Special Needs Require Special Care II

A Guide for the Transportation of Preschoolers and Children with Disabilities for North Carolina Public Schools

June, 2008

Transportation Policies, Guidelines, and Best Practices

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

- Chinese Proverb

The Transportation of Preschoolers and Children with Disabilities Manual Steering Committee is pleased to provide you with "Special Needs Require Special Care II": A Guide for the Transportation of Preschoolers and Children with Disabilities for North Carolina Public Schools. This is the second edition of the Guide with updated legal references and best practices for safe and efficient public school transportation of students with special needs whether children with disabilities, preschool children or others. The Guide is designed to serve as a resource document for state administrators and local education agency personnel to promote effective staff development and collaboration between school transportation services and exceptional children programs. Although it contains applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and policies, this Guide is not law or NC State Board of Education Policy.

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Thank You!

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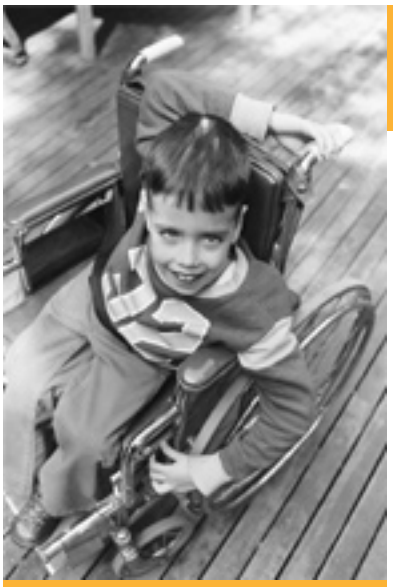

"The dream is real, my friends. The failure to make it work is the unreality."

- Toni Cade Bambara

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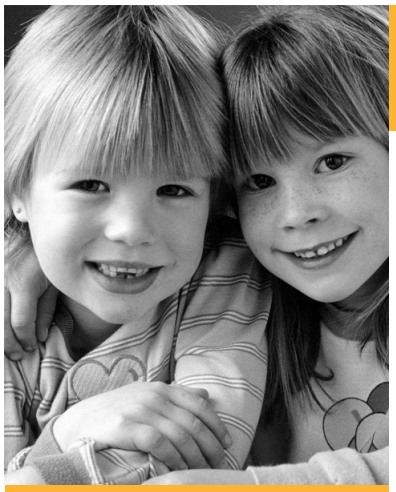

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"I am beginning to think it is the sweet, simple things of life which are the real ones after all."

-Laura Ingalls Wilder

1.1 Federal Laws — Acts and Amendments

Serving children with special needs on school buses can be a challenging part of the school day for transportation personnel. While the number of students with disabilities requiring transportation services continues to rise, so do their requirements for specialized equipment, assistive devices and safe operational practices. These factors raise the standard of care for everyone in the school bus transportation industry.

The right of students with disabilities to receive transportation to travel to and from school is primarily mandated by two federal statutes: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The core purpose of Section 504 is to remove any barriers that limit services to students with special needs. It ensures a student's right to transportation based on his/her need to travel to/from school to access all educational services. IDEA mandates that school districts provide transportation for eligible students with disabilities as is required to benefit from special education and related services.

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-112)

The Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by any recipient of federal funding, including public schools. Section 504 covers persons with a disability who would otherwise be qualified to participate in and benefit from programs or other activities receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 has been used as the foundation for special education complaints involving transportation services, such as access to bus service, length of ride, transportation costs to parents, loss of instructional time, suspension, method of transportation, and specialized needs.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 (Pub. L. 108.446)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) protects the rights of children with disabilities and their families and guarantees a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to all eligible children with disabilities ages 3 through 21 in the United States. IDEA assures that each child with a disability is provided with an individualized education program to meet the child's unique needs, and related services as are required to assist the child with a disability to benefit from his/her special education program. IDEA specifies that transportation is a related service for children with disabilities, and a nonacademic/extracurricular service that allows the equal opportunity for children with disabilities to participate with the general education population. Transportation includes travel to and from school, and between buildings; travel in and around school buildings; and specialized equipment such as special/adapted buses, lifts, and ramps.

Legislative History of IDEA

1965 – Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Amendments that authorized the first federal grant program for children and youth with disabilities, and authorized state agencies to educate children with disabilities in state-operated or state-supported schools and institutions. (P.L. 89-313)

1966 – ESEA was amended and the first federal grant program for the education of children with disabilities at the local school level was established. This particular section of the ESEA became known as Title VI. (P.L. 89-750)

1968 – ESEA was amended to establish supplemental/supportive programs to expand/improve special education services. (P.L. 90-247)

1970 – Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA) became law as a result of ESEA amendments, and consolidated previous separate federal grant programs including Title VI for children with disabilities. (P.L. 91-230).

