



# **Transportation Employee Handbook**

**2023**



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## **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Arkansas City USD 470 will provide equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, ancestry, political belief or activity, or status as a veteran. This policy applies to all areas of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation benefits, social and recreational programs, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

USD 470 complies with all relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will not discriminate against any qualified employee or job applicant with respect to any terms, privileges, or conditions of employment because of a person's physical or mental disability. If you have a disability which affects your ability to perform the essential functions of your job, a reasonable accommodation may be available. If you desire an accommodation, please notify your supervisor or the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Equal employment opportunity notices are posted on appropriate employee bulletin boards as required by law. The notices summarize the rights of employees to equal opportunity in employment and list the names and addresses of the various government agencies that may be contacted if any person believes he or she has been discriminated against.

Any persons having inquiries concerning USD 470's compliance with regulations implementing Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, may contact the Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations, 2545 Greenway, Arkansas City, KS 67005, (620.441.2000), who has been designated to coordinate the district's efforts to comply with these laws.

## **Transportation Handbook**

The driver and aide of a school bus are important members of the educational team. The responsibilities are considerable; ranging from constant attention and an understanding of defensive driving coupled with strict observance of vehicular laws, to diplomacy in handling students, parents, school personnel and the public. Drivers and aides should also have basic knowledge of first aid, CPR, and a deep feeling of personal responsibility for the students aboard the bus. Once a bus leaves the transportation facility, the success or failure of that trip rests mainly with the driver and aide.

## **Public Relations**

A school bus driver and aide are sometimes the only regular contact a parent/guardian has with USD 470 and may be only means we have of establishing an effective relationship with them. A positive attitude and friendly reaction to the people of the community will make a big contribution to the district's ability to create a positive image. Misunderstandings with the public can be avoided if district policies are thoroughly explained in a calm and friendly manner. Transportation staff will inform the Transportation Supervisor of any problem or potential problem involving parents/guardians and/or students through incident reports and/or oral communication. Remember, drivers and aides can influence the attitude and mood of passengers by the manner of the driver's control and personality.

## USD 470 Locations

Gene Snyder  
Administrative Center  
2545 Greenway Rd  
620.441.2000

Maintenance  
715 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St  
620.441.2080

Adams Elementary  
1201 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St  
620.441.2040

Frances Willard Elementary  
201 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St  
620.441.2050

Jefferson Elementary  
131 Osage  
620.441.2060

Arkansas City Middle School  
400 E. Kansas Ave  
620.441.2030

Avery Learning Center  
2500 N. 15<sup>th</sup> St  
620.441.2078

Transportation / Warehouse  
420 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St  
620.441.2084 (Transportation)  
620.441.2082 (Warehouse)

Technology  
2207 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St  
620.441.2088

C-4 Elementary  
11945 292<sup>nd</sup> Rd  
620.441.2045

IXL Elementary  
6758 322<sup>nd</sup> Rd  
620.441.2055

Roosevelt Elementary  
300 N. B St  
620.441.2070

Arkansas City High School  
1200 W. Radio Ln  
620.441.2010



# General Information

## **ID Badge / Key Fob**

USD 470 shall provide each classified employee with a photo identification badge and a key fob. Badges should be visible at all times when an employee is on duty, especially when on a school campus. If an ID needs to be replaced, an appointment may be made with the Personnel Clerk at the District Office.

## **Cell Phone**

Cell phones may be carried by drivers and aides at their personal discretion. Phones may be used for talking, texting, reading, and/or listening only while the bus is safely parked, and no students are on board. Aides may not be on cell phones or devices when students are on board the bus. Drivers will not use personal electronic devices, including cell phones, while driving. This includes any device used for talking, texting, reading, and listening. Federal Ruling (FMCSA 35-11) banned hand-held phone use by drivers of buses and large trucks for commercial motor vehicles.

## **Confidentiality**

It is essential that all employees fully understand how to treat confidential information. Knowledge of sensitive information, be it private or medical, regarding students and other district employees may occur. Such knowledge is to be kept strictly confidential. Gossip regarding students, teacher, other drivers, or schools can be cause for disciplinary action. If it is necessary to discuss sensitive information, it should be with the Transportation Supervisor. Please remember radio communication is overheard by persons other than those involved in the conversation and must remain professional and appropriate to protect all parties' privacy rights. The Family Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of an individual's information. No information should be disclosed unless an employee has been given permission to do otherwise.

## **Appearance / Dress Code**

As representatives of USD 470, all transportation staff should always look neat and professional. First impressions, and to a degree, later opinions are based on appearance as well as actions. All staff have a much better chance of commanding the needed respect of passengers and the public if looks warrant that respect.

All clothing worn by transportation employees should be clean and well kept. For safety, shoes must be considered safe to operate a school bus: non-slip soles, closed toes and heel straps secured. Employees hair should be neat and trimmed and not allowed to hamper vision in any way. Hats should be removed inside the bus.

The following are examples of apparel not appropriate for transportation employees: short shorts, tank tops, tube tops, ragged sweatshirts, tight clothing (such as exercise pants or tops), flip flops or open toe shoes, T-shirts with inappropriate messages (such as endorsements for alcohol, tobacco, etc.).

Shorts are permitted if they are no shorter than four inches above the knee or, using arms as a measure, when both are fully extended, the shorts extend beyond the length of fingertips.

## **Change of Information**

If an employee has a change of address, telephone number, or name, the change should immediately be reported to the Transportation Supervisor, the Personnel Clerk, and the Department of Motor Vehicles (this must be reported within 10 days of any name or address change).

