

**OPERATIONS HANDBOOK & SAFE
DRIVER PLAN**

**WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
3235 COASTAL HIGHWAY
CRAWFORDVILLE, FL. 32327**



WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

2022-2023

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Verna Brock, District I
Melisa Taylor, District II
Cale Langston, District III
Josh Brown, District IV
Jo Ann Daniels, District V

Robert Pearce
Superintendent of Schools

Pat Jones
Transportation Coordinator

Talana Dugger
Transportation Secretary

Missy Hudson
Transportation Secretary

Shannon Smith
Assistant Coordinator

Welcome back to what I am sure will be another great year.

The service you provide for the Wakulla County School Board is greatly appreciated. As bus drivers and bus attendants, you are a vital link between the public and our schools.

Student transportation services have grown tremendously in the past years, and we are now serving more than 4800 students daily. Your hard work and dedication are important lessons for the students who ride our buses.

This handbook has been prepared to aid you in preparing for the upcoming school year. I know the high standards of performance that characterize the Wakulla County School Board “Transportation Team” will continue.

Sincerely,

Robert Pearce
Superintendent

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION
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The Wakulla County School Board is committed to providing fair and equal educational and employment opportunities with regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, or marital status. The district complies with all Federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination in education. WCSB Policy 2.80.

EQUITY COORDINATOR

The district appoints an Equity Coordinator to ensure compliance with Federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination. If you have any questions, concerns, complaints, or suggestions about policies and/or procedures affecting employment or educational opportunities in the district please contact:

Mrs. Lori Sandgren, Equity Coordinator
Wakulla County School Board
P. O. Box 100
Crawfordville, Fl. 32326-0100
(850) 926-0065

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The School Board maintains a drug-free workplace. Drug abusers will be prosecuted as prescribed in the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. WCSB Policies 2.90, 3.42 and 6.33.

REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS PROVIDED

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered, in advance, to request reasonable accommodation.

HARASSMENT

Harassment of any kind, religious, sexual or racial, to name a few, is considered undesirable behavior. It is each individual's responsibility to respect the rights and integrity of others. It is the responsibility of each individual to report incidences of harassment witnessed or suspected to a person (s) of authority. School Board Policy 2.70, speak to harassment issues. Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Federal and State law and is prohibited by the Wakulla County School Board. Questions, concerns or complaints regarding this policy or a specific act or situation should be brought to the attention of the Equity Coordinator. The grievance procedure timeline will be followed for resolution of issues. Revised 6/02

OUR MISSION

**TO PROVIDE THE SAFEST, MOST EFFICIENT, AND PROFESSIONAL
TRANSPORTATION FOR THE DISTRICT'S LEARNERS.**

SAFETY

It takes one hour to hold a safety meeting.
It takes one week to plan a safety program.
It takes one month to put it into operation.
It takes one year to win a safety award.
It takes a lifetime to become a safe driver.
It takes one second to destroy it all with an accident.

Safety cannot be an afterthought. In this business,
safety needs to be foremost in a driver's mind
every time he/she gets behind the wheel of his/her
bus or van.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Transportation Department of the Wakulla County School Board. You have been selected as part of perhaps the most vital team, in that your responsibilities will focus on the safe transportation of thousands of students to and from school daily.

The school bus/van driver is the first contact that many students may have in school. This experience can provide the key to the proper adjustment of the student for school or it can cause an emotional reaction that can delay this adjustment. It is essential that the bus/van driver is patient, kind and understanding. Each morning our goal is to deliver students ready to learn in a safe and happy environment. Each afternoon our goal is to deliver students so they can remember a safe and happy journey from school.

The bus/van driver is the only contact some parents will have with school personnel. The parents of the students riding a school bus/van need to feel that their children are in a safe and professional environment while en route to and from school. The reputation of the bus/van driver for courteous and professional treatment of parents and students is essential to winning their respect and confidence.

Because of the tremendous task you have accepted, this handbook was designed to provide you with safe driving procedures which will assist you in meeting the demands of your position. It is intended to be a convenient reference for you and will cover many of the daily situations you will encounter. Please take the time to review these procedures. Remember, however, that the members of the management team are available to clarify and assist you in any difficult situations that you may encounter.

The Transportation Department is a vital part of the Wakulla County School Board. With this handbook and your efforts as an essential member of our team, we can make an already excellent transportation system second to none!

ABSENTEE PROCEDURES

As a school bus/van driver, YOU ARE REQUIRED to report your absence from duty as follows:

1. First call Pat Jones at 544.8546 by 5:00AM. If she cannot be contacted then call Talana Dugger at 251.7578 For the

afternoon route, call the Transportation Department at 926.7550 by **12:00 p.m.** Bus Mechanics call Shannon Smith at 850.528.1038

2. It is your responsibility to contact Pat Jones or Talana Dugger to inform them of your absence.
3. Failure to contact the appropriate people or failure to perform route could result in “personal leave without pay”. Anymore occurrences may result in termination
4. It is the responsibility of the employee to complete the leave **form(s) within three (3) working days upon returning to duty.** School Board Sick Leave Policy 6.549. If appropriate forms are not completed by the payroll due date, the leave will be without pay. School Board Policy 6.546.
5. If you are scheduled for a field trip during the time of your Absence, please notify Pat Jones or Talana Dugger.
6. Personal leave will not be granted for the first week or the last week of school to a bus driver/van driver. Should sick leave be used during these two weeks, a doctor’s note will be required, or leave will be without pay.

*School Board Policy 6.546 Personal leave is charged to Sick Leave and shall be approved, in advance, by the Transportation Supervisor.

QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

Each school bus driver employed by the Wakulla County School Board is required to meet the following state and school board regulations:

1. Must hold a valid Florida commercial driver's license, Class B, with a S & P endorsement and be registered in the Drug & Alcohol National Clearinghouse.
2. Possess a high school or general education diploma;
3. Has submitted a Wakulla County School Board on-line application for employment.
4. Has demonstrated ability to safely operate the type and size of vehicle assigned or to be assigned, and also demonstrated knowledge of all requirements for school bus drivers as prescribed by state traffic laws and rules of the State Board and District School Board;
5. Have at least five years driving experience;
6. Provide evidence of 40 hours of initial inservice training;
7. Submit documentation verifying the successful completion of an annual DOT physical examination by a Certified Medical Examiner, who is registered with the Registry of Certified Medical Examiners.
8. Complete eight hours of School Board approved driver inservice training annually.
9. Participate in the district drug and alcohol screening program as required by the Omnibus Transportation Employees Testing Act, 1991 (OTETA) and comply with Wakulla County School Board Policy 6.60 Drug and Alcohol Policy. Any positive drug test by CDL employee will result in termination. Additionally, the employee is required to self-report to the Drug & Alcohol National Clearinghouse.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

As a bus driver/van driver for Wakulla County School Board, the laws, rules, regulations, and policies that apply to operating a school bus/van must be understood and followed. These include:

Training

Bus operators and van drivers must attend and participate in all conferences and training classes to include online training which are scheduled by Transportation Department.

Appearance

Bus drivers & van drivers must be neat and clean in appearance. School bus drivers and bus attendants must wear uniforms assigned to them.

Demeanor

Bus drivers/van drivers may not smoke/vape or use any other type of tobacco or use profane language during bus/van operation or on school board property. Alcohol, drugs, or medication which may impair driving while on duty are prohibited.

Routes

Bus and van drivers should always keep an up-to-date route schedule on the bus. All appropriate changes in stops and routes must be approved by the Transportation Coordinator. Unnecessary hazards to bus passengers would be the only reason to make an unauthorized change, which must then be relayed to the appropriate personnel.

Non-Transportation Employee Van Drivers:

These employees are employed by Wakulla County Schools in

another job capacity but have agreed to assist Wakulla County Schools Transportation Center in transporting students to and from school in a WCSB van. This agreement will be between the School Level Principal and the Transportation Supervisor. By adding more responsibilities to these employees, compensation of one-hour additional pay in the morning and one-hour additional pay in the afternoon will be added if these additional hours fall after/before the normal workday. If applicable, this shall cover any overtime.

Students

Bus/van drivers must ensure that students observe all bus rules and regulations prescribed by law and by the state and school board, and that they are instructed in safe riding practices. Included in these rules are the following:

1. Students are to leave the bus at their assigned stops, i.e. established pickup and delivery points. Only upon written permission from the school principal can these points be changed.
2. If you have reason to believe that by dismissing a student(s) at a bus stop in the afternoon is detrimental to their safety, you should radio the school principal and keep the student(s) on the bus until given instructions by the principal. If a school principal cannot be contacted, radio the bus garage for assistance.
3. Students are to be supervised when leaving the bus until they have crossed the roadway safely. They are to cross in front of the bus only after all vehicles have come to a complete stop.
4. Misconduct of any student while under the immediate supervision of the bus driver, which requires the attention of school authorities, must be reported immediately to the school principal or designee.
5. Students shall not stand on the bus when seats are available. When seats are not available and students are standing, the bus driver must ensure that those standing are not forward of the second row of seats. In addition, the bus driver must notify the Transportation Coordinator immediately of the bus overload.
6. Only authorized persons shall be transported. These include:
 - A. students registered on the route being covered at that specific time,
 - B. designated students participating in school sponsored extra trips,

- C. students temporarily assigned to ride during emergencies,
 - D. school personnel and chaperones assigned to ride the bus, and
 - E. parents/guardians who have been authorized by the principal
All other people are unauthorized riders.
7. Students shall never be permitted to occupy the driver's seat of the bus.

VEHICLE INSPECTION

It is the responsibility of the school bus driver to inspect the bus at least daily prior to the beginning of the first daily trip or more often as required by the school district and to report any defect affecting safety or economy of operation immediately to authorized service personnel. The inspection shall include all items identified in the procedures related to the mandatory daily inspection in the Basic School Bus Driver Curriculum.

The school bus driver plays an important role in the preventive maintenance program. Every time the bus is put into service, vehicle inspections should be performed. This consists of Pre-Trip, On-the-Road, and Post-Trip inspections. Monthly inspections are also part of the preventive maintenance program and required by the state. The driver should be alert for evidence of conditions which may require attention. The pre-trip inspection is to be reported on the Wakulla County required Pre-Trip inspection form and submitted to the Transportation Coordinator on the first working day of each week for the prior week.

Post Trip – A thorough post-trip inspection should be completed after the a.m. and the p.m. route and consists of the following:

1. Interior Inspection – Check the interior for children a.m. and p.m. after each route, lost items, damage to seats and bus cleanliness at the end of the route. All windows and overhead hatches should be closed. The interior should be swept, and the trash emptied. When exiting, be sure to close the door behind you.
2. The bus driver shall, after each run, a.m. and p.m. walk to the rear of the bus and check each seat to ascertain that no students were left on the bus. This applies to all assigned routes and/or field trips.

Monthly School Bus Inspections:

Monthly inspections are mandatory. **REQUIRED BY LAW.** Bus drivers are directed to have their buses inspected monthly when scheduled. It is not the responsibility of the school board to provide transportation to the driver to and from the bus garage. The success of a good preventative maintenance program depends on the full cooperation of bus drivers with mechanics and management. Drivers should watch and listen at all times for anything wrong and report it to the mechanics as soon as possible. Drivers are to call the garage before operating a bus if there are questions regarding the condition of the bus.

Operation of the School Bus/Vans

Lights – Headlights must be on while the bus/van is in operation, with or without students. School bus strobe light shall always be used while bus is in operation during dark and inclement weather.