1974 — Title VI of the ESEA was renamed to the the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments (EHA). This law began the focus on fully educating all children with disabilities, and required states to establish a

timetable for achieving full educational opportunity for all children with disabilities. (P.L. 93-380)

1975 – Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) became the first law to clearly define the rights of all children with disabilities ages 3 to 21 as consistent with state law to receive a free appropriate public education through the use of an individualized education program (IEP), including related services if appropriate. (P.L. 94-142)

1983 – EHA was amended and expanded incentives for preschool special education programs, early intervention, and transition programs. (P.L. 98-199)

1986 – EHA was amended to include age 3 as the minimum age of eligibility for special education and related services (implementation by year 1991-92), and established the early intervention program for children birth to their 3rd birthday. (P.L. 99-457)

1990— EHA was amended and renamed "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)." It reaffirmed requirements for a free appropriate public education with related services through an IEP and due process procedures. The word reference "handicapped" was replaced with "disabled". (P. L. 101-476). IDEA received minor amendments in 1991 that pertained to the Department of Defense programs and the provision of services to eligible children in accordance with IDEA. (P. L. 102-119)

1997— IDEA received significant amendments. The definition of disabled children expanded to include developmentally delayed children between three and nine years of age. It also required parents to attempt to resolve disputes with schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) through mediation, and provided a process for doing so. The amendments authorized additional grants for technology, disabled infants and toddlers, parent trainning, and professional development. (P. L. 105-17)

2004— On *December 3, 2004*, IDEA was amended by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 now known as IDEIA (IDEA 2004). Several provisions aligned IDEA with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* to promote equity, accountability, and excellence in education services for children with disabilities. More concrete provisions relating to discipline of special education students was also added. (P. L. 108-446)

Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Pub. L. 94-142) (EAHCA)

The Education For All Handicapped Children Act guaranteed a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) , including special education and related services, to all handicapped children. It also provides funding to help states bear the additional costs they would incur in educating handicapped students. It provides that they must be educated with other, non disabled students to the extent possible (Least Restrictive Environment) and establishes an elaborate system of procedural safeguards to ensure parental input. Persons involved with the student's special education program must be appropriately trained. Transportation services may include schools, travel in and around school buildings, specialized equipment (lift buses), counseling, or social work services.

Education of All Handicapped Children's Act Amendments of 1986 Part H

This law addresses the need for early intervention for infants and toddlers. States were offered financial incentives to establish an extensive, statewide service among numerous agencies that would be provided to children from birth through two years of age. In addition, it lowered the age of eligibility for special education and related services for all children with disabilities to age three and required that all eligible children receive early intervention services. This law also required that services be specified in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The responsibilities of transportation services are defined as the cost of travel that is necessary to enable an eligible child and the child's family to receive early intervention services.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1990 (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires public schools to make available to all eligible students with disabilities a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) appropriate to their individual needs. This changed the terminology of "handicapped children" to "children with

disabilities" and broadened the definition of the terms "assistive technology device" and "assistive technology service." The areas of transition for children, services for children with serious emotional disturbance, and rights to more fully include children with autism and traumatic brain injury were expanded. IDEA strengthened the mandate to public school systems to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each child that reflects the individualized special education and related service needs of each student.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997

This Act strengthened academic expectations and accountability for children with disabilities and bridged the gap that too often existed between what children with disabilities learn and what is required in regular curriculums. The role of the regular education teacher was increased as it relates to the IEP team participation, and new requirements were added for overall parental involvement in their child's education. New discipline procedures were also added to IDEA.

Pursuant to IDEA, a student cannot be permanently suspended or expelled from public school transportation. However, if the student is unable to ride the school bus in a safe manner, an IEP meeting should be held to discuss what behavior interventions may be required for the student to ride the bus safely. The IEP team may also consider the appropriateness of alternative modes of transportation based on individual student needs. Even when the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the student is still entitled to receive related services to access their special education program. Transportation personnel should receive ongoing training and support from school personnel, with expertise in behavior management to successfully manage and meet the diverse needs of students.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

The privacy rights of students extend to education records maintained by a school district and by a person acting for the school district. Personal notes made by a driver concerning a student for their own use and not available to other persons, except a substitute driver, are not subject to FERPA. Disclosure of "personally identifiable information" about a student to persons other than professional personnel employed in the school district is prohibited without parental consent. Parental consent is the guiding principle regarding the release or exchange of student records and information in those records. Emergency information should be carried on the bus at all times to provide appropriate identification for students in emergency situations.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act

This reform gives districts flexibility in how they spend their federal education dollars, in return for setting standards for student achievement and holding students and educators accountable for results. NCLB is designed to help all students meet high academic standards. States disaggregate data for students by poverty, race/ethnicities, disabilities and limited English proficiencies to ensure that no child – regardless of his or her background – is left behind. NCLB provides options for parents so that their children receive the best possible education. It also invests in teaching practices that have been demonstrated to work. The law aims to foster an environment in which every child can learn and succeed.

Title X, Part C McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The program is now referred to as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001. This part of NCLB is intended to ensure that homelessness does not cause children to be left behind in school. Requirements regarding homeless students apply to all districts, regardless of whether the district receives a McKinney-Vento Homeless grant. McKinney-Vento funds may be used for tutoring, supplemental services, enrichment services, evaluation of strengths and needs of homeless children, professional development, provision of referral services for medical, dental, mental, and other health services, transportation cost, programs to retain homeless children in public schools, mentoring, homework assistance, and costs for obtaining records, education and training to parents about rights and resources. (Appendix 1A – McKinney-Vento 2001 – Law into Practice)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination of individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, government activities, public accommodations, public transportation, and telecommunication relay services. The Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, enforces transportation requirements such as building and transit systems accessibility. The ADA defines an individual with a disability as being a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such impairment. This law includes barrier free transportation in and around schools for children with disabilities.