## **Break Room / Training Room**

Please keep the break / training room tidy by picking up litter, immediately washing and putting away dishware, pushing in chairs, and putting away reading material. Any special use of the break room, such as private meetings, etc., must be cleared in advance with the Transportation Supervisor. Children are not permitted in the office, the shop area, or the yard of the transportation complex. The break room may be used periodically as a waiting room for drivers' children and training/staff meetings. Children should not be present during meetings called by the Transportation Supervisor, colleagues, or other administrators.

## **Office Areas**

The office area should always be an area of quiet with a business-like atmosphere.

## **Gray / White Board**

There is a gray board located in the break/training room where general staff information is posted. Check this board often as important information can be added at any time. Questions concerning special instructions can be directed to the Transportation Supervisor.

## **Employee Parking**

There is limited employee parking available across the street from the transportation complex. Employees are to park only in designated parking areas.

## **Tobacco Free School Campus / Drug Free Workplace**

The use, possession, or promotion of any tobacco product by any employee is prohibited in any district facility, in school vehicles, at school-sponsored activities, programs, or events and on school owned or operated property at all times. "Tobacco product" means any product that is made from or derived from tobacco, or that contains nicotine, that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, or ingested by any other means.

Maintaining a drug free workplace is important in establishing an appropriate learning environment for the students of the district. Employees shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use controlled substances in the workplace.

Improper behavior such as the use of alcohol or any prohibited substance, either before reporting for or while on duty, is strictly prohibited. Also prohibited are any medications, oral or otherwise, that may affect the central nervous system, including, but not limited to, amphetamines, barbiturates, and/or narcotics. If an illness requires medication, be certain the medicine does not reduce alertness, cause



drowsiness, or produce unsafe side effects. Ask a doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to operate a school bus while taking any questionable medication.

USD 470 participates in a federally mandated National Clearinghouse which requires driver registration and the use of random drug-testing. During the year, fifty percent of drivers and others in safety sensitive positions will be randomly selected and required to submit to alcohol testing. Failure to submit to the testing may result in a positive test result. Details of this policy are available in the transportation office. All new driver candidates are required to take and pass a drug test as a condition of employment. Federal law also requires that drug testing be conducted immediately after certain types of accidents.

USD 470 reserves the right to randomly drug test any employee at any time.

## **Profanity / Vulgarity**

Use of profane or vulgar language is strictly forbidden while in the presence of students, on school property in the vicinity of children and adults, or while otherwise representing the district. This behavior indicates ignorance on the part of the user and demonstrates a “poverty of vocabulary”. Use of such language in the presence of fellow employees may be the basis of grounds for a formal complaint of harassment in the workplace.

## **Personal Items**

Do not leave personal items in places where students have access to avoid damage or theft.

# **Work Procedures**

## **USD 470 Rules and Regulations**

1. All bus drivers must be 21 years of age.
2. A bus driver or bus aide may hold another job between routes if it does not interfere with their duties as a USD 470 employee. If another job is held, employee must be able to drive 30 minutes after notification in case of emergency school dismissals (weather, bomb threats, etc.).
3. Drivers will walk to the back of the bus after completion of each route to check for students left on the bus and to lock ALL bus doors.
4. Drivers will not make a right hand turn on a red light.
5. A driver will not back a bus except in extreme emergencies unless a flagman or aide is used.
6. A driver may be terminated if they have three accidents in one year causing any kind of damage to the bus or other property.
7. A driver may be terminated if they are convicted or plead guilty to any moving violation.
8. If there is a cut-back of bus routes and a reduction in the number of drivers and/or aides is required, the following factors will be considered (in no particular order):
  - a. Number of at-fault accidents (any type)
  - b. Discipline control
  - c. Attitude and cooperation with supervisors, principals, and other drivers
  - d. Daily maintenance of the bus

- e. Years of experience with the district
- 9. At the end of the school year, all buses will be parked in the parking area at the Transportation building, doors locked, with keys and gas card returned.
- 10. During the school year, all buses will be parked in the parking area at the Transportation building.
- 11. School vehicles will be used for school business only.
- 12. Safety vests will be made available to all staff.

## **Licenses and Certificates**

As a condition of employment as a school bus driver, all appropriate licenses and certificates prescribed by law and/or the district must be maintained and carried when driving. This includes:

- Valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL): A valid license of the appropriate class.
- Medical Certificate (renewed every two years unless required more frequently due to doctor's instructions)
- Defensive Driving Card (renewed every three years)
- Valid First Aid Card (renewed annually)
- Registration in the National Driver's Clearinghouse
- Busing on the LookOut (BOLT) Certificate

School bus drivers are required to obtain licenses and certificates prior to employment. In addition, USD 470 requires a pre-employment physical examination and background check. After employment, the district will pay for future school bus driver physicals.

A school bus driver is responsible for keeping certifications current. As a courtesy, the Transportation Supervisor will attempt to provide notification when a certification renewal is due. If a medical certificate, driver's license, first aid card, etc. is allowed to expire, a CDL becomes invalid. Permitting required certification to expire is considered a failure to meet the requirements of the job classification and, at the minimum, will result in unapproved leave without pay.

## **Bus Aide Responsibilities**

The bus driver and bus aides work together as a team. An aide's responsibility includes helping to keep a good, clean environment on the bus. Although the law makes the driver ultimately responsible for what happens on the bus, it is USD 470's philosophy that there is equal responsibility regarding certain actions. For example, failure to properly tie down a wheelchair or failure to follow procedure in using the lift would be a shared responsibility. Another example is failure to perform a proper post-trip inspection of the bus, possibly resulting in a sleeping child being left on the bus in the yard. Any issues to comply on either side needs to be reported to the Transportation Supervisor.

