together with the bus driver and/or the bus aide, makes students aware of their responsibilities on the bus. With careful planning the special education school bus can be a valuable extension of the classroom experience.
- Be familiar with state and local policies on special education transportation.
- Communicate to parents or caretakers and students the state and local policies and regulations for special education transportation in order to promote understanding and support for the school systems special education transportation program.
- Communicate regularly with the bus driver and/or bus aide regarding the special needs of students.
- Supply information to the driver and/or bus aide regarding behavior modification so that consistency can be maintained. The teacher should explain the style of discipline used in the classroom and suggest techniques which work with specific students, realizing that the bus is an entirely different setting.

- Discuss the teachers expectations for bus behavior with the driver before school begins. This should be done in order to clarify the teacher's and bus driver's expectations for the students' bus behavior.
- Establish consistent procedures for loading and unloading students:
- Have the students ready at dismissal time.
- Load all the students at one designated time in the afternoon. Coordinate loading times with the other teachers if there are several special education programs in the school.
- Distribute classroom materials in the classroom before the students get on the bus to return home. Distributing materials on the bus creates an atmosphere of confusion.
- Notify the driver when a parent has picked up a student from school so that the driver does not have an unnecessary delay. Notify the bus driver when a parent brings a student to school late. Advanced notice to the driver will reduce the possibility of a student being inadvertently left at school.
- Give rewards which are earned in the classroom to the driver (especially if they are toys or food) in a bag marked with the student's name.
- Tell the driver what kind of a day the student has had, especially if it has been bad. This helps alert the driver to a potential problem. It is most effective to tell the driver quietly in front of the student, so that the student realizes that the driver is aware and can make adjustment. It may be helpful to seat a student in a different place on the bus and/or alter the route slightly in order to deliver the student home as soon as possible.
- Instruct the student on proper bus behavior and school bus safety as a part of classroom discussions and activities. The teacher should assist the student to develop an attitude of respect and courtesy toward the driver and bus aide.
- Give the bus driver adequate notice concerning any changes in pick-up and drop-off addresses.
- Building administrators will be responsible for providing the transportation department with names and phone numbers of person(s) who are designated to take care of students whose parents are not at home.
- Refrain from asking the bus driver to change the routing pattern and pick-up or dismissal times as the driver is not allowed to change or modify bus routes.

#### **6. Parent or Caretaker Responsibility:**

- Have the student ready to board the bus when the bus arrives and when necessary be with the student at the bus stop.
- Encourage the child to obey safety rules and regulations and encourage proper bus behavior.
- When the students are delivered to the assigned address at the end of each school day, the driver will NOT be allowed to leave the student unattended. Parents are responsible for arranging to have a designated person receive the student. A parent or caretaker may request permission to leave a student unattended in writing from local school officials.
- Have all necessary supplies, materials or medications, etc., in a pouch or a packet labeled with the child's name. In consideration of student safety, articles that block the aisles, emergency door, or service door of a school bus will not be allowed.
- Do not allow students to drink or eat food on the bus. The danger of a student choking on food is a high risk factor.
- Know where the student is to be picked up each morning and delivered in the afternoon. In the event that the student needs assistance to get to or from, on or off the bus, the parent cooperates by making arrangements for bringing the student to the bus, and for picking up the student on the return trip.

- In the event that the student does not plan to attend school on a specified day, the parent/caretaker shall:
  1. Notify the bus driver and/or appropriate school official in advance one full school day;
  2. Inform the bus driver when the bus arrives at the student's house;
  3. Use a pre-arranged signal with the driver.
  4. Prepare a student emergency information card as required by this regulation. This card includes emergency phone numbers and/or address of a responsible person to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Give at least a full five-school-day notice concerning any changes in pick-up and drop-off address. The driver is not allowed to change or modify a bus route. Do not ask a driver to violate this policy.
- Transport his or her student in the event of a necessary bus suspension.