ADA and Service Animals

The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. The civil rights of persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals in all places of public and housing accommodations is protected by this federal law. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), privately owned businesses that serve the public, such as restaurants, hotels, retail stores, taxicabs, theaters, concert halls, and sports facilities, are prohibited from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. The ADA requires these businesses to allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals onto business premises in whatever areas customers are generally allowed. This would allow service animals to access school bus transportation with the student, as indicated on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Constitution of the United States – Fourteenth Amendment

The US Constitution Fourteenth Amendment prohibits any government entity from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without the due process of the law, nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. Alleged violations of special education rights could have implications for constitutional violations.

1.2 Head Start Transportation

Head Start Transportation Regulations-Code of Federal Regulations CFR 1310

Head Start regulations for transportation were published on January 18, 2001 and have been revised several times since then. This statue consists of provisions for establishing requirements for safety features, training, and safe operations of vehicles that are used to transport children participating in Head Start programs.

The Final Rule: 45 CFR 1310

The final rule clearly defines regulations that apply to all entities that provide transportation to children who participate in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The major topics addressed include:

- Types of vehicles used on daily routes
- Equipment requirements for allowable vehicles
- Vehicle maintenance and inspection
- Driver qualifications and employment practices
- Use of monitors on vehicles
- Training for drivers, monitors, parents, and children
- Administrative procedures
- Records-keeping
- Deadline for Implementation: January 18, 2006

Provided below are the key provisions of the Head Start Transportation Regulations as published by the U.S. Government Printing Office and the U.S. Office of Human Development Services, Department of Health and Human Services.

1310.3 Definitions

- Allowable Alternate Vehicle means a vehicle designed for carrying eleven or more people, including the driver, that meets all the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards applicable to school buses, except 49 CFR 571.108 and 571.131.
- Bus monitor means a person with specific responsibilities for assisting the driver in ensuring the safety of the children while they ride, board, or exit the vehicle and for assisting the driver during emergencies.
- Child Restraint System means any device designed to restrain, seat, or position children that meets the current requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 213, Child Restraint Systems, 49 CFR 571.213, for children in the weight category established under the regulation, or any device designed to restrain, seat, or position children, other than a Type I seat belt as defined at 49 CFR 571.209, for children not in the weight category currently established by 49 CFR 571.213.
- School Bus means a motor vehicle designed for carrying 11 or more persons (including the driver) and which complies with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards applicable to school buses.
- Transportation Services means the planned transporting of children to and from sites where an agency provides services funded under the Head Start Act. Transportation services can involve the pick-up and discharge of children at regularly scheduled times and pre-arranged sites, including trips between children's homes and program settings. The term includes services provided directly by the Head Start and Early Head Start grantee or delegate agency and services which such agencies arrange to be provided by another organization or an individual. Incidental trips, such as transporting a sick child home before the end of the day, or such as might be required to transport small groups of children to and from necessary services, are not included under the term.
- Trip routing means the determination of the fixed routes to be traveled on a regular basis for the purpose of transporting children to and from the Head Start or Early Head Start program or activities.

1310.02 Applicability

- Applies to all Head Start and Early Head Start agencies, and their delegate agencies, including those that provide transportation services.
- Transportation services to children served under the home-based Option for Head Start and Early Head Start services are excluded from these requirements.
- Agencies may request a waiver of specific requirements.

1310.10 General

- Each agency must assist as many families as possible who need transportation in order for their children to attend the program in obtaining that transportation.
- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that each vehicle used in providing such services is equipped with: a communication system to call for assistance in case of an emergency; safety equipment for use in an emergency, including a charged fire extinguisher that is properly mounted near the driver's seat and a sign indicating its location; a first aid kit and a sign indicating the location of such equipment; and a seat belt cutter for use in an emergency evacuation and a sign indicating its location.
- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that all accidents involving vehicles that transport children receiving such services are reported in accordance with applicable State requirements.
- Each agency must ensure that children are only released to a parent or legal guardian, or other individual identified in writing by the parent or legal guardian.

1310.11 Child Restraint Systems

- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that each vehicle used to transport children receiving such services is equipped for use of height- and weight- appropriate child safety restraint systems.

1310.12 Required use of School Buses or Allowable Alternate Vehicles

- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that children enrolled in its program are transported in school buses or allowable alternate vehicles that are equipped for use of height- and weight-appropriate child restraint systems, and that have reverse beepers. (Does not apply to transportation services to children served under the home-based option for Head Start and Early Head Start.)
- Head Start and Early Head Start agencies receiving permission from the responsible HHS official to purchase a vehicle with grant funds for use in providing transportation services to children in its program or a delegate agency's program must ensure that the funds are used to purchase a vehicle that is either a school bus or an allowable alternate vehicle and is equipped for use of height- and weight-appropriate child restraint systems and is equipped with a reverse beeper. (Does not apply to vehicles purchased for use in transporting children served under the home-based option for Head Start and Early Head Start.)

1310.13 Maintenance of Vehicles

- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that vehicles used to provide such services are maintained in safe operating condition at all times through:
  - Annual vehicle inspections by state-licensed program
  - System of preventive maintenance of vehicles

1310.15

- On vehicles equipped for use of such devices, any child enrolled in a Head Start or Early Head Start program must be seated in a child restraint system appropriate to the child's height and weight while the vehicle is in motion.
- Baggage and other items transported in the passenger compartment must be properly stored and secured and the aisles remain clear and the doors and emergency exits remain unobstructed at all times.
- There must be at least one bus monitor on board at all times, with additional bus monitors provided as necessary, such as when needed to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities. (Does not apply to transportation services to children served under the home-based option for Head Start and Early Head Start.)
- Except for bus monitors who are assisting children, all vehicle occupants must be seated and wearing height- and weight- appropriate safety restraints while the vehicle is in motion.