## **Attendance**

Good attendance is an expectation of the district. Daily attendance is expected, and an absence must be for good cause. Continual poor attendance and/or lateness will result in disciplinary action. The USD 470 Classified Staff Handbook states that two or more tardies in a month are excessive. For transportation personnel, two or more tardies a year may be considered excessive. Excessive tardiness may result in probation, termination, or remaining on the same salary for the following year.

The Transportation Supervisor should be notified at least one hour before check-in time if an absence or late arrival for work is necessary. Voice mail messages are not acceptable. Arrival after an assigned route time will be considered late. A “no call/no show” is defined as failure to notify the Transportation Supervisor of an absence or late arrival. If this happens, the office may not notice an absence and an assigned route might not be covered. This causes hardship for the students and could create an unsafe condition while the students wait for the bus. Either type of lateness can be disruptive to the operation, although, a no call/no show is a far more serious offense. If late, the Transportation Supervisor may cover the route with another driver.

## **Leaves and Absences**

Drivers must notify the Transportation Supervisor when a sub is needed and work with the Transportation Supervisor to identify who will be subbing. Shop personnel will only be used in emergency substitute situations as determined by the Transportation Supervisor. (See Classified Staff Handbook for leave and absence policies.)

The Route/Student Log is to be on the bus by the driver’s seat at all times. The Route Log must always be kept current at. This includes any medical plans.

Notify the Transportation Supervisor immediately if an illness occurs while on duty. Notify the Transportation Supervisor in advance when an absence is necessary.

When possible, annual medical checkups, vacations, etc., should be scheduled during spring, winter, or summer breaks and off-hours. Do not place an unnecessary burden on the Department by asking for personal time off. However, there are provisions for emergencies.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

All transportation staff are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. Reports will be filed by the observer. Reports must be completed within 36 hours of becoming aware of the information concerning an incident. The reporting staff member must notify the Transportation Supervisor that a report was filed to protect the best interest of the child.

# **Work Procedures – Bus Operations**

## **Bus Assignments**

The Transportation Supervisor will assign and reassign buses to routes according to the needs of the district, taking into consideration length of route, capacity, terrain, vehicle type, etc.

Drivers are responsible for giving a complete, tentative roster of all eligible riders on their route no later than September 5<sup>th</sup> to the Transportation Supervisor. If September 5<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, rosters should be delivered the last previous workday. This roster should be continually updated throughout the year. Roster should include correct student name, address, date of birth, parent’s name, and emergency contact phone numbers. Drivers will check with the transportation secretary to verify accuracy of report.

Drivers will not pick up any new riders once school starts unless approved by the Transportation Supervisor.

If a student changes residence during the school year, the Transportation Supervisor will be notified and will determine if the student is still eligible for transportation.

Drivers will refer questions regarding attendance center boundaries to the Transportation Supervisor or the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction.

## **Bus Stop Descriptions**

The Transportation Supervisor and the drivers will develop routes that have very specific stop descriptions. Make certain pick-ups are at an exact location. Where possible, stops should be located 200 feet from an intersection. If uncertain about exactly where to stop, check with the Transportation Supervisor. Changing or adding a stop location is not permitted without prior approval. If a situation arises not covered by these instructions, drivers will inform the Transportation Supervisor so corrective measures can be taken immediately.

## **Bus Stops**

Every attempt will be made to establish bus stops in the safest locations. All stops should be made a safe distance from any obstruction that could interfere with safe loading or unloading procedures.

The bus must be stopped parallel to the curb leaving adequate space between the bus and curb for a student to step down to the street and then up to the curb. Buses should not block an intersection or crosswalk. If a designated bus stop is on the highway, buses will pull off the main traveled portion of the road as far to the right as is safe and practical.

If arriving early, wait until the scheduled departure time. If arriving on time, wait two minutes before leaving. Call the Transportation Supervisor on the two-way radio when a student is missing. If a student will be absent for an extended period, please notify the Transportation Supervisor of the extended absence.

## **School Traffic Patterns and Bus Lineups**

Each school has unique bus approach routes and parking lineups. When assigned an unfamiliar route, drivers should check with the Transportation Supervisor or secretary for accurate directions for the route. Most schools have a specific bus parking order and a diagram for each school can be found in the transportation office.

The space available for bus parking is limited at the schools. Bus drivers will pull buses up to the front as closely as possible. Be aware of protruding overhead crossover mirrors. Besides making more parking space available, this practice prevents students from the dangerous practice of running between buses to cross the street.



## **Timeliness on the Route**

The entire transportation operation is based on the premise that a set time schedule will be observed. Safety, however, takes precedence over punctuality in all cases. Never attempt to “make up” time by taking short-cuts in pre-trip inspections or by speeding/driving recklessly.

Never leave a bus stop early. If running more than ten minutes behind schedule, for any reason, notify the Transportation Supervisor of the estimated arrival time.

## **Noon Routes**

Noon route driving is chosen by seniority for drivers and aides and seniority bumps.

## **Returning the Bus to School**

Although tempting at times, never alter a route or return a group of students to a school without authorization from the Transportation Supervisor.

If assistance with student behavior is needed, call the Transportation Supervisor for assistance.

## **Assigned Seating**

Seating assignments and documented seating charts are required and must be kept up to date.

## **Summer Trips / Summer School**

Bus drivers wanting to drive during the summer must notify the Transportation Supervisor. Interested drivers are selected by lottery. First-drawn, first-pick on drivers, aides and monitors. This will be done the last Safety Meeting in April.