Speed of the Bus/Vans – No school bus/van shall ever operate faster than the posted speed. When transporting students and traveling on Interstate roads, no school bus/van shall operate faster than 65 MPH. Bus drivers should always reduce speed when road and/or weather conditions may be hazardous.

Stopping the Bus

To warn that the bus is approaching a student passenger stop. The amber lights must be activated at approximately 200 feet from the stop to warn traffic of the impending stop for passengers. After stopping 10 feet from the nearest student, the flashing red lights and the stop signal arm will replace the amber lights. The bus door must not be opened to load or unload students until approaching traffic near the bus has stopped and the parking brake set. Always operate the eight light system lights when stopping to load or unload passengers as required by law.

Use of Safety Belts

The school bus or van is not to be operated unless the driver's seat belt assembly is in proper use. If operating a school board van all passengers must wear seat belts and if not working properly the van will not be driven.

Backing the Bus

The school bus should not be backed on school grounds except in an emergency. If it must be backed, it must be done with the aid of an observer. Also, if you must go back use 4-way flashers and sound horn before backing.

Breakdown of the Bus

If the bus should break down on the road, there are several procedures to follow:

1. Pull completely off the road, if possible. Activate 4-way flashers.
2. Display emergency triangles properly.
3. Divided 4-lane highways –
 - A. triangle approximately 200 feet to rear in center of lane occupied by stopped bus.
 - B. triangle in center of lane 100 feet to rear; and
 - C. triangle to rear at traffic side 10 feet from rear of bus.
4. Undivided 2-lane highways –
 - A. triangle 100 feet in front of bus
 - B. triangle 100 feet in rear of bus; and
 - C. triangle at traffic side 10 feet from rear of bus.
 - D. Be sure the ignition switch is off and the emergency brake is set
4. Radio the garage to report a breakdown. The after hours and weekend numbers are Pat Jones 926.7444/544.8546 or Shannon Smith 850.528.1038. **Never let students or other vehicles push the bus.**
 - A. If one of the Transportation Department mechanics wants to push the bus, be sure that there are no students on the bus.
 - B. If there is a danger of fire or of the bus being struck by another vehicle, evacuate the bus and have students stand at the side of the road as far away from danger as possible.
 - C. Do not permit unauthorized persons to board the bus under any circumstances. Should anyone, other than students, stop or any manner attempt to board the bus, keep the door closed. Other than students, authorized personnel include school administrators, Transportation officials, law enforcement officers or medical personnel.

- D. Only those mechanics employed by the Transportation Department are authorized to service a school bus

ACCIDENTS

Accidents Involving Vehicles

1. Most important “stay calm”. **Contact the bus garage immediately.**
2. Stop the bus and make sure that there is no danger of further movement. Move the bus off the road if possible. Turn off the engine and remove the key.
3. Try to determine if there is danger of fire or explosion. If there is the possibility of fire or further injury to students by having them remain on the bus, unload the students and have them wait at a safe distance from the bus.
4. Immediately determine if there are injuries on the bus or to the driver of the other vehicle. This will determine the kind of help needed. Contact the garage by radio or if the radio is not available by cell phone.
5. All vehicles involved should be stopped as close to the accident scene as possible. Put out triangles, if necessary. Smoking is prohibited at the accident scene.
6. Immediately after the accident the driver must complete passenger information listing names, addresses, birth date, schools, and grades.
7. No student is to be released unless checked by EMT, school officials or transportation director or supervisor.

8. Be prepared to give the school bus registration, the make, year and insurance policy number to the law enforcement officer.
9. AVOID STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCIDENT. Let proper authorities and School Board officials settle this.
10. In every case, remain at the accident scene until you are released. All vehicles and their controls should remain as they were until investigated by the property authorities.
11. Do not attempt to use the bus to transport pupils following an accident until it has been inspected and repaired by a mechanic or until authorized to do so by a Transportation mechanic.
12. The bus driver may be required to submit to a drug/alcohol test following an accident

Accidents Involving Animals

1. A school bus driver should never swerve or make a hard panic stop to avoid hitting a small animal. The safety and well-being of passengers and fellow motorists must come first. Should an emergency stop, or swerve be made for such a reason, an on-bus injury or accident may occur, and human suffering could result.
2. If, while transporting students, a bus driver injures or kills a small animal, the driver must not stop. Report the incident to the Transportation Department at the first opportunity by telephone.
3. Bus Drivers should not ask the dispatcher to report dead animals.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS

The purpose of school bus evacuation drills is to have the bus driver, bus monitor, and each student riding the bus know exactly what to do in case of

emergency. Emergencies may occur because of fire, civil disturbance or accidents. The following are procedures which should be followed:

1. School bus evacuation drills are held twice a year during each school year.
2. Drills will be supervised by school personnel.
3. Times and dates of such drills will be coordinated between the Transportation Department and school principals.
4. All students will participate in these drills unless they are handicapped by an injury or sickness that would prevent their participation
5. Evacuation drills will be held on school grounds in the mornings when buses arrive at school to unload; this is the safest area for a drill evacuation.
6. During the exercise, the bus driver will declare an emergency. Students riding the bus will immediately cease all talking so that the instructions of the bus driver can be heard.
7. Selected assistants will open the rear emergency door and assume their position on each side of the door. (During practice drills, the students will evacuate through the front door only.) Students will exit the bus per the bus driver's instructions.
8. After the bus has been evacuated, the students, at the proper signal, will re-enter the bus for their books and personal belongings. Pupils will remain inside the bus and the driver will proceed to the usual unloading area.
9. The school bus driver is responsible for the safety of the students; however, in an emergency, the driver might be incapacitated and not be able to direct students to evacuate. Several reliable students on every bus route should be instructed how to:
 - A. steer the bus,
 - B. Turn off the ignition switch,

- C. Set the parking brake,
- D. Kick out windows as additional emergency exits,
- E. Help small students off the bus,
- F. Account for all students,
- G. Set out triangles,
- H. How to use the radio and seek help,
- I. Perform other assignments.