1310.16 Driver Qualifications

- Drivers must have a valid Commercial Driver's License (in states where granted) and must meet physical, mental, and other requirements necessary to perform job-related functions.
- Agencies providing transportation services must ensure that there is an applicant review process for use in hiring drivers including a check of the applicant's driving record through the appropriate State agency, including a check of the applicant's record through the National Driver Register, if available in the State.
- Agencies providing transportation services must establish criteria for rejection of unacceptable applicants.

1310.17 Driver and bus monitor training

- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that persons employed to drive vehicles used in providing such services will have received training including: a combination of classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel instruction in vehicle operation; safely loading and unloading children, stopping at railroad crossings and performing other specialized driving maneuvers; basic first aid; vehicle evacuation procedures; and how to operate any special equipment such as wheelchair lifts, assistance devices or special occupant restraints.
- Drivers must also receive instruction on the provisions of the Head Start Program Performance Standards for Children with Disabilities relating to transportation services for children with disabilities.
- Bus monitors must be trained on child boarding and exiting procedure, use of child restraint systems, any required paperwork, responses to emergencies, emergency evacuation procedures, use of special equipment, child pick-up and release procedures and pre- and post-trip vehicle check.

1310.20 Trip routing

- Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that in planning fixed routes the safety of the children being transported is the primary consideration and that the time a child is in transit to and from the Head Start or Early Head Start program must not exceed one hour unless there is no shorter route available or any alternative shorter route is either unsafe or impractical.
- When possible, stops must be located to eliminate the need for children to cross the street or highway to board or leave the vehicle.

1310.21 Safety Education

- Each agency must provide training for parents and children in pedestrian safety.
- Training for children who receive transportation services and their parents must include safe riding practices, boarding and leaving the bus, recognition of danger zones around the bus, emergency procedures, and evacuation drills, etc.
- Emergency evacuation drills are required within 30 days of the beginning of the Head Start Program year on the same vehicle the child will be riding and at least twice during the year thereafter.
- Activities must be developed by each agency to reinforce safety training.

1310.22 Children with disabilities

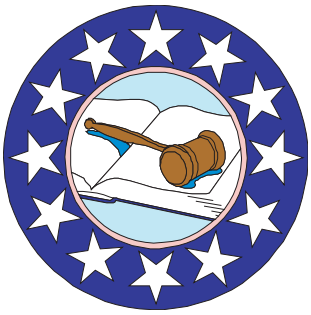
- Each agency must ensure that there are school buses or allowable alternate vehicles adapted or designed for transportation of children with disabilities available as necessary to transport such children enrolled in the program. Whenever possible, children with disabilities must be transported in the same vehicles used to transport other children enrolled in the Head Start or Early Head Start program.
- Each agency must specify any special transportation requirements for a child with a disability when preparing the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), and ensure that in all cases special transportation requirements in a child's IEP or IFSP are followed, including: special pick-up and drop-off requirements; special seating requirements; special equipment needs; any special assistance that may be required; and any special training for bus drivers and monitors.

1310.23 Coordinated transportation

Each agency providing transportation services must make reasonable efforts to coordinate transportation resources with other human services agencies in its community in order to control costs and to improve the quality and the availability of transportation services.

1.3 North Carolina Statutes

Excerpts from Article 9 - Education of Children With Disabilities



§ 115C-106.1. State goal.

The goal of the State is to provide full educational opportunity to all children with disabilities who reside in the State. (1973l, e. 1293, ss. 2-4; 1975, c. 568, ss. 1-5; 1977, c. 927, ss. 1, 2; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1295; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1997-443, s. 11A.47; 2006-69, s. 2.)

§ 115C-106.2. Purposes.

(a) The purposes of this Article are to (i) ensure that all children with disabilities ages three through twenty-one have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepares them for further education, employment, and independent living; (ii) ensure that the rights of these children and their parents are protected; and (iii) enable the State Board of Education and local educational agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities.

(b) In addition to the purposes listed in subsection (a) of this section, the purpose of this Article is to enable the State Board of Education and local educational agencies to implement IDEA in this State. If this Article is silent or conflicts with IDEA, and if IDEA has specific language that is mandatory, then IDEA controls.

§ 115C-107.1. Free appropriate public education; ages.

(a) A free appropriate public education shall be made available to the following:

(1) All children with disabilities who reside in the State, who are the ages of three through twenty-one, who have not graduated from high school, and who require special education and related services.

(2) Any child with a disability who is receiving special education and related services and who has not graduated from high school until the end of the school year in which that child reaches the age of twentyl-two.

(3) Children with disabilities who require special education and related services and who are suspended or expelled from school and entitled to continuing education services as provided in IDEA.

(b) A free appropriate public education is not required to be provided to infants and toddlers with disabilities. However, early intervention services shall be made available to these children under G.S. 143B-139.6A.

§ 115C-111.2. Contracts with private service providers.

Local educational agencies furnishing special education and related services to children with disabilities may contract with private special education facilities or service providers to furnish any of these services that the public providers are unable to furnish. (1977, c. 927, s. 1; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 2006-69, s. 2.)