## **Daily Pre-Trip Inspection**

By law, it is the driver’s responsibility to check a vehicle to determine that it is in satisfactory operating condition prior to leaving the transportation yard.

A Daily Pre-Trip Inspection Form shall be filled out completely for each bus driven during a day. This form shall be submitted to the Transportation Supervisor at the end of each workday.

Any defect that renders the bus inoperable or makes its operation hazardous shall be reported immediately to the Lead Mechanic. The driver will then record the defect on the Pre-Trip Daily Inspection Form and Mechanic’s Board.

A daily pre-trip inspection will be performed any time a bus is idle for 1.5 hours or longer.

Daily pre-trip inspections should be done early enough to allow for a change in bus if needed.

If more than one bus is driven by a driver in one day, that driver shall also fill out a separate Daily Pre-Trip Inspection Form for each bus driven.

## Daily Pre-Trip Inspection Form

The Daily Pre-Trip Inspection Form is required by law and must be checked off at the time of the inspection, declaring a completed pre-trip inspection and brake check. Each daily inspection must be initialed at the bottom of the page and the form must be signed before turning in at the end of each day. Maintenance and mechanical issues will be recorded and dated on the Daily Pre-Trip Inspection Form and posted on the Mechanic's Board. Accurately maintained forms are essential for documentation in the event of an accident.

## Bus Warmup

Always warm up the buses for at least ten (10) minutes before starting a route. Buses with new idling technology idle only ten (10) minutes in total. In cold weather, buses without idling technology, should warm up at least 20 minutes before starting route, going through ignition cycle twice before starting bus. All warmup idles should be done on high idle. The high idle button should be engaged after the pre-trip inspection is done to fully distribute fluids throughout engine. The button should be disengaged before starting the route.

On days when the buses will be used, the engine heater will be plugged in a minimum of eight (8) hours if the minimum temperature is predicted to be below freezing (32 F) or as determined by Lead Mechanic.

## Cleanliness of Bus

Every bus shall be kept clean and free of litter. The driver and aide (including substitute drivers) are responsible for sweeping the floor once per week or more often if needed. Pre-announced and "surprise" bus inspections are conducted periodically to monitor bus cleanliness. Activity and/or spare buses will be fueled, swept and trash picked up after each trip. All cleaning of buses should be done at the bus barn, not at the destination or enroute. All trash should be placed in the transportation dumpster.

1. Sweep and mop as necessary. Dust such items as dashboard, visor, gauges, switch panel, air vents, dome lights, interior ledges, ceilings, walls, driver seat, driver area, etc. Clean all mirrors and glass (windshield, windows, headlamps, stop lamps, taillights, turn indicators, reflectors, etc.) to ensure safety.
2. The dashboard, windshield, visor, and driver areas are to be kept free of all foreign articles.
3. Drivers and substitute drivers are responsible for leaving a bus clean and free of litter. Buses that are dirty or littered upon an alternate driver's arrival should be documented and reported to the Transportation Supervisor.

## Dashboard and Other Clutter

Dashboard, mirrors and driver areas are to be kept free of all articles unless authorized by the Transportation Supervisor. Brooms may not block exits and must be secured.

## Bus Speed

Never drive faster than is safe for the conditions. Buses should not travel faster than 40 mph on gravel roads.



All speed limits shall be strictly adhered to and in no event shall a school bus exceed the posted speed limit.

## **Open Bus Doors**

Bus doors are to always remain closed when the bus is in motion, whether or not passengers are aboard.

## **Exit Safety**

Be aware of this potential problem and double check that the door is clear before moving away from a bus stop.

## **Bus Overloading**

Number of students on a bus may not exceed the rated capacity of the bus. Notify the Transportation Supervisor and await further instructions if this situation occurs.

## **Luggage Compartments / Back Doors**

Students may not open luggage compartments or back door without the driver's supervision.

## **Use of Signal Devices**

The following should be adhered to when using signal devices:

- Signal when changing lanes, pulling over to stop, or pulling back into the flow of traffic after making a stop.
- Do not rely on the left-hand turn signal to create an opening in the traffic flow before pulling out from the curb.
- Signal turns 100 feet before reaching the turning point.
- Cancel turn signals while sitting at a bus stop, or when loading/unloading.
- Never assume another vehicle is turning when the directional light is on.

## **Mirror Use**

Before leaving the bus yard, all mirrors must be adjusted for maximum visibility on both sides and across the front of the bus. Mechanics will make necessary adjustments.

## **Backing**

Every attempt should be made to avoid backing a district bus on a route. It is advisable to drive around the block to avoid any backing. When it is necessary to back up, sound horn – even if bus has backup lights and beepers – to warn people in the area. It is prudent to get out of the bus and check the area behind the bus before backing. If possible, designate a responsible student in the rear seat to keep watch and provide assistance. (The guide does not relieve the driver of any responsibility for an accident).

Except for backing at the bus barn, district buses should not be backed on school grounds unless there is a responsible adult present at the rear of the bus to guide the bus. When backing in the bus yard, sound horn twice and radio the bus number prior to moving.

## **Bus Parking**

When a student is aboard, the driver shall not leave the driver's compartment without first stopping the engine, effectively setting the parking brake, placing the transmission in neutral gear or park position, and removing the ignition keys.

## **Post Trip Inspection**

Before leaving the bus, drivers and aides will walk through to the back of the bus to check for vandalism, lost and found items, debris, and sleeping or hiding students. Leaving an unattended child on a school bus is grounds for dismissal. Upon completion of the walk through the 'Clear' decal will be posted.