POLICIES REGARDING STUDENTS

General Guidelines

1. Students are to be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus arrives and ready to board the bus at the time shown on the bus schedule. The bus driver is responsible for keeping to this schedule and cannot wait for tardy pupils.
2. Students are to be instructed by drivers to stay off the road while waiting for the bus and to wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before loading or unloading. Students may leave the bus only with the driver's permission.
3. Students should leave and enter the bus through the front door only, unless directed to do otherwise by the driver.
4. Students are allowed to leave the school bus only at their regular stops, such as established pickup and delivery points. Deviations will be permitted only upon written permission from the parents and approved by the school principal.
5. Students must be supervised until they have crossed the roadway. Students are to cross in front of the bus only after all the cars have come to a complete stop and the driver has instructed them to do so.
6. Students who may ride the bus include:
 - A. Students registered on the route being covered at a specific time.

Designated students participating in school-sponsored extra trips.

B. Students are temporarily assigned to ride during emergencies.

C. Students with written permission from a parent or guardian, signed by a school administrator.

7. Students may not be on board the bus when the bus is being refueled.

Student Contact

Discipline on the school bus is one of the greatest challenges facing school bus drivers. There are important reasons for having a discipline system on the buses, but of utmost importance is for the safety of students. Disorderly students might not only injure each other, but they could also cause the bus driver to have an accident. It is also important to realize that the bus driver can be held liable if his/her actions are negligent. Guidelines are as follows:

1. A standard of classroom behavior is expected from students while riding the bus, except that lower volume conversation is allowed.
2. Rules for student conduct and safety are posted in the front of the bus.
3. Bus drivers shall review these rules with students at the beginning of the school year and as often as necessary to ensure that students remain familiar with them.
4. All students will have assigned seating in order to maintain safety and/or order on the bus. Assigned seating may not be used in a discriminatory or culturally based manner. High school students in one area of bus and middle school students in the other area of bus. Example: High school students in the back of bus and middle school students in the front. All WI students in the first 2 seats at all times.
5. Serious behavior problems should be referred to the principal or designee of the student's assigned school by completing a school bus referral form. **When a driver suspects that a student is being bullied and/or harassed, the driver must immediately report it to the principal or designee. If the principal or designee is not available, the driver shall contact the Transportation Coordinator.**
6. Assistance in handling inappropriate behavior problems can be requested through the school principal.
7. Drivers should not permit students to bring live animals, insects, weapons, glass, or any kind of sharp instruments that might injure other pupils on the bus. Band and orchestra instruments will be permitted, if they can be held in the student's lap and do not interfere with the comfort and safety of other students; or for large instruments, if vacant space is available.

Fights on Your Bus

In transporting school children, you must become aware of how to handle the disruptive behavior of the students. Sometimes behavior results in physical violence. You must always take immediate control of such behavior before physical harm occurs. These steps must be taken immediately.

1. Pull the bus over and stop in a safe area as soon as possible. Shut the bus off and remove the key. Activate 4-way flashers and proceed to the students that are fighting. Sometimes the bus being pulled to the side and the driver getting out of the seat will end the fighting.
2. Do not place yourself between the students that are fighting. Attempt to separate the fighting students by talking in a calm voice.
3. If you have a bus attendant, have them take one of the students to the rear of the bus while you keep one in the front of the bus, near you. If you do not have a bus attendant, place one student by someone he likes to try to calm him/her down. The other student should remain near you. Be sure to notify the school principal in which the student attends and the Transportation Office of the incident and document it through the on-line discipline system exactly as it occurred – using specific details.
4. After you have the students separated, check them for injuries and take appropriate first aid action. If you are not sure of the severity of an injury, call the Transportation Department and request assistance from 911. It is better to have the student checked than to take any chances, which will reduce liability both for the school system and you.
5. You are required to notify the Transportation Office immediately if any medical assistance is administered to anyone riding your bus. You will also need to complete a Student Incident Form describing student/employee injuries and give a full description of the incident. A bus conduct referral should be done immediately upon completing your bus route and forward it to a school administrator.

A Disruptive Student

There are times when you will face the problem of a disruptive student on your bus. This student will mainly be “acting out” to show off. (The problem could be a large one or a small one, depending on how you react to the situation.)

Some simple procedures to help you maintain discipline on your bus are as follows:

1. Remain calm – never raise your voice. A soft voice sometimes will diffuse a situation. Pull the bus over to a safe area and stop, if appropriate. This will allow you to take control of the student, if necessary.
2. Attempt to calm the student(s) down by talking quietly to find out the reason for the behavior.
3. Isolate the disruptive student from the rest of your student load, if possible. Sometimes peer pressure will also help in diffusing a potential problem on your bus, if used properly.
4. Contact the Transportation Department for assistance, if necessary.

Remember, the safety of all your students comes first, so take whatever steps are necessary to ensure their safety. Acting in a reasonable and prudent manner will almost always clear you of any unjust claims.

Keys to Maintaining Discipline

- Clearly and firmly tell students exactly what the rules are and how they are to behave.
- Have a reason for asking a student to do something.
- Be specific. Tell students exactly what they are doing well. Praise them often for good behavior. Make sure praise is specific and sounds sincere.
- REWARD students who do behave. Rewards should be something students like, appropriate for the age level of the student, and never be taken away as punishment.
- Have a plan of action when students do not behave appropriately.
- Stay calm and use a normal tone of voice when reprimanding students.

- Set a good example and be consistent in communicating with students.
 - Provide a pleasant environment by greeting the students with a friendly smile and/or a friendly comment, such as “Good Morning, how are you today?” or “Good-bye,” etc.

