Student Conduct on Buses

Any misconduct by a student, which in the opinion of the bus driver or bus supervisor, is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus shall be sufficient cause for the principal to suspend the transportation privilege.

Rules of conduct for students riding buses:

A. Students shall obey the driver and any aide assigned to the bus by the district. The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and shall be obeyed. If an aide is assigned to the bus by the district, he/she shall be responsible for the safe operation of the bus. When transporting classes or teams, the teacher or coach shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. Students shall obey both the driver and the teacher, coach or other staff member.

B. Students shall ride only on their assigned bus unless written permission to do otherwise has been received by school officials.

C. Students shall not be permitted to leave the bus except at their regular stop unless written permission to do otherwise is received by school officials.

D. Students assigned seats shall use only that seat unless permission to change is authorized by the driver.

E. Students shall observe rules of classroom conduct while riding on buses. Noise shall be kept down to avoid distracting the driver. Students shall refrain from the use of obscene language or gestures.

F. Students shall not smoke or ignite lighters or matches on buses.

G. Students shall not eat on buses, except when specifically authorized and supervised by and accompanying teacher, coach or other staff member. Buses shall be kept clean.

H. Students shall not open bus windows without the driver's permission.

I. Students shall not extend any part of their body out of bus windows at any time.

J. Students shall not carry or have in their possession items that can cause injury to passengers on the bus. Such items include, but are not limited to, sticks, breakable containers, weapons or firearms, straps or pins protruding from clothing, large, bulky items which cannot be held or placed between legs, etc. Books and personal belongings shall be kept out of aisles.

K. Students shall not have animals on buses, except a dog providing assistance to a disabled student.

L. Students shall not sit in the driver's seat or to the immediate right or left of the driver.

M. Students shall refrain from talking to the driver unless necessary.

N. Students shall go directly to a seat once inside the bus and remain seated at all times unless the driver instructs otherwise.

O. Students shall get on/off the bus in an orderly manner and shall obey the instructions of the driver or school safety patrolmen on duty. There shall be no pushing and shoving when boarding or leaving the bus. Once off the bus, students shall adhere to rules for pedestrians.

P. Students shall never cross the roadway behind a bus unless they use pedestrian crosswalks or traffic lights.

Q. Students shall stand away from the roadway curb when any bus is approaching or leaving a stop.

R. Students going to and from their bus stops where there are no sidewalks shall walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Students shall go directly to their home after leaving the bus.

S. Students shall use lap belts on buses when available.

T. Students shall follow emergency exit drill procedures as prescribed by the driver.

U. Students shall not tamper with emergency doors or equipment.

V. Students shall remain quietly seated, not exhibit disruptive behavior and turn off all noise-making devices at highway rail grade crossings.

W. Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses shall be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students causing the damage may be suspended from transportation.

X. Student misconduct shall constitute sufficient reason for suspending transportation privileges.

Disciplinary Procedures

Principals are responsible for correcting students whose abusive behavior results in a bus- incident report or violate the rules above. The principal shall provide supervision during bus arrival and departure times and receive reports (written and oral) from the drivers.

The principal shall insure that students comply with the specified regulations. Principals must maintain open lines of communication among school officials, bus drivers and the transportation department.

When waiting for a bus, or going to and from a bus stop, students are responsible for conducting themselves according to the social and legal mores that apply to adults in public. That is, they must not abuse or cause damage to private or public property; they must not use obscene language or gestures; they must not engage in criminal activity. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in formal complaints by citizens which may be forwarded to principals for possible corrective action.

Students provided with transportation are responsible for complying with the district's rules of conduct for students riding buses. Failure to adhere to these rules, or abusive behavior towards the public, driver, fellow passengers or the vehicle constitutes justification for initiating corrective action against a student.

Abusive behavior on the part of a student riding a bus may result in a written report when, in the opinion of the driver or bus supervisor, there has been an infraction of the rules applicable to student conduct. The written report is the primary means by which a driver or bus supervisor communicates a student's conduct to the school and transportation department. This report, in most cases, reflects an infraction of rules which is repeated by the student after his/her having received previous oral warnings from the driver or bus supervisor. In order for drivers and bus supervisors to effectively maintain control on their buses, it is expected that action be exercised by principals when receiving such a report.

When a student's conduct constitutes an infraction of the rules, the driver or bus supervisor shall complete a report on the student describing the incident or damage that occurred. The driver or bus supervisor shall provide the student with a copy of the report, hand the original report to the principal and submit a copy to the transportation supervisor. The copy of the report concerning special education students shall be given to the principal for disposition.

The principal upon receiving the report shall investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and take action according to the procedures set forth in the district's policies pertaining to corrective action and punishment. When investigating the incident, the primary concern must be with respect to the safe transport of students. Corrective action, if necessary, should be consistent throughout the district as follows:

A. Warning: When a student's misconduct is of a minor nature which does not jeopardize the safety or welfare of other students or the operation of the bus.

B. Suspension: When a student's misconduct is deemed to jeopardize the safety of bus passengers and operation, or when repeated warning notices fail to correct abusive behavior, or when a student incurs damage to the bus.

C. Expulsion: When a student's misconduct is of such nature that the safety of the bus operation and/or of the occupants was willfully and seriously threatened (i.e., student assaulting the driver).

The action taken by the principal shall be annotated on the report and forwarded to the student's parent for signature. The transportation department shall be notified.

Drivers shall be advised to file assault and battery charges against students who physically assault them. Under no circumstances shall the driver retaliate in kind and physically assault the student as this conduct may subject him/her to legal action.

The student or parent of a student who has been suspended from receiving transportation entitlements may appeal the principal's decision by submitting a written statement to the superintendent. The superintendent shall render a decision after evaluating the issues and facts involved. If the decision is based on issues unrelated to those described in the district's rules of conduct for students riding buses, the decision shall require board concurrence before implementation.

Emergencies

The transportation supervisor shall review the contents of the School Bus Driver's Handbook with each driver prior to the beginning of each school year. Each driver, in turn, is expected to follow the

procedure as outlined in the handbook. At the start of each field trip or extracurricular trip, the school bus driver shall review with all passengers the location and use of the emergency exits, emergency equipment and any district emergency procedures.

In the event of an accident, the driver shall make contact with the transportation supervisor who shall:

A. Determine the nature of the accident;

B. Contact emergency services if there is reason to believe that there are injuries which require immediate attention;

C. Contact the state patrol regarding the accident;

D. Advise the superintendent of schools;

E. Investigate the accident and gather the names of all students and witnesses;

F. Dispatch another bus to transport the student to their destination;

G. Contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any students who are injured.

To facilitate the responsibilities assigned to the transportation department, the supervisor, in cooperation with the building principals, will compile a list of students, including addresses and phone numbers that are authorized to ride each bus route.