Buses are to be locked and windows/hatches closed. While walking away, do a visual inspection for leaks, lights, tires or other maintenance issues. Report all concerns immediately.

## **Lost Articles**

After each run check the bus and pick up articles left behind. Items not claimed after a few days should be taken to the transportation office lost and found area.

## **Unauthorized Passengers**

Unauthorized passengers are not permitted on the bus. This includes children, infants, spouses, relatives, employees, friends, or others who are not USD 470 students assigned to a particular route or field trip. This also includes transferring students from bus to bus without the knowledge of the Transportation Supervisor. Parents requesting a ride on the bus for activities must receive advance approval from the building principal.

## **Pedestrians**

A school bus driver is expected to show courtesy to all pedestrians. The pedestrian has the right-of-way at any intersection whether it is marked or unmarked. Disregard signals given by the pedestrian to proceed. A pedestrian's signal does not relieve the driver of responsibility to stop, and a driver may be cited by the police for failure to yield.

## **AM/FM Radios**

All buses have AM/FM radios. Radios may not be adjusted while driving. Use good judgment to establish volume levels so that emergency vehicles and other notifications may be heard. Avoid stations that play songs with suggestive or vulgar lyrics. Stations with religious themes are not appropriate.

## **P.A. System**

The P.A. part of the system works well for giving the passengers directions or correcting discipline problems. Choice of words, voice volume, and pronunciation are essential.

## Two-Way Radios

All district buses are equipped for two-way communication. Two-way radios are only to be used for student transportation business – never personal messages. Users should monitor the radio before transmitting to avoid interfering with another’s conversation. All communications should be professionally held as conversations are often heard by those outside the district.

## Two-Way Radio Operating Tips

- Check that the channel is clear before transmitting.
- Be brief. Know the topic before keying microphone.
- Key the microphone and wait approximately 1-2 seconds before speaking into it.
- Hold the microphone about six inches from mouth, use natural voice and speak clearly. Do not shout into the microphone.
- Use the radio only when necessary. Non-essential transmissions should be avoided.

## School Bus Accident, Injury, or Incident

Duties: The driver of the school bus shall immediately notify, the Transportation Supervisor of any accident resulting in personal injury or property damage. In the case of an accident, the driver should call one of the following:

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Transportation Supervisor (cell) | 620-441-7641 |
| Head Mechanic (cell)             | 620-441-8072 |
| Transportation Department        | 620-441-2084 |
| District Office                  | 620-441-2000 |

Reporting accidents when the transportation office is closed: The law states that all “school bus accidents” must be reported to the local law enforcement. If the transportation office is closed, inform the local police department of the accident by dialing 911. No students are to be released until the police have finished their report and released them. All drivers will have a roster including student name, DOB, address, and phone number ready and available.

Accidents and traffic citations not involving a school bus (personal vehicle incidents) are also to be reported immediately to the Transportation Supervisor.

## Mechanical Breakdown

When a bus develops trouble on the road, there are three alternatives:

1. Radio for help
2. If the radio is inoperable, use cell phone or ask a passerby to call for help
3. If the bus has no passengers, and the radio is inoperative, leave the bus to obtain help

If passers-by are sent for help, write down the information needed: telephone number to call, bus number, nature of problem, exact location, number of students aboard, etc.

Keep students on bus when possible. Some conditions may warrant evacuation of students because of possible fire, extremely dangerous section of the highway, or for some other reason. Contact the Transportation Supervisor if this occurs.

Place emergency reflectors correctly to protect the stalled bus. Students may not do this for a driver.

## **Reporting Traffic Violations**

Immediately report all personal traffic violations, whether in a personal vehicle or driving a USD 470 school bus, to the Transportation Supervisor.

## **Safety**

### **Defensive Driving is a USD 470 Requirement**

When driving a USD 470 school bus, hold a safe following distance (five-second rule minimum). Always travel in the right-hand lane, except when absolutely necessary to do otherwise. Approach all traffic signals with a plan for stopping.

### **Fitness for Duty**

School bus driving is a physically and mentally taxing job. Always plan to get sufficient rest. Patience and attention to driving can be affected if overtired.

Medical conditions that impair a driver's abilities and performance of duties may necessitate a doctor's verification for fitness of duty.

An employee may be excused from work, either for a shift or a day, for the following: unfit for duty, improperly attired, or for tardiness. Serious infractions may be cause for dismissal.

### **Safety Training**

The district will provide opportunities for approved in-service training during the school year. Attendance is required at these approved trainings.

Drivers are required to attend all safety trainings and driver's meetings. Employees will participate in safety exercises designed to ensure the safety of students. If a driver fails to attend meetings and makes no provisions with the Transportation Supervisor for safety training make-up, the driver may be placed on probation or terminated.

### **Driving Proficiency**

The Transportation Supervisor will keep records regarding a driver's ability to operate different types of buses and related equipment. Under no circumstances is a bus to be operated unless documented proficiency training is established. A driver is responsible to notify the Transportation Supervisor of unproficiency on any buses.

### **Fire Extinguisher**

The fire extinguisher is required by law. The care and knowledge of operation of this device is the responsibility of all drivers and aides. Check it daily for correct internal pressure and a valid, dated inspection tag "good for one year from inspection date."

## **Fire on the Bus**

If a bus catches fire, the safety of the students is the first consideration. Only after all students are safely off the bus should the vehicle be checked. After all other tasks are safely completed, apply the extinguisher as needed. Aim under the fire, rather than hitting it from above. If in doubt, let it burn. Under no circumstances should a student get near a burning bus, regardless of possessions that may be in the fire. Students are to always be held in a safe area and under driver's and/or aide's supervision.