Parents Not At Home:

- 1. No Pre-K student is permitted to be dropped off unless there is supervision at the bus stop. Only individuals listed on the Pre-K Transportation sheet can get the student off the bus. If there is no one at the stop, radio Pre-K or Transportation and proceed on with your route. Pre-K or Transportation will notify you with other instructions.**
- 2. Kindergarten, 1st grade, or 2nd grade students are not permitted to be dropped off unless there is supervision at the bus stop or they get off with an older sibling, 3rd grade or above. This would be allowed if a note has been provided by parent giving permission for the K-g – 2nd grade child to get off with older sibling. If a parent wants their child to get off without supervision, they must provide a signed note. The driver will provide the school center and Transportation with a copy of the signed note.**
- 3. If there is no supervision at the bus stop, radio the school center or the Transportation Department. Proceed on your route and the school center or Transportation will notify you with other instructions. Upon returning the second time if no one is at the stop, radio the school center or Transportation for further instructions.**
- 4. When delivering students to their respective stops, remember to be observant towards strangers or unfamiliar vehicles. If you see someone strange, and feel uncomfortable, do not let your student /students off the bus. Radio the Transportation Office. If possible, get tag number and/or description of vehicle and/or persons.**

5. **REMEMBER**, you need to notify Transportation as soon as possible of any situation that may jeopardize the safety of the students.

Use of School Bus Patrols/Student Monitors are not permitted.

General Guidelines

1. Bus drivers are not to leave the bus with children aboard except in the case of extreme emergency.
2. Avoid having students cross the street wherever possible.
3. While at school turn the motor off when loading students. The only exception is for buses with side lifts.
4. No unauthorized persons are allowed on the bus, including parents
5. The bus driver is responsible for always keeping current bus information for each student on the bus.

RECORDS, REPORTS AND ACCOUNTING

Any agency which uses public funds must keep detailed records of all operations. Furthermore, planning for better services cannot be accomplished without adequate information. Therefore, bus drivers are required to keep records of certain aspects of their operation.

Pre-Trip Forms

1. Drivers must complete this form prior to their route for each trip. A deficiency that requires immediate correction must be reported to the Transportation Department. It is important that any deficiency be reported immediately.
2. It is very important that bus drivers clearly state what they think is wrong with their bus since such information will assist the mechanics in quickly locating and correcting the deficiencies.

Field Trips

Please see Field Trip Handbook

Bus Conduct Referrals

1. Bus Conduct Referrals are to be reported for student behavior that is serious, persistent and/or cannot be resolved by student cooperation with the bus driver.
2. The referrals are to be reported by the bus driver using the on-line referral system and submitted directly to the appropriate school official.
3. Any disciplinary action taken as a result of the referral shall be made by the school official.

School Bus Schedule & F.E.F.P. Report

School bus schedules are required to be completed four times a year. Additional school bus schedules are required if changes occur. F.E.F.P. reports are required two times during the regular school year and twice during the summer school session.

Payroll Information

All bus drivers and bus attendants must give this information to the transportation secretary at the beginning of the school year and each time there are any consistent changes that increase or decrease the hours worked.

Recruitment and Signing Bonus: added 2020-2021 SY

Any Wakulla County School bus driver who recruits someone to become a Wakulla County School bus driver; that person is hired as a bus driver; becomes qualified to be a bus driver; and drives a bus for six months for Wakulla County, will be awarded a bonus of \$1,000 per recruitment. A leave of absence of any kind will extend the six-month required driving period. The recruitment documentation form must be completed by the bus driver who recruits the new employee prior to the first day of work for the new employee. Any new bus driver hired after December 14th, 2020, will receive a \$500 signing bonus after being an active driver for six months without being on a leave of absence of any kind. A leave of absence of any kind will extend the six-month required driving period. The signing bonus documentation form must be completed by the new hire.

TRANSPORTATION ATTENDANCE BONUS: added 2021 SY

\$1,250 per 9 weeks possible

CRITERIA

1. All absences for any reason (death, illness, emergency, etc) are considered an absence. There are no exceptions.
2. Employees eligible for this attendance incentive/bonus are transportation employees who have a CDL license and drive a bus on a regular basis. A “regular basis” means driving a bus 5 days a week, each morning, and each afternoon.
3. Transportation administrators are not eligible for this attendance bonus.
4. An employee can miss up to 1 day per nine weeks and still be eligible for the attendance bonus
5. There are no partial bonuses given.
6. If more than 1 day is missed during any 9-week period, employees are not eligible.
7. Any amount of time taken off equaling to or less than 3.5 hours will count as half a day off for the purpose of the bonus.
8. Any time taken off more than 3.5 hours will count as a full day off for the purpose of the bonus.

Operating Procedure No. 1 – Fuel Conservation

1. Avoid sudden start and stop at all times.
2. Shut off the engine while waiting. Do not let the engine idle for extended periods of time.
3. Inform the maintenance supervisor when the bus engine is not running smoothly. A tune up may be necessary.

Operating Procedure No. 2 – Dress Code for Bus Drivers and Attendants

1. Personal Appearance: All drivers and attendants are expected to be clean and neat at all times.
2. Clothing:
School bus drivers, van drivers and bus attendants will be provided Uniforms purchased by the school board. All bus drivers and bus attendants are expected to wear uniforms while on duty (This includes field trip duty).
3. Footwear: It is recommended that you wear shoes that are fully enclosed, with grease, oil, and skid-resistant soles. The following are not acceptable:
 - A. Sandals or Crocs
 - B. Shower Clogs, slip-on platforms or thongs
 - C. High heels or
 - D. Bare feet

Operating Procedure # 3 – Conformance to Route Schedules

1. Keep an up-to-date route sheet in the bus/van at all times. This is essential in an emergency situation or when a relief driver is required. Exceptional education bus drivers are expected to keep accurate and complete information on students. Any student change, to include phone number, must be reported to the transportation office.
2. Drive the routes as printed on the official schedule. Stops and times have been coordinated with the students, school officials, and parents. Deviations from stops and times will not be allowed as they decrease the dependability of the services and generate unnecessary confusion.
3. A variance of plus or minus five minutes from the printed stop times is permitted to offset traffic variations. However, drivers must not leave a designated stop earlier than the scheduled time. WAIT IF YOU MUST. Use of an accurate timepiece is required at all times while on route.
4. Coordinating route changes between drivers without knowledge and permission of the transportation office is forbidden. All coordination of permanent route changes must be carried out by the Transportation Coordinator.

