

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY POLICY

Adopted: May 18, 2015

Revised:

Reviewed:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe and efficient system of transportation for all students to support the educational mission of the district.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

To accomplish the goals of the Transportation Safety Policy, the district understands the need to educate students, parents, and staff about safety issues as well as the roles and responsibilities related to school bus ridership. It is also important that the transportation providers within the ROCORI School District and school personnel work cooperatively in support of a safe and efficient system.

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The authority for the administration of the transportation system is assigned to the superintendent of schools or a district designee. The bus contractors will be responsible to the superintendent.

The superintendent or designee:

- A. serves as the district's transportation safety director.
- B. approves all bus routes and time schedules.
- C. maintains a transportation map, showing the location of all bus routes.
- D. meets with each contractor for the purpose of guidance and instruction.
- E. may require weekly bus reports of all regular or extra-curricular trips, if available.
- F. will, in cases of inclement weather, hazardous road conditions or other emergencies, decide if the buses and/or school will operate.
- G. will require immediate reports of all accidents involving vehicles operated by the contractor during the transportation of students.

IV. BUS RIDERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Bus Contractors' Responsibilities:

1. Comply with all terms of the contract, safe operation rules and procedures, and school bus driver training.
2. Establish and in-service drivers and students on emergency procedures.
3. Maintain all vehicles in safe operating condition through preventative maintenance and inspection programs.
4. Comply with all State and Federal rules and regulations.
5. Appropriate reporting of any accidents.
6. Handle transportation complaint calls.

B. Principals' Responsibilities:

1. Assist transportation providers in developing and maintaining bus rules.
2. Inform parents of bus rules and regulations, including "No Parking" areas, and the "School Bus Incident Report to Parents".
3. Require all teachers to review the bus policy, rules and regulations with their students.
4. Invite the bus contractor to IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings if transportation issues are to be discussed.

C. Bus Drivers' Responsibilities:

1. Enforce school bus rules.
2. Utilize the "School Bus Incident Report to Parents" (and/or "Minnesota School Bus Accident Report") when students do not follow the bus rules.
3. Be friendly, fair and firm.
4. Operate the vehicle in a safe and efficient manner.
5. Conduct thorough pre-trip and post-trip inspections of the vehicle and special equipment.
6. Responsibly and respectfully communicate with school staff, students, parents, law enforcement officials and the motoring public.
7. Assist district staff with required training programs.
8. Hand signal all students before they cross a road upon entering and upon leaving the school bus. This process will be included in the bus safety curriculum.
9. Avoid use of profane or indecent language while transporting students and do not tolerate such language on the part of the students

D. Teachers' Responsibilities:

1. Review and discuss the bus rules and regulations with their students including the hand signal process.
2. Teach the school bus safety curriculum mandated by the State Department on an annual basis.

3. All school bus supervisors and chaperons will be responsible to maintain discipline on bus trips.

E. Students' Responsibilities:

1. Obey all bus rules and regulations
2. Be courteous and respectful at all times.

F. Parents' Responsibilities:

1. Become familiar with district rules and policies, including parking restrictions, regulations and principles of school bus safety and thoroughly review them with their children.
2. Assist students in understanding safety rules and encourage them to abide by them.
3. Support safe riding and walking practices, and recognize that students are responsible for their actions.
4. Monitor bus stops, if possible.
5. Have their children to the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives.
6. Have their children properly dressed for the weather.
7. Support efforts to improve school bus safety.
8. Have a plan in case the bus is late
9. When an emergency condition arises requiring a request for permission to ride a different bus to a location other than their scheduled location, the appropriate bus company must be contacted. This is to be used for emergency purposes only and will not be accepted as a regular practice.
10. Communicate safety concerns to their school administrators.

V. PLAN FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY TRAINING

A. School Bus Safety Week: The school district may designate a school bus safety week.

1. Generally in the ROCORI School District, the first week of school is designated as school bus safety week.
2. The National School Bus Safety Week is the third week in October.

B. Student Training

1. The School District will provide students with school bus safety training as expected by the state of Minnesota.
 - a. The training will consist of results-oriented classroom instruction and practical training using a school bus.
 - b. Upon completing the training, a student will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of at least the following competencies and concepts:

- (1) transportation by school bus as a privilege not a right;
 - (2) district policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
 - (3) appropriate conduct while on the bus;
 - (4) the danger zones surrounding a school bus;
 - (5) procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
 - (6) procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing; and
 - (7) school bus evacuation and other emergency procedures.
- c. Bus safety training will be conducted during the first week of school.
- (1) All students who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first week of school must demonstrate bus safety competencies by the end of the third week of school.
 - (2) Students who enroll in a school after the first week of school and are transported by school bus will undergo training and demonstrate competencies within three weeks of the first day of attendance.
- d. The District will, to the extent possible, provide kindergarten students with school bus safety training before the first day of school.
- e. The School District may deny transportation to a student who fails to demonstrate the competencies unless the student is unable to achieve the competencies due to a disability.
2. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must provide students enrolled in grades K through 3 school bus safety training twice during the school year.
 3. Students taking driver's training instructional classes must receive training in the laws and proper procedures for operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of a school bus as required by Minnesota statutes.
 4. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must conduct a school bus evacuation drill at least once during the school year.
 5. The school district will make reasonable accommodations in training for students known to speak English as a second language and students with disabilities.
 6. The school district may provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in grades K through 5.
 7. The school district shall adopt and make available for public review a curriculum for transportation safety education.
 8. Nonpublic school students transported by the school district will receive school bus safety training by their nonpublic school. The nonpublic schools may use the school district's school transportation safety education curriculum. Upon request by the school district superintendent, the nonpublic school must certify to the school district's school transportation safety director that all students enrolled in grades K through 10 have received the appropriate training.