## **Bus Evacuation**

Federal standards call for each state to implement programs on safe riding practices and bus evacuation. School bus drivers will conduct instruction and drill participation in bus evacuation at a scheduled time for each school. Drivers will fill out the Bus Evacuation form after each bus evacuation drill and give the form to the Transportation Supervisor. At least two bus evacuation drills must be scheduled per semester.

## **First Aid Kit**

Each school bus must be equipped with an approved first aid kit. It is the driver's responsibility to keep it clean and fully equipped as required by law. Do not open sterilized packets to use a bandage unless absolutely necessary.

## **Emergency Reflectors / Triangles**

Each school bus shall always be equipped with three red emergency reflectors. All reflectors shall be maintained in good working condition. Be aware of the proper use and placement under various conditions. The law requires reflectors be placed by the bus when the bus is disabled even during daylight hours.

## **Railroad Crossings**

The driver of any school bus will stop at all railroad crossings as required by law.

## **Narrow or Low Clearance – And Other Hazards**

In narrow or low clearance situations, the driver must be sure that the bus will clear the obstacle before proceeding.

Low hanging branches, foliage blocking view, leaning signs and other movable/removable obstacles should be reported to the Transportation Supervisor for corrective action.

## **Hijacking or Kidnaping**

All situations are different and could be dangerous if not handled properly. Be aware of unusual circumstances and avoid situations that could create serious problems for driver and passengers.



A.L.I.C.E. protocol guides staff to use discretion in responding in the manner deemed to be safest for students and staff.

A.L.I.C.E.

Alert

Lockdown

Inform

Counter

Evacuate

## **Hazardous Articles**

Students may not carry aboard articles that may prove hazardous to themselves and others.

- Supervise the loading of equipment or other bulky items that have the potential to be hazardous.
- Aisles and exits in the bus must be kept clear of articles at all times.
- On activity trips, equipment or items that may roll should be placed in the luggage compartment, when possible. These objects are not allowed in the passenger compartment of a home-to-school bus.
- If heavy or bulky objects must be stored in the passenger compartment, they should be placed on the floor, immediately behind the rear seats, and/or secured in a way that the emergency exit door will not be blocked in an emergency. When any item is stored in the rear of the passenger compartment, no more than one third of the item will be permitted to extend above the seat back.
- Poles used for pole vaulting and other items too long to fit in the baggage compartment shall be loaded before passengers board the bus, and stored in a manner that will avoid blocking aisles. They must be securely fastened to seat frames alongside the aisle by appropriate rope or straps.
- Sharp or potentially sharp objects are not allowed on the bus.
- Band instruments and other large objects that must be carried in the passenger compartment must be stored so emergency exits are not blocked.

## **Student Management**

### **Student Management**

The primary reason for good student management is safety.

Children (and adults too) respond well when treated with fairness and consistency. It is district practice to have uniform rules and procedures that are enforced in a consistent manner. If all transportation staff work together as a team using the same procedures, the child will know the rules no matter which driver is in charge.

If a situation develops which requires more correction than “a word to the wise” over the PA system, safely pull the bus over to the side of the road. Driving and disciplining at the same time are unsafe practices. Another alternative is to wait until arrival at the school or the next bus stop.



The following is a guideline to use beginning the first day of school. Every day and every group should be handled the same, so that eventually, no matter the group, the rules are the same.

## **Teach Four Basic Safety Rules**

1. Obey the Driver
2. Stay Seated
3. Inside Voices
4. Hands to Yourself

Teaching the four basic rules will help avoid 90% of the discipline problems encountered.

The driver is expected to teach children:

1. To load and unload properly
2. To be seated properly
3. Safety expectations regarding windows
4. To adhere to all district discipline and transportation policies and procedures

## **Pointers From the Pros:**

- If a full bus is anticipated, load in a manner that will utilize all seats
- Keep the rear seats unoccupied when possible
- Be firm about keeping students seated until they have been released to exit the bus
- Be firm and direct but do not shout
- Use “please” and “thank you” with all requests
- Use non-verbal cues to communicate (eye contact, head shake, nod, smile, etc.)
- Do not use hollow threats...if an incident report is warranted, deliver
- Build good rapport with students by showing interest in their activities
- Be consistent
- Discipline the child...not the group
- Do not hold a grudge

## **Procedures for Good Student Management**

All drivers are expected to establish and use the following procedures:

1. Only the bus driver or bus aide is to operate the door, or any other part of the bus or its equipment, except in the case of an emergency when the driver is unable to perform normal tasks
2. Teach children to load and be seated properly. This may require the driver or aide to seat the children until they are able to do it themselves.
3. Unauthorized stops are prohibited. Stop to load or unload students only at authorized bus stops.
4. Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten children should be transported in the front of the bus when possible.
5. All students must be instructed on the use of emergency procedures.
6. Only students authorized to ride the bus are permitted on the bus.
7. Students are to get off the bus only at the normal bus stop. Parents must notify the Transportation Supervisor and the school in advance for students to get off at a stop other than the designated stop.

## **Student Conduct**

It is the responsibility of each driver to establish and enforce rules that will lead to a safe and comfortable ride for ALL passengers. At the beginning of the school term, drivers will take time to familiarize each student with district bus rules and expectations. Once expectations are clear, disciplinary conversations should be held privately when possible.

When expectations are established during the first two weeks of school, this often determines yearlong success.

## **Bullying and Intimidating Behaviors**

Bullying/intimidation or any form of harassment will not be allowed on any bus. All incidences of harassing behaviors will be dealt with immediately according to district discipline policies.