## **7. Qualifications for Special Education School Bus Drivers:**

### School Bus Driver Selection

- The school district administrator or local transportation provider shall adhere to all applicable federal and state employment requirements when employing, re-employing or retaining a school bus driver. The employer shall maintain records verifying completion of the following procedures in their files:
  - Completion of an application form that meets or exceeds State and Federal requirements.
  - A check of the applicants' driving record through the New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division, or the National Driver Register or other states' Motor Vehicle Divisions. Driver record checks shall be made monthly.
  - A criminal background check in accordance with section 22-10-3, NMSA, 1978; to determine if the applicant has a record of criminal convictions, the school district and transportation provider shall maintain an Agreement, Authorization, Waiver and Release form, in addition to a Criminal History Affidavit on any new employee working with children.
  - Satisfactory completion of a school bus driver physical examination.
  - Verification that the driver is properly licensed as a school bus driver by the Motor Vehicle Division.
  - A copy of the commercial drivers license examination, vehicle inspection, basic control skills and road test.
  - Each employer shall make available to each bus driver at the time of hiring the Standards for Providing Transportation for Eligible Students and any local handbooks.
  - Special education drivers may be required to attend other special training programs as designated by the local district.

## **8. Qualifications for Aides:**

- A bus assistant shall be provided on buses equipped with a wheel chair lift, when necessary and/or required by law or regulation.
- Bus assistants shall complete a course on providing Transportation as a Related Service to students with disabilities and an approved First Aid/CPR course.
- Bus assistants shall have a current First Aid/CPR certification.
- Bus assistant shall complete 16 hours in-service each year.
- Aides will be a minimum age of 18.

## **9. Responsibilities for Drivers and Bus Aides:**

The following rules and regulations are applicable to drivers and aides, but do not cover all situations, which exist for various exceptionalities. They do serve as guidelines for the operation of special education transportation programs. The driver and aide will:

- Obey all regular school bus operational regulations (unless exceptions are noted), state and local policies and traffic laws.
- Maintain and keep current transportation confidential such as emergency cards and other required reports. This information is to be maintained in accordance with the Family Education and Privacy Act and state and local special education regulations.
- Refrain from administering any medication.
- Withhold from a student any type of food (candy, gum, soft drink, etc.) unless the written permission of parents or caretakers is granted.
- Exercise patience, understanding, and mature judgment in working with a handicapped student.
- Communicate effectively with parents and school staff.
- Utilize and safely operate the special equipment needed for each student's seating, loading and unloading.
- Know the safest and most direct route to a hospital or recognized medical center.
- Arrange the seating of students, where possible, to prevent emotional or physical disturbances, but allow "normal" interaction between students, the special education teacher for these students may be of great assistance in these situations.
- Explain bus rules to students and enforce them, remembering to:
  1. Be firm -- but gentle.
  2. Be patient -- but persistent.
  3. Always be consistent.
- Maintain discipline and report to the proper school authorities and/or parents any unusual episodes, attitudes, etc., immediately and in detail, because they may have medical implications. Any student who is a threat to the safety of the other children, themselves, and/or the driver should not be permitted to ride the bus. Administrative procedures will be followed when exclusion of a child is considered.
- Be willing to learn how to care for each student under the many circumstances that might occur while the students are on the bus. Eye contact usually reveals problems that may occur.
- Know the appropriate procedures to take in case of a traffic accident or breakdown as they relate to the exceptionalities of the students.
- Maintain the bus schedule for pick-up and drop-off of students as closely as safety will permit.
- Adhere to an established route unless there is an emergency.
- Make sure that a student is not unattended in the bus or at the p.m. drop-off point. The driver must contact Transportation/School if no one is present at stop to meet student.
- Communicate with school personnel and parents when a student is on medication and what possible effects the medication will have on the student being transported.
- Record when each student is behaving abnormally for their condition and advise the appropriate officials accordingly.
- Be mentally alert and follow the plan for emergency indicated on the student information card when problems or abnormal reactions occur.
- Assist each student in meeting therapeutic needs as indicated by appropriate school personnel such as learning to get on and off without assistance.
- In addition to the above requests, the special education aide will:
  1. Assist in the loading and unloading.
  2. Maintain control of students while on the bus.