5. Each bus driver/van driver will continuously evaluate assigned routes. Recommendations to improve routing are encouraged. Please submit written recommendations to the Transportation Office so immediate consideration can be given.
6. If a bus is overloaded or if the route cannot be driven in accordance with the published schedule, please contact the Transportation Office immediately.
7. Each bus attendant is required to become familiar with the route and student addresses to enable a substitute bus driver to complete the route in an efficient and timely manner.

Operating Procedure # 4 – Personal Use of Buses

1. Buses are only to be utilized for business purposes, i.e., to transport authorized passengers and/or to conduct other School Board approved business, as sanctioned by the Superintendent or his designee.
2. Bus drivers are not permitted to transport other personnel to and from their places of residency or to and from their places of employment.
3. The use of a school bus for reasons other than those mentioned above is strictly prohibited.

Operating Procedure # 5 – Leaving Children Unattended in a Motor Vehicle

The bus driver shall, after each run, a.m. and p.m., walk to the rear of the bus and check each seat to ascertain that no students were left aboard. This applies to all assigned routes and/or field trips. This should apply to van drivers as well. Check to make sure no students are left in the van after a.m. and p.m. routes.

Operating Procedure # 6 – Smoking

1. It is against state law (Florida Statute 386.205) to smoke on a school bus at any time. Smoking is not permitted within 50 feet of the bus. Any person who violates this law is guilty of a non-

criminal violation, punishable by a fine of not more than \$100 for the first violation and not more than \$500 for each subsequent violation.

2. School board policy prohibits smoking on any school board properties. Any employee convicted of a violation of either state law or school board policy will also be subject to appropriate job-related disciplinary action which could lead to termination.

Operating Procedure # 7 – Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) for Employees Who Drive District-Owned/Leased Vehicles

1. The Transportation Office will check the status of the driver's license of each employee who operates a district-owned/leased vehicle through the State of Florida's Motor Vehicle Registration Office. Volunteers assigned to drive school board owned vehicles; license will be checked prior to use of the vehicle.
2. It is the responsibility of every employee/volunteer who drives a district-owned/leased vehicle to immediately inform the Coordinator of Transportation if their driver's license is suspended or revoked for any reason. In addition, no employee/volunteer shall drive a district-owned/leased vehicle with an improper license or while their license is suspended or revoked.
3. It is mandatory that any traffic accident or violation, parking violation, and/or zoning violation received by you while operating a district-owned/leased vehicle be reported to your immediate supervisor immediately or no later than the end of your work shift if extenuating circumstances exist. See Safe Driver Plan – Pages 60-64
4. It is also mandatory that any traffic accident or violation received by you while operating any privately owned vehicle during non-working hours be reported to your immediate supervisor no later than 24 hours from the time of the incident.

5. It is your responsibility to notify the State of Florida Motor Vehicles Registration Office of any name and/or address change within 10 days. “Whenever any person, after applying for or receiving a driver’s license, changes his residence mailing address named in such application or in the license issued to him or when the name of a licensee is changed by marriage or otherwise, such person shall within 10 days thereafter obtain a replacement license which reflects the change. A violation of this section is a nonmoving violation with a penalty as provided in s.318.18(2). (Chgd. By L.1989, chap. 282(41), eff. 4/1/91.)
6. Failure to comply with this operating procedure will subject the Wakulla County School System to additional liability and will result in disciplinary action, which could lead to termination.

Operating Procedure # 8 – Bus Security

1. All locking devices for doors or windows on school buses must remain unlocked or disengaged while riders are aboard.
2. Bus drivers are required to secure their bus at the end of each trip.

Operating Procedure # 9 – School Bus Keys and Van Keys

1. Ignition keys should always be removed from the bus and placed in the designated lock box. Do not take the keys home.

Operating Procedure # 10 – Students on the Wrong Bus

If a student has inadvertently boarded a bus by mistake, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Under no circumstances will you allow the student to leave your bus.

2. Notify the Transportation Office by radio immediately for instructions.

Operating Procedure # 11 – Use of Two Way Radios

As a bus driver you are assigned a school bus with a two-way mobile radio, you are required to adhere to the following: Van drivers must also follow this policy.

1. Prior to going into service, you are required to turn your radio “ON” and adjust the volume to a normal audible tone.
2. The two-way radio must remain on and the volume adjusted as required throughout your working hours.
3. When your working hours are completed, you are required to turn the radio “OFF”.
4. **The use of the radios are for business purposes ONLY!** A professional, businesslike manner must be used at all times when all radio transmissions are made.
5. Speak in a clear, concise voice without shouting or whispering. Use good diction and proper pronunciation at all times.
6. Bus drivers/attendants must make every effort to safeguard radio equipment from misuse or abuse by students or other unauthorized persons.
7. Non-compounded buses equipped with radios shall be parked where protection from theft or vandalism is maximized, or the vehicle may be required to be parked at the Transportation compound.

8. **When dispatch has been advised of a vehicular accident and/or an emergency, please limit your transmission to emergency use only.**
9. All radio stations are to be tuned to the appropriate channel as noted below:
 - A. Channel 1 – Regular communication for all mobile radios and school centers.
 - B. Channel 2 – Bus to bus communication.

Operating Procedure # 12 – Responsibilities of a School Bus Attendant

1. Assist the bus driver in loading and unloading students in compliance with School Board Regulations.
2. Ensure that all students are secured with seat belts or in special seats, and that all wheelchairs are properly secured.
3. Maintain discipline among students on the bus.
4. Administer the individual needs of the students as required.
5. Develop and maintain a good relationship with the bus driver, students, teachers, and parents.
6. Attending all scheduled meetings and inservice workshops when instructed by the Transportation Coordinator.
7. Maintain familiarity with the bus route to which assigned.
8. Perform all other duties as assigned or as required by the School Board Policy.