§ 115C-111.6. Obligation to provide services for preschool children with disabilities.

State funds appropriated to the public schools to implement preschool services for children with disabilities under this Article and IDEA shall be used to provide special education and related services to

preschool children with disabilities. These State funds shall be used to supplement and not supplant existing federal, State, and local funding for the public schools.

Preschool children with disabilities will continue to be served by all other State funds to which they are otherwise entitled. (2006-69, s. 2.)

Other Statutes (excerpts)

G.S. 115C-105.47. Local safe school plans.

(a) Each local board of education shall develop a local school administrative unit safe school plan designed to provide that every school in the local school administrative unit is safe, secure, and orderly, that there is a climate of respect in every school, and that appropriate personal conduct is a priority for all students and all public school personnel. The board shall include parents, the school community, representatives of the community, and others in the development or review of this plan. The plan may be developed by or in conjunction with other committees.

(b) Each plan shall include:

Professional development clearly matched to the goals and objectives of the plan. This professional development shall include a component to train appropriate school personnel in the management of disruptive or dangerous student behavior. Appropriate school personnel may include, but is not limited to, teachers, teacher assistants, school administrators, bus drivers, school resource officers, school psychologists, and school counselors. The training shall include instruction in positive management of student behavior, effective communication for defusing and de-escalating disruptive or dangerous behavior, and safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint. The appropriate personnel with priority for the training shall include those staff members who are most likely to be called upon to prevent or address disruptive or dangerous student behavior. Each local board of education shall include in this component of its safe school plan procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of this training in preventing or addressing disruptive or dangerous student behavior. Local boards of education are encouraged to use available sources of discretionary revenue to implement the plan to train personnel in the management of disruptive or dangerous student behavior. Local boards may only be required to implement the behavior management training component of the plan to the extent that funds have been appropriated for this purpose by the General Assembly or by local units of government. By January 1, 2006, local boards of education shall amend their safe school plans to include this training component.

G.S. 115C-375.2. Possession and self-administration of asthma medication by students with asthma or students subject to anaphylactic reactions, or both.

(a) Local boards of education shall adopt a policy authorizing a student with asthma or a student subject to anaphylactic reactions, or both, to possess and self-administer asthma medication on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events. As used in this section, “asthma medication” means a medicine prescribed for the treatment of asthma or anaphylactic reactions and includes a prescribed asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector. The policy shall include a requirement that the student’s parent or guardian provide to the school:

(1) Written authorization from the student’s parent or guardian for the student to possess and self-administer asthma medication.

(2) A written statement from the student’s health care practitioner verifying that the student has asthma or an allergy that could result in an anaphylactic reaction, or both, and that the health care practitioner prescribed medication for use on school property during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored events.

(3) A written statement from the student’s health care practitioner who prescribed the asthma medication that the student understands, has been instructed in self-administration of the

asthma medication, and has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the asthma medication and any device that is necessary to administer the asthma medication.

(4) A written treatment plan and written emergency protocol formulated by the health care practitioner who prescribed the medicine for managing the student's asthma or anaphylaxis episodes and for medication use by the student.

(5) A statement provided by the school and signed by the student's parent or guardian acknowledging that the local school administrative unit and its employees and agents are not liable for an injury arising from a student's possession and self-administration of asthma medication.

(6) Other requirements necessary to comply with state and federal laws.

(b) The student must demonstrate to the school nurse, or the nurse's designee, the skill level necessary to use the asthma medication and any device that is necessary to administer the medication.

(c) The student's parent or guardian shall provide to the school backup asthma medication that shall be kept at the student's school in a location to which the student has immediate access in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency.

(d) Information provided to the school by the student's parent or guardian shall be kept on file at the student's school in a location easily accessible in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency.

(e) If a student uses asthma medication prescribed for the student in a manner other than as prescribed, a school may impose on the student disciplinary action according to the school's disciplinary policy. A school may not impose disciplinary action that limits or restricts the student's immediate access to the asthma medication.

(f) The requirement that permission granted for a student to possess and self-administer asthma medication shall be effective only for the same school and for 365 calendar days and must be renewed annually.

(g) No local board of education, nor its members, employees, designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any act authorized by this section, or for any omission relating to that act, unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing. (2005-22, s. 1; 2006-264, s. 57(b).)

G.S. 115C-391.1. Permissible use of seclusion and restraint.

(a) It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to:

(1) Promote safety and prevent harm to all students, staff, and visitors in the public schools.

(2) Treat all public school students with dignity and respect in the delivery of discipline, use of physical restraints or seclusion, and use of reasonable force as permitted by law.

(3) Provide school staff with clear guidelines about what constitutes use of reasonable force permissible in North Carolina public schools.

(4) Improve student achievement, attendance, promotion, and graduation rates by employing positive behavioral interventions to address student behavior in a positive and safe manner.

(5) Promote retention of valuable teachers and other school personnel by providing appropriate training in prescribed procedures, which address student

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behavior in a positive and safe manner.

(b) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) "Assistive technology device" means any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capacities of a child with a disability.

(2) "Behavioral intervention" means the implementation of strategies to address behavior that is dangerous, disruptive, or otherwise impedes the learning of a student or others.

(3) "IEP" means a student's Individualized Education Plan.

(4) "Mechanical restraint" means the use of any device or material attached or adjacent to a student's body that restricts freedom of movement or normal access to any portion of the student's body and that the student cannot easily remove.