Indication of an impending altercation should be reported to the Transportation Supervisor immediately. Authorities will be contacted as necessary. Do not leave the scene until all students are clear and safe. The bus is a safe refuge for a threatened student. Any fight that resumes once students are off the bus continues to be under the jurisdiction of school discipline if the event is a continuation of the original situation.

## **Reporting / Log Requirements**

### **Mileage Log**

Keeping a mileage log is required and should be logged on mileage card. Mileage cards for the current week should be left on the bus at all times. Mileage should be turned in to the Transportation Supervisor by 7:00 a.m. on the Monday morning of the following week.

### **Written Reports**

Filling out and turning in the various daily and weekly forms that are required by law or by the school district is expected of each driver. Accuracy, neatness, and punctuality are vital for meaningful reports. Please make every effort to carefully follow instructions on each form.

Forms to be kept in the bus:

1. Kansas School Bus Emergency System (emergency numbers, etc.)
2. A Daily Bus Inspection Form will be turned in daily for each bus operated.
3. Bus Incident Report. Use as needed.
4. Weekly Bus Mileage Form

### **Written Report of Collision, Injury, or Accident**

All accidents and incidents must be reported to the Transportation Supervisor. Minor accidents or scratches as well as major collisions or injuries of a serious nature must be reported. A full and complete accident or injury report must be filled out by the bus driver and turned in to the

Transportation Supervisor. A complete written report, with all required information, is to be made as soon as conditions permit, but no later than the next working day after the accident. Additional reports may be required. Be sure to note carefully any obstructions or special circumstances that may have contributed to the accident or injury. Diagram any and all lane markings, traffic signal devices, stop signs and other pertinent information. Try to be as detailed as possible in the description, as the report may be used as a reference at a later date.

The written report filed with the Transportation Department may affect a driving record and/or driving privileges.

## **Student Accident Report**

All information obtained at the scene should be given to the Transportation Supervisor immediately.

## **School Bus Incident Report**

Fill out form completely. Note the dates of all previous referrals and submit the report immediately. Be specific when a student uses abusive, profane or vulgar language, write it exactly as it was said. Although it may be embarrassing, it is important that the school officials and parents know exactly what was said.

## **Activity Trips**

### **Activity Trip Assignment Procedures**

It is the Transportation Department's intent to assign out of town activity trips to drivers and aides who ask to take such trips, then choose in alphabetical order. To reduce transportation costs to the district, overtime will be considered when assigning routes. Drivers and aides may indicate a preference to be removed from the list at any time. Re-entry to a list will require waiting through one rotation before receiving an assignment. Aides will only be assigned to an activity trip if needed to support a student(s) with disabilities.

In town activity trips will be assigned at the discretion of the transportation supervisor. To reduce transportation costs to the district, overtime will be considered when assigning routes. Appropriate rotation of drivers and aides will be used when possible.

### **Activity Trip Posting**

When possible, by 12:00 PM Friday before the week being assigned, the Transportation Supervisor will assign Monday to Monday activity trip assignments for the following week. Trip requests received after posting will be added by the Transportation Supervisor as they arrive. The Transportation Supervisor will place a bus number on the assignment sheet as it is assigned.

### **Cancellation of Activity Trips**

If a driver arrives at the bus yard or pickup location for an activity trip and is notified the trip has been canceled, the driver will receive one-hour pay and will be placed at the top of the activity trip list. If the

driver is not told the trip has been canceled, the driver is to wait at the pickup location for at least 45 minutes to be certain the group or driver has not had a mix-up in departure times. In this case the driver will also be placed at the top of the trip list, and the one-hour pay provision applies.

## **“Swapping” Activity Trips**

Activity trips shall not be “swapped” without permission from the Transportation Supervisor.

## **Activity Trip Acceptance Deadlines**

If absent on the day of an activity trip, the trip will be reassigned and will not be made up. If absent on the day before an assigned trip, contact the Transportation Supervisor by 4:00 p.m. otherwise the trip will be reassigned. During an absence, the Transportation Supervisor will not make contact about a trip assignment. It is especially important to keep in contact with the Transportation Supervisor on a daily basis during an absence. This way, if unable to accept a trip the trip can be reassigned without causing inconvenience to the office staff, fellow drivers, and students. If not in contact on a daily basis, a trip will be reassigned.

## **Activity Trip Paperwork**

On the day before a trip departure, check with dispatch about trip information. Planning an itinerary is the responsibility of the driver assigned to the trip. Most common destinations can be found in the transportation office. All activity trip paperwork should be completed in its entirety and should be turned in to the Transportation Supervisor by the Monday morning following the activity.

## **Activity Trips**

Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time at the pick-up location.

Certain groups, such as marching bands, may require an even earlier arrival to load equipment.

When dropping a group off at the destination, provide the coach or sponsor with any necessary information such as cell phone numbers. If more than one bus is involved, all drivers are normally to return on one bus if the other bus(es) can be safely secured at the destination.

If scheduled to return the group, try to verify that the trip is covered and remind any other driver(s) of pertinent information such as time verification, directions, and group passenger count.

## **Buses in Convoy**

When two or more buses are traveling together to the same destination, they are to travel in convoy (or caravan).

The lead bus shall maintain a legal speed that will enable the following drivers to keep each other in sight. The lead driver will always maintain sight of the second bus. The second bus in line is responsible for always keeping the third bus in sight and so on for as many buses as are in the convoy/caravan. Buses in convoy are never to pull out to pass another bus in the same convoy.