VI. CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR

- A. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school district's general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses, including nonpublic and charter school students.
- B. Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school district under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district's transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.
 - 1. School Bus and Bus Stop Rules. The school district school bus safety rules are to be posted on every bus. If these rules are broken, the school district's discipline procedures are to be followed. In most circumstances, consequences are progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges. It is the school bus driver's responsibility to report unacceptable behavior to the school district's Transportation Office/School Office.
 - 2. Rules at the Bus Stop
 - a. Be on time. Get to your bus stop 5 minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
 - b. Wait in designated areas for the bus. Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus
 - c. Wait until bus stops before approaching bus.
 - d. Always cross in front of bus at driver's signal.
 - e. Stay in seat while bus is moving.
 - f. Keep head, hands, and arms inside bus and to yourself.
 - g. Be courteous. Fighting, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are unacceptable behaviors.
 - h. Talk quietly and use appropriate language
 - i. Tobacco, alcohol and drugs are prohibited.
 - j. Weapons or other dangerous objects are prohibited.
 - k. Animals are not permitted.
 - l. Keep bus clean and treat equipment respectfully.
 - m. Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.
 - n. After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
 - 3. Rules on the Bus
 - a. Immediately follow the directions of the driver.
 - b. Sit in your seat facing forward.
 - c. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
 - d. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
 - e. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.

- f. Fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay are inappropriate behaviors.
- g. Throwing of any object(s) is not acceptable.
- h. Eating, drinking, or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs is not permitted on the bus.
- i. Weapons or dangerous objects are not permitted on the school bus.
- j. Prevent actions causing damage to the school bus.

C. Procedures for Discipline Report

1. First Offense: Documented School Bus Incident Report; verbal warning to the student.
2. Second Offense: Documented School Bus Incident Report sent to parents along with first offense record. Conference with principal and student.
3. Third Offense: Documented School Bus Incident Report, conference with principal, bus company, parent, and student. Appropriate consequences will be determined.
4. Serious, Reportable Offense: Report to local law enforcement and file Minnesota School Bus Incident Report to Department of Public Safety.

These procedures may be altered for severe cases of misbehavior or violations of other existing policies.

D. Discipline Records

Records of misconduct will be forwarded to the individual school building and retained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of student misbehavior on a school bus or in a bus-loading or unloading area that are reasonably believed to cause an immediate and substantial danger to the student or surrounding persons or property shall be provided by the school district to local law enforcement and the Department of Public Safety in accordance with state and federal law. Video records will be handled according to district policy 4-19.

1. Other Discipline: Based on the severity of a student's conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school also may result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.
2. Vandalism/Bus Damage: Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages (or make arrangements to pay) within 2 weeks may result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid.
3. Notice: School bus and bus stop rules and consequences for violations of these rules will be reviewed with students annually and copies of these rules will be made available to students. School bus rules are to be posted on each school bus.
4. Criminal Conduct: In cases involving criminal conduct (for example, assault, weapons, drug possession, or vandalism), the appropriate school district personnel and local law enforcement officials will be informed.

X. SCHOOL DISTRICT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- A. If possible, school bus drivers or their supervisors shall call “911” or the local emergency phone number in the event of a serious emergency.
- B. School bus drivers shall meet the emergency training requirements contained in Unit III “Crash & Emergency Preparedness” of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual. This includes procedures in the event of a crash (accident).
- C. School bus drivers and bus assistants for special education students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition shall be trained in basic first aid procedures, shall within 1 month after the effective date of assignment participate in a program of in-service training on the proper methods for dealing with the specific needs and problems of students with disabilities, assist students with disabilities on and off the bus when necessary for their safe ingress and egress from the bus; and ensure that protective safety devices are in use and fastened properly.
- D. Emergency Health Information shall be maintained on the school bus for students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition. The information shall state:
 - 1. the student’s name and address;
 - 2. the nature of the student’s disabilities;
 - 3. emergency health care information; and
 - 4. the names and telephone numbers of the student’s physician, parents, guardians, or custodians, and some person other than the student’s parents or custodians who can be contacted in case of an emergency.

XII. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DIRECTOR

The school board has designated an individual(s) to serve as the school district’s school transportation safety director(s). The school transportation safety director shall have day-to-day responsibility for student transportation safety, including transportation of nonpublic school children when provided by the school district.

- A. The school transportation safety director will assure that this policy is periodically reviewed to ensure that it conforms to law. The school transportation safety director shall certify annually to the school board that each school bus driver meets the school bus driver training competencies required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 4.
- B. The transportation safety director also shall annually verify or ensure that the private contractor utilized by the school has verified the validity of the driver’s license of each employee who regularly transports students for the school district in a type A, B, C, or D school bus, type III vehicle, or MFSAB with the National Driver Register or the Department

of Public Safety.

- C. Upon request of the school district superintendent or the superintendent of the school district where nonpublic students are transported, the school transportation safety director also shall certify to the superintendent that students have received school bus safety training in accordance with state law.
- D. The name, address and telephone number of the school transportation safety director are on file in the school district office. Any questions regarding student transportation or this policy may be addressed to the school transportation safety director.

Source: MSBA Policy