Operating Procedure # 13 – Monthly Inspection of School Buses

1. The administrator of garage operations will be responsible for developing and implementing a monthly inspection schedule for all buses to ensure an even flow of work Monday through Friday of each week during the month.
2. Each bus driver is responsible for knowing the inspection day of the bus he/she drives and for bringing the bus to the applicable inspection facility at the assigned time. In the event

a bus fails to pass the inspection and the required work cannot be accomplished during the time allowed, a spare bus will be issued until all deficiencies are corrected.

3. If your bus is scheduled for inspection on a holiday, i.e., and a student holiday, spring break or during winter holidays, it is still your responsibility to meet the inspection date. You are required to take the bus to the garage.
4. If a bus due for inspection has not been turned in by the assigned time on the applicable day, the administrator of garage operations will notify the Transportation Coordinator and appropriate action will be initiated.

Operating Procedure #14 – Rainy Afternoon Schedule

1. Bus drivers and van drivers occasionally encounter heavy fog and rain while transporting students to and from schools and on extra trips. When heavy fog or rain impairs visibility, the bus driver/van driver will take the following action:
 - A. Find a suitable place and stop the bus or van, leave the lights on, and activate the 4-way flashers.
 - B. Explain to the students on board the reason for this action. Do not allow them to leave the bus or van. Notify dispatch office of the location of the bus/van and the school being served, and do not leave the bus/van at any time unless an extreme emergency occurs.
 - C. When weather conditions are such that it is safe to continue the route, proceed with caution.
2. Safety always overrides all other aspects of student transportation. Late bus arrival times are acceptable when caused by unsafe conditions.

Operating Procedure #15 – Motor Vehicle Accidents

Everyone hopes they will never be in an accident. However, as careful as you might be, accidents sometimes occur. When this happens, please observe the following procedures:

1. Stop the bus or van, if not already stopped by the accident.

2. Turn on 4-way flashers, turn off ignition, and set the parking brake.
3. Remain calm and aid the injured.
4. Make evacuation decisions according to the situation.
5. Protect the accident scene with disabled vehicle warning devices.
6. The driver should always ensure the police (911) are called, no matter how minor the accident. The only exception is when it involves county-owned vehicles on county property and there are no students on board. In such cases, it is still required that you notify the Transportation Department and inform your manager.
7. If students are on board, the driver should always call the Transportation Department. When notifying the Transportation Department, give the following information:
 - A. vehicle number involved in the accident,
 - B. location of the accident,
 - C. any injuries,
 - D. any students on board (if so, get list of all students involved),
 - E. mechanic or wrecker needed, and
 - F. brief description of accident
8. If possible, do not move the vehicle or release students until told to do so by a police officer or Transportation official.
9. Do not discuss the accident with anyone on the scene except law officials or a representative of the Transportation Services.
10. Do not admit fault, but do give clear, concise, truthful answers to all questions asked by the authorities.

11. The vehicle must be brought to the Transportation Department within 48 hours for a damage estimate immediately upon completion of the route or field trip.
12. Report all accidents to the Transportation Department regardless of how minor or how much damage has been done.

Police, fire and ambulance – Dial 911

Transportation Services – Dial 926-7550

Operating Procedure #16 – Bus Refueling

1. Bus drivers/attendants may not remain on the bus during refueling. All passengers will disembark with exceptions as listed below:
 - A. Regular station wagons and sedans used for transporting students may be refueled without removing the students. Refueling these vehicles with students aboard is considered safe when normal safety precautions are followed.
 - B. On occasion, side-lift buses carrying students in wheelchairs, special seats or harnesses require refueling while on route. These students will not be removed when emergency refueling is accomplished, i.e., placing five or ten gallons of gas in a tank so bus can complete its route. It is considered safe to accomplish this emergency refueling when regular safety precautions are followed.
2. Smoking within 50 feet of gasoline pumps or mobile tank vehicles is prohibited by law.
3. Routine bus refueling must be planned to occur at times when students are not on board. Refueling immediately after completion of morning or afternoon routes is preferred, thus eliminating the need for refueling while on route.
4. Proper keys must be identified with the correct bus number.

Operating Procedure #17 – Cellular Telephones/CB Radios/Recorders

1. No bus/van driver is permitted to use a cellular telephone, 2-way telephone, CB radio, tape recorder, and/or other device while driving a Wakulla County school bus. Violation of this procedure could result in suspension without pay or termination of employee. This includes ear buds or any other wireless devices.
2. This does not preclude the use of the authorized 2-way mobile radio units that are installed in the Wakulla County School Board buses which are used to better facilitate transporting students to and from school.

Operating Procedure #18 – Assigned Seating

1. Bus drivers are required to assign bus seats. Up to date seating charts shall remain on the bus at all times.

Bus Cleanliness #19 –

The bus should always be kept clean. A dirty and littered bus is an invitation for students to make it worse and misbehave. Once a month, lift seats and remove trash, making sure seats are properly latched back after checking. Empty trash receptacles when necessary. Do not allow mildew to collect on the inside roof of the bus. A quick weekly cleaning of the interior with warm water and detergent will keep the bus clean. The bus must pass a monthly inspection for cleanliness. The bus must also be clean inside and out when turned in at the end of the school year.