## **When One Trip in a Caravan / Convoy is Canceled**



If more than one driver is assigned an activity trip and the group discovers they do not need a bus, the last driver assigned (not necessarily the least senior driver) will return to base and will receive a make-up trip. This rule also applies when fewer drivers are needed to stay on an overnight trip.

## **Activity Driver Responsibilities**

1. Maintain the safety of passengers
2. Safely operate the vehicle and explain basic bus operations to sponsors
3. Explain emergency evacuation procedure to sponsor(s) and students at the beginning of the trip
4. Prior to the trip, determine the shortest route which can be traveled safely to the town / event scheduled, how to locate the school or building within the town, and the location of service stations along the route. Inform the Transportation Supervisor of intended route.
5. Cooperate with the sponsor but keep in mind the safety of the passengers and vehicle
6. Inform the sponsor that discipline is the sponsor's responsibility and if a discipline problem occurs, request that the sponsor handle the problem

## **Activity Driver Safety Talk**

After loading the bus, introductions should be made to the passengers and as required by law, take a moment to review emergency evacuation procedures. As required, point out the location and functions of the fire extinguisher, first aid kit, radio, and all exit locations. Like the airlines, the talk is legally required on each activity trip, even though some groups may have heard the talk many times in the past. Explain that school bus rules apply to all, even on trips.

## **Return Time for Activity Trips**

It is the driver's responsibility to communicate with the Transportation Supervisor if an activity route will interfere with a regular route for the day. Note driving time to the destination, add about ten minutes for possible delays, and announce the departure time to the group leader. If running late for any reason, call the Transportation Supervisor. All field trips should return by 2:45 p.m. for the driver to be present for their afternoon route.

Upon return, the bus must be fueled and swept, trash emptied, paperwork and keys placed in the proper locations, and all doors and gates locked. If a bus has some sort of problem, or is not safe to operate, make certain to contact the Transportation Supervisor and lead mechanic so the bus is not inadvertently assigned to a route the next school day. Fill out Transportation Vehicle Repair Request Form and make a note on the Daily Pre-trip Inspection Sheet.

## **Bus Maintenance**

### **Fueling**

Please see the Transportation Supervisor for instructions on locations and procedures for fueling buses. No bus shall be parked with less than a half tank of fuel. In times of possible inclement weather, all buses should be fully fueled in case of emergencies. Drivers and substitute drivers are responsible for refueling their assigned bus. Buses should be fueled before the last route of the day (prior to 1:00

p.m.). Bus is to be moved out of fuel dock immediately after fueling. If a gas card is checked out to a driver and is lost, stolen, or misplaced, the Transportation Supervisor should be notified immediately. If the Transportation Supervisor is not notified immediately, the driver is liable for any fuel charged to that card.

## **Fueling Reminders**

Do not operate the two-way radio while fueling.

School buses are NEVER to be fueled while engine is running or when aides and students are on board. In the event fueling is needed when students are on board, all students must be unloaded and monitored while fueling.

Fuel tanks should be locked immediately after fueling.

## **Care of Tires**

Tires should be checked in the morning as part of the pre-trip inspection procedure and to check them at least once more during to day to catch slow leaks.

“Knocking” the tires with a heavy object is the accepted way of checking the rear duals to find a flat or soft tire. A normally inflated tire will give off a characteristic “thump” when struck with a hard object (hold firmly and hit tire hard). A tire that is flat or low on pressure will sound differently when struck. The best way to describe it is the difference between the “thump” of a normal tire and the dull “thud” of a low one. For a demonstration, ask the Transportation Supervisor to demonstrate with a flat or unmounted tire.

For safety, wheels should be set towards the curb when loading or unloading students. Tire sidewalls should not scrape against the curb at bus stops or on street corners.

## **Supplies and Parts Room**

Supplies such as paper towels, facial tissue, rubber gloves are kept at the bus barn. Higher value items such as glass cleaner, brooms, squeegees, etc., may be obtained from the lead mechanic during the day.

## **Brakes**

Brakes are the most vital working part of any vehicle. Know the use of the bus brake and emergency stopping system. Brakes wear with use. Practice defensive driving by avoiding fast starts or sudden stops. If the brakes need adjustment, inform the lead mechanic immediately.

## **Engine**

The engine is the heartbeat of a school bus. Gauges are the only way to monitor what is going on in and around the engine. Check gauges frequently and understand their functions.

## **Bus Repair**



Each driver will fill out a Transportation Vehicle Repair Form and report any problems with the operation of a bus to the Lead Mechanic immediately. Any issue will also be recorded on the Daily Pre-Trip Inspection Form and on the Mechanic's Board. In the case of a breakdown, the driver will call one of the following until contact is made:

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Transportation Department        | 620-441-2084 |
| Transportation Supervisor (cell) | 620-441-7641 |
| Lead Mechanic (cell)             | 620-446-8072 |
| District Office                  | 620-441-2000 |

## Conclusion

Student transportation is a great responsibility. Safe transportation of children to and from school is the primary purpose. The Arkansas City USD 470 Transportation department exerts every effort to provide safe, efficient, and convenient transportation services to eligible students. To accomplish this, all members of our department must work together as a team.

We will work with diligence to earn the respect and confidence of our patrons: school administrators, teachers, parents, the public, and students. We are professionals who will see that this image is maintained and improved through our efforts.

## Handbook Receipt

In signing this receipt, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Arkansas City USD 470 Transportation Handbook. I further understand that I, as a professional school bus driver, bus aide, or monitor, am responsible for following all rules, regulations, laws, and other directives pertaining to the safe and proper operation of school buses, including those listed in this handbook. A copy of this handbook receipt will be provided.

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Employee Signature

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Date

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Print Name