3. Take care of any special needs of the students while they are on the bus and while they are being loaded and unloaded.
4. Assist the bus driver in times of need and during any emergency.

#### **10. Loading and Unloading Students:**

- The bus driver will follow the same loading and unloading procedures as regular transportation.
- The type and severity of the exceptionality will usually determine where the actual bus stop will be located, within the following guidelines:
  1. Students who cannot be left unattended will be loaded and unloaded in front of each student's home or pick-up/drop-off point.
  2. Other students may be able to walk to and from the bus stop, and this may be required as part of their therapy. Written directions will be provided to the driver by the parent or caretaker and the school district.
  3. The bus stop will be determined by the school officials upon recommendation from the doctor, special education administrators, and parents.

#### **11. Communication Equipment for Buses:**

Because of the inherent medical emergencies and other problems that could occur while transporting special education students, a high priority should be given for the installation and maintenance of two-way radio communication systems on special education buses.

#### **12. Transportation of Medication:**

- The driver and/or aide may accept the transportation of medication, pursuant to local board policy, from the parent and/or caretaker; however, the driver should have a form on which they date and sign the acceptance of the medication from the parent.
- A secure compartment must be provided for the driver to store medication.
- Upon arrival at the student's destination, the person receiving the medication from the driver should sign for acceptance of the medication from the driver.
- All medication must be clearly identified with the student's name on it.
- Should a child's IEP call for the administration of medication during a trip or on a route, the Exceptional Programs Department will provide a trained person to administer the medication. Otherwise, medication will not be administered.

#### **13. Transportation Confidential Emergency Card:**

In order for the driver and/or aide to be generally informed by local school officials concerning the physical, mental, and/or emotional disabilities of each student, a Transportation Confidential Emergency form will be provided by the school on each student.

Each form will include, but is not limited to, the following information:

- Student's name, date of birth, school, school year and bus number.
- Parent's name.
- Address, with loading and unloading instructions, for both a.m. and p.m.
- Home telephone and emergency telephone numbers, i.e., doctor, parent(s), and teacher.
- Nature of child's exceptionality as it pertains to transportation needs and special bus provisions.
- Suggested steps to be taken by the driver or the aide in the event of illness, seizure, etc., while riding the bus.
- Emergency medical information, medication student is under, and special instructions for attending physician.
- These forms must be treated as confidential records.

#### **14. Discipline and Student Rights:**

The following suggested procedures will protect the pupil's rights and maintain order on the bus:

- The driver and the aide should attempt to handle infractions through discussions with pupils and/or reassignment of seats. (Sometimes a call to the parents will improve behavior.)
- First offenses require at the minimum a notification to the pupil and parent(s) by phone or in person. Second or subsequent offenses or infractions of the rules may require a conference with the pupil, parents, driver, and school administrators and could result in a period of suspension of the pupil's bus riding privileges.
- In case of serious or recurring misconduct, a pupil's bus riding privileges may be promptly suspended for acts which jeopardize the safe operation of the bus and/or the safety of the other passengers on board.

#### **15. Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Order:**

All efforts to revive a student will be made including a call to "911" for emergency assistance.

#### **16. Comparable Travel Time:**

Transportation time for students with disabilities will be comparable to that provided to their peers without disabilities. Whenever possible students will ride on regular route buses, students with disabilities, whose I.E.P. dictates special transportation needs may require a variance to the comparable travel time policy, this shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the student's I.E.P. committee and shall be clearly stated in the I.E.P. document. Students should not be riding for more than one and one-half hour.

#### **17. Transportation of Special Personnel:**

Special personnel (i.e., licensed nurses, special education assistants, or other designated persons) will be assigned to a bus route only after a decision has been made by the I.E.P. committee to provide this type of service to a student or students.

#### **18. Transportation of Animals to Accompany a Student with Disabilities:**

When a student's I.E.P. stipulates the need for an animal to accompany him or her to and from school, the following conditions must be met:

- The animal must have proper certification and training.
- The animal must have up to date immunization records.
- The animal must be muzzled.