(5) "Physical restraint" means the use of physical force to restrict the free movement of all or a portion of a student's body.

(6) "School personnel" means:

a. Employees of a local board of education.

b. Any person working on school grounds or at a school function under a contract or written agreement with the public school system to provide educational or related services to students.

c. Any person working on school grounds or at a school function for another agency providing educational or related services to students.

(c) Physical Restraint:

(1) Physical restraint of students by school personnel shall be considered a reasonable use of force when used in the following circumstances:

a. As reasonably needed to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects on a person or within the control of a person.

b. As reasonably needed to maintain order or prevent or break up a fight.

c. As reasonably needed for self-defense.

d. As reasonably needed to ensure the safety of any student, school employee, volunteer, or other person present, to teach a skill, to calm or comfort a student, or to prevent self-injurious behavior.

e. As reasonably needed to escort a student safely from one area to another.

f. If used as provided for in a student's IEP or Section 504 plan or behavior intervention plan.

g. As reasonably needed to prevent imminent destruction to school or another person's property.

(2) Except as set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, physical restraint of students shall not be considered a reasonable use of force, and its use is prohibited.

(3) Physical restraint shall not be considered a reasonable use of force when used solely as a disciplinary consequence.

(4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the use of force by law enforcement officers in the lawful exercise of their law enforcement duties.

(d) Mechanical Restraint:

(1) Mechanical restraint of students by school personnel is permissible only in the following circumstances:

a. When properly used as an assistive technology device included in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan or behavior intervention plan or as otherwise prescribed for the student by a medical or related service provider.

b. When using seat belts or other safety restraints to secure students during transportation.

c. As reasonably needed to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects on a person or within the control of a person.

d. As reasonably needed for self-defense.

e. As reasonably needed to ensure the safety of any student, school employee, volunteer, or other person present.

(2) Except as set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, mechanical restraint, including the tying, taping, or strapping down of a student, shall not be considered a reasonable use of force, and its use is prohibited.

(3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the use of mechanical restraint devices such as handcuffs by law enforcement officers in the lawful exercise of their law enforcement duties.

Nothing in this section modifies the rights of school personnel to use reasonable force as permitted under G.S. 115C-390 or modifies the rules and procedures governing discipline under G.S. 115C-391(a).

(e) Notice, Reporting, and Documentation.

(1) Notice of procedures – Each local board of education shall provide copies of this section and all local board policies developed to implement this section to school personnel and parents or guardians at the beginning of each school year.

(2) Notice of specified incidents:

a. School personnel shall promptly notify the principal or principal's designee of:

1. Any use of aversive procedures.
2. Any prohibited use of mechanical restraint.
3. Any use of physical restraint resulting in observable physical injury to a student.
4. Any prohibited use of seclusion or seclusion that exceeds 10 minutes or the amount of time specified on a student's behavior intervention plan.

b. When a principal or principal's designee has personal knowledge or actual notice of any of the events described in this subdivision, the principal or principal's designee shall promptly notify the student's parent or guardian and will provide the name of a school employee the parent or guardian can contact regarding the incident.

(3) As used in subdivision (2) of this subsection, "promptly notify" means by the end of the workday during which the incident occurred when reasonably possible, but in no event later than the end of following workday.

(4) The parent or guardian of the student shall be provided with a written incident report for any incident reported under this section within a reasonable period of time, but in no event later than 30 days after the incident. The written incident report shall include:

a. The date, time of day, location, duration, and description of the incident and interventions.
b. The event or events that led up to the incident.
c. The nature and extent of any injury to the student.
d. The name of a school employee the parent or guardian can contact regarding the incident.

(5) No local board of education or employee of a local board of education shall discharge, threaten, or otherwise retaliate against another employee of the board regarding that employee's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges of employment because the employee makes a report alleging a prohibited use of physical restraint, mechanical restraint, aversive procedure, or seclusion, unless the employee knew or should have known that the report was false.

G.S. 143-300. State Tort Claims Act.

The State Tort Claims Act (STCA) is contained in G. S. 143-300. 1 and covers the local board of education from all claims of negligent operations or maintenance of public school buses or school transportation service vehicles. For example, driver negligence is insured for such claims as hitting another car, destroying property, (e.g. mailbox), or an accident causing students to be insured.

G.S. 115C-242. Summary of Tort Claims as it relates to five and under population.

The STCA provided coverage in the following, provided the driver is employed and paid by the LEA and is operating a bus as allowed under G. S. 115c-242:

- Transporting children with special needs (preschool handicapped program, ages three, four, and five), receiving education in local education agencies and transported on school buses.
- Transporting Chapter 1 Pre-Kindergarten pupils receiving education in local education agencies and transported on school buses.
- Transporting Head Start pupils receiving education housed in a building owned and operated by local education agencies and transported by school bus.
- Transporting students participating in Smart Start Program.
- Transporting mothers of infants enrolled in Mothers and Infants Educational or similar programs being operated by local education agencies. Since infants are neither pupils nor enrolled in school, the language of this article may make them ineligible for Tort coverage; however, an LEA may incur liability in the case of an accident or injury to the infants while being transported. (LEAs should secure insurance coverage for infants in this instance).

G.S. 20-137. 1. North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law.