INTRODUCTION:

The Wakulla County School Board can significantly increase safety and reduce the potential for injuries and lawsuits by initiating a plan that assures we do not hire or allow any person to drive a bus or van who does not have an acceptable driving record. People who have poor driving records will not drive a school bus or van for the Wakulla County School Board. {Authority 6A-3.0141(8)}

PLAN:

In order to qualify for and remain employed by the Wakulla County School Board, school bus drivers, substitute/volunteer drivers, and bus attendants who transports students, must maintain a personal driving record which exemplifies careful driving habits and meets the criteria prescribed by this plan. The Coordinator of Transportation or Designee is responsible for monitoring all driving records, and all bus drivers, substitute/volunteer drivers and bus attendants, who transport students will be required to report the following to the Coordinator of Transportation or Designee:

1. All accidents and violations in which they are involved as the driver of a School Board owned/leased vehicle.
2. All accidents and violations in which they are cited or charged as the driver of non-school owned/leased vehicles.
3. All evidence of damage to assigned vehicle(s).
4. Suspension or revocation of driver's license. No driver shall be allowed to drive a vehicle belonging to or leased by the Wakulla County School Board without proper license or when license is under suspension or revocation.
5. Citation for a DUI or driving while under the influence of a controlled substance: A driver receiving this type of citation will be suspended without pay pending court ruling or clearance by the clerk of court. If convicted of a DUI or driving while under the influence of a controlled substance the driver shall be recommended for termination.

Failure to report within twenty-four hours or before the next driving assignment, or making false misleading report(s), may be grounds for termination of employment. Drivers shall not be assigned points under the district imposed point system (with the exception of a citation for a DUI or driving while under the influence of a controlled substance) until court action is taken. The effective date of the points assigned shall be the date of the first meeting following the date of conviction. For monitoring purposes, driving records will be checked as required by the Department of Education on a weekly basis.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

The effective date of the Safe Driver Plan and Program will be May 1, 2008.

APPLICATION:

This plan will be applicable to all school bus drivers and substitute/volunteer drivers and bus attendants who transport students. Prospective drivers will not be hired if, according to this plan, they have more than five points in the last year or more than ten points in the last three years, or convicted of DWI, DUI, DUBAL in the last seven years.

THE DISTRICT IMPOSED POINT SYSTEM:

The driving record of all Wakulla County School Board bus drivers, substitute/volunteer drivers and bus attendants who transport students will be reviewed monthly. The Transportation Coordinator or Designee shall assign points as convictions occur according to the

following schedule. A driver involved in a single accident or event and convicted for more than one violation will receive no less than the maximum points assigned to the highest violation category.

VIOLATION CATEGORIES	MAXIMUM POINTS TO BE ASSIGNED
1. Conviction of driving while impaired (DWI), driving under the influence (DUI), or driving with unlawful blood alcohol level (DUBAL) will result in mandatory recommendation for termination as a driver	Termination
2. Speeding 15 MPH or less over posted speed limit	3
3. Speeding more than 15 MPH over posted limit	4
4. Careless driving	4
5. Reckless driving	4
6. Failure to observe stop sign	4
7. Failure to observe red light	4
8. Failure to observe traffic instruction sign	1
9. Operating without a valid driver's license or improper (revoked, suspended, etc.) license	10
10. Improper lane change	4
11. Failure to have vehicle under control	4
12. Crossing private property to avoid traffic light or stop-sign	2
13. Driving on wrong side of road	2
14. Improper turn	2
15. Failure to yield - entering through highway	4
16. Failure to yield - right of way	4
17. Improper backing	2
18. A. Following too close	2
B. Following too close resulting in an accident	4
19. Improper passing	4
20. Leaving the scene of an accident	Termination
21. Failure to stop at railroad crossing (when required to do so)	Termination
22. Fleeing or attempting to elude police officer	Termination
23. Failure to observe other established driving law. Points will be established 0-10 by the Transportation Coordinator or Designee using the above schedule as a guide.	0 to 10
24. Passing a school bus while it is loading or	Termination

unloading	
Any accident indicating evidence of driver negligence, results in injuries, causes damage to vehicles or property, or demonstrates unsafe driving practices, may be charged in this category. The Transportation Coordinator or Designee using the above schedule may assess 0 - 10 points using above violation categories as guide.	0 - 10

An accumulation of points shall result in the following administrative action:

NUMBER OF POINTS	TIME PERIOD	BUS DRIVER ACTION	SUBSTITUTE / VOLUNTEER DRIVER ACTION
1-2 points within	12-month period	verbal warning	verbal warning
1-4 points within	12-month period	documented warning	documented warning
5-6 points within	12-month period	1 day suspension without pay	1 day suspension from driving
7-9 points within	12-month period	3-day suspension without pay	3-day suspension from driving
10 points within	12-month period	termination of employment as a driver	will not be allowed to drive school owned/leased vehicle
15 points within	24-month period	termination of employment as a driver	will not be allowed to drive school owned/leased vehicle

ADMINISTRATION:

The Coordinator of Transportation or Designee will administer this plan:

1. To determine if an incident was preventable in accordance with the definition in the National Safe Driver Award Rules and Guidelines. A preventable accident is “Any occurrence involving an employer owned or leased vehicle which results property damage regardless of who was injured, what property was damaged, to

what extent, or where it occurred, in which the driver in question failed to do everything reasonable to prevent it.”

2. To make recommendations to the Assistant Superintendent for Transportation concerning action to be taken.

3. Review any convictions for driving violations.

4. Assess points in accordance with the schedule plan.

Each employee shall be given an opportunity to read this plan and have all his/her questions answered. Each employee shall sign a form indicating that he/she has read this plan.

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF WAKULLA COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
SAFE DRIVER PLAN REPORT FORM**

Drivers Name: _____

On _____ **the Safe Driver Plan was reviewed concerning the vehicle accident or citation which occurred on** _____.

The following action was taken:

Violation Category	Points Possible	Points Assigned

Comments:

The driving record of all Wakulla County School Board bus drivers, substitute/volunteers and bus attendants who transport students will be reviewed monthly. Points will be assigned as convictions occur according to the imposed point system. A driver involved in a single accident or event but convicted for more than one violation will receive points in the one category receiving the highest number of points.

Signature, Transportation Coordinator/Designee

Signature, Employee

Date

Date

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