The North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law requires that:

- A child must be secured in a properly used child restraint (CR) if the child is less than 8 years old AND weighs less than 80 pounds. Any type of child restraint (CR), including car booster seats and harnesses, is legal to use as long as it is certified to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS 213), the child is within the weight range for the child restraint/booster seat, and the CRS is being used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Children may be secured in a properly fitted seat belt at age 8 (regardless of weight) OR at 80 pounds (regardless of age) - whichever comes first. Placing the shoulder belt under a child's (or adult's) arm or behind the back is both dangerous and illegal.
- If no seating position equipped with a lap and shoulder belt to properly secure a belt positioning booster seat is available, a child who weighs at least 40 pounds may be restrained by a properly fitted lap belt only. WARNING: Belt-positioning booster seats can only be used with lap and shoulder combination safety belts. Belt-positioning booster seats must NEVER be used with just a lap belt. The NC Child Passenger Safety law exempts vehicles not required to have seat belts and federal standards do not require seat belts on school buses. The larger buses do not have seat belts because they rely on strong, well padded, energy absorbing seats and higher seat backs to 'compartmentalize' and protect passengers during a crash. Seat belts are required on small school buses (under 10,000 lbs.) and children being transported in these smaller buses are covered under the NC Child Passenger Safety Law. Most of the seat belts on these smaller buses are lap-belt-only seat belts. Children less than 40 pounds in weight are required to be in a front-facing restraint with a harness. Children at least 40 pounds can be restrained by just the lap belt without a booster seat. WARNING: Belt-positioning booster seats must NEVER be used with just a lap belt. Belt-positioning booster seats can only be used with lap and shoulder combination safety belts.

G.S. 20-137-4. Unlawful use of a mobile phone.

a) Definitions. - For purposes of this section, the following terms shall mean:

(1) Additional technology - As defined in G.S. 20-137.3(a)(1).

(2) Emergency situation - Circumstances such as medical concerns, unsafe road conditions, matters of public safety, or mechanical problems that create a risk of harm for the operator or passengers of a school bus.

(3) Mobile telephone - As defined in G.S. 20-137.3(a)(2).

(4) School bus - As defined in G.S. 20-4.01(27)d4. The term also includes any school activity bus as defined in G.S. 20-4.01(27)d3. and any vehicle transporting public, private, or parochial school students for compensation.

(b) Offense. - Except as otherwise provided in this section, no person shall operate a school bus on a public street or highway or public vehicular area while using a mobile telephone or any additional technology

associated with a mobile telephone while the school bus is in motion. This prohibition shall not apply to the use of a mobile telephone or additional technology associated with a mobile telephone in a stationary school bus.
(c) Seizure - The provisions of this section shall not be construed as authorizing the seizure or forfeiture of a mobile telephone or additional technology, unless otherwise provided by law.
(d) Exceptions - The provisions of subsection (b) of this section shall not apply to the use of a mobile telephone or additional technology associated with a mobile telephone for the sole purpose of communicating in an emergency situation.
(e) Local Ordinances - No local government may pass any ordinance regulating the use of mobile telephones or additional technology associated with a mobile telephone by operators of school buses.
(f) Penalty - A violation of this section shall be a Class 2 misdemeanor and shall be punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars ($100.00). No drivers license points or insurance surcharge shall be assessed as a result of a violation of this section. Failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall not constitute negligence per se or contributory negligence by the operator in any action for the recovery of damages arising out of the operation, ownership, or maintenance of a school bus.

Note: According to the Division of Motor Vehicles, for purposes of School Bus Driver Certification a conviction of the Mobile Phone Use By School Bus Drivers law (20-137.4 F) shall cancel a School Bus Driver certificate for a period of 1 year.

Excerpts from Article 17 – Supporting Services

§ 115C-245. School bus drivers; monitors; safety assistants.

a. Each local board which elects to operate a school bus transportation system shall employ the necessary drivers for such school buses. The drivers shall have all qualifications prescribed by the regulations of the State Board of Education herein provided for and must be at least 18 years old and have at least six months driving experience as a licensed operator of a motor vehicle before employment as a regular or substitute driver, but the selection and employment of each driver shall be made by the local board of education, and the driver shall be the employee of such local school administrative unit. Each local board of education shall assign the bus drivers employed by it to the respective schools within the jurisdiction of such board, and the superintendent or superintendent's designee shall assign the drivers to the school buses to be driven by them. No school bus shall at any time be driven or operated by any person other than the bus driver assigned to such bus except by the express direction of the superintendent or superintendent's designee or in accordance with rules and regulations of the appropriate local board of education.

b. The driver of a school bus subject to the direction of the superintendent or superintendent's designee shall have complete authority over and responsibility for the operation of the bus and the maintaining of good order and conduct upon such bus, and shall report promptly to the principal any misconduct upon such bus or disregard or violation of the driver's instructions by any person riding upon such bus. The principal may take such action with reference to any such misconduct upon a school bus, or any violation of the instructions of the driver, as he might take if such misconduct or violation had occurred upon the grounds of the school.

c. The driver of any school bus shall permit no person to ride upon such bus except pupils or school employees assigned thereto or persons permitted by the express direction of the superintendent or superintendent's designee to ride thereon.

d. The superintendent or superintendent's designee may, in his/her discretion, appoint a monitor for any bus assigned to any school. It shall be the duty of such monitor, subject to the direction of the driver of the bus, to preserve order upon the bus and do such other things as may be appropriate for the safety of the pupils and employees assigned to such bus while boarding such bus, alighting therefrom or being transported thereon, and to require such pupils and employees to conform to the rules and regulations established by the local board of education for the safety of pupils and employees upon school buses. Such monitors shall be unpaid volunteers who shall serve at the pleasure of the superintendent or superintendent's designee.

e. A local board of education may, in its discretion within funds available, employ transportation safety assistants upon recommendation of the principal through the superintendent. The safety assistants thus employed shall assist the bus drivers with the safety, movement, management, and care of children boarding the bus, leaving the bus, or being transported in it. The safety assistant should be either an adult or a certified student driver who is available as a substitute bus driver. (1955, c. 1372, art. 21, s. 6; 1979, c. 719, ss. 1-4; 1979, 2nd Sess. , c. 1156; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1987, c. 276; 1989, c. 558, s. 2; 1998-220, s. 4.)

§ 115C-250. Authority to expend funds for transportation of children with disabilities.

(a) The State Board of Education and local boards of education may expend public funds for transportation of children with disabilities who are unable because of their disability to ride the regular school buses and who have been placed in programs by a local school board as a part of its duty to provide these children with a free appropriate education under Article 9 of this Chapter. At the option of the local board of education with the concurrence of the State Board of Education, funds appropriated to the State Board of Education for contract transportation of children with disabilities may be used to purchase buses and minibuses as well as for the purposes authorized in the budget. The State Board of

Education shall adopt rules concerning the construction and equipment of these buses and minibuses.

The Departments of Health and Human Services, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Correction may also expend public funds for transportation of children with disabilities who are unable because of their disability to ride the regular school buses and who have been placed in programs by one of these agencies as a part of that agency's duty to provide these children with a free appropriate public education under Article 9 of this Chapter.

If a local area mental health center places a child with a disability in an educational program, the local area mental health center shall pay for the transportation of the child who is unable due to the disability to ride the regular school buses to the program.

(b) Funds appropriated for the transportation of children with disabilities may be used to pay transportation safety assistants employed in accordance with G.S. 115C-245(e) for buses to which children with disabilities are assigned. (1955, c. 1372, art. 21, s. 6; 1973, c. 1351, s. 1; 1975, c. 678, ss. 9, 10; 1977, c. 830, s. 1; 1979, c. 719, ss. 1-4; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1156; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; c. 912, s. 1; 1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1282, s. 31; 1985, c. 479, s. 26(b); 1987, c. 769; 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a); 1998-202, s. 4(n); 2000-137, s. 4(q); 2006-69, s. 3(h).)

§ 115C-253. Contracts for transportation.

Any local board of education may, in lieu of the operation by it of public school buses, enter into a contract with any person, firm or corporation for the transportation by such person, firm or corporation of pupils enrolled in the public schools of such local school administrative unit for the same purposes for which such local school administrative unit is authorized by this article to operate public school buses. Any vehicle used by such person, firm or corporation for the transportation of such pupils shall be constructed and equipped as provided in rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education, and the driver of such vehicle shall possess all of the qualifications prescribed by rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education. Where a contract for transportation of pupils is entered into between a local board of education and any person, firm or corporation which contemplates the use of an automobile or vehicle other than a bus for the transportation of 16 pupils or less, the automobile or vehicle shall not be required to be constructed and equipped as provided for in G. S. 115C-240(c) , but shall be constructed and equipped pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education. In the event that any local board of education shall enter into such a contract, the board may use for such purposes any funds which it might use for the operation of school buses owned by the board, and the tax-levying authorities of the county or of the city may provide in the county or city budget such additional funds as may be necessary to carry out such contracts. (1955, c. 1372, art. 21, s. 11; 1975, c. 382; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1987, c. 827, ss. 49, 50; 2007-423, s. 3.)

1.4 Exceptional Children Division Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities

The following are excerpts from State Board of Education Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities.

Disability Terms

Child with a Disability

A child with a disability is a child evaluated in accordance with Policies as having autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, developmental delay, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, serious emotional disability, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment including blindness, and who by reason of the disability needs special education and related services.

If it is determined through an appropriate evaluation that a child has one of the eligible disabilities, but only needs a related service and not special education, the child is not a child with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA), final regulations 2006.

If the only service required by the child is speech language, it is considered special education rather than a related service and the child would be determined to be a child with an eligible disability.

The terms used in the definition of a child with a disability are defined as follows:

1. **Autism, sometimes called Autism Spectrum Disorder**

   A developmental disability that significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction which is generally evident before age three and adversely affects a child's educational performance. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the criteria are met.

   Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

   Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance as defined in this section.

2. **Deaf-blindness**

   Hearing and visual impairments that occur together.

   The combination of impairments causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

3. **Deafness**

   A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

4. Developmental delay

A child aged three through seven whose development and/or behavior are delayed or atypical as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures.

Delay in one or more of the following developmental areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, or adaptive, and who by reason of the delay needs special education and related services.

5. Serious emotional disability

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Serious emotional disability includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

6. Hearing impairment

Impairment in hearing whether permanent or fluctuating that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

The term is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.

7. Intellectual disability

Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning that adversely affects a child's educational performance, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, and manifested during the developmental period.

8. Multiple disabilities

Two or more disabilities occurring together (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.

The term does not include deaf-blindness.

9. **Orthopedic impairment**

   A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

   The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

10. **Other health impairment**

    An impairment having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, which result in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette's syndrome, etc.; and

    Adversely affects a child's educational performance.

11. **Specific learning disability**

    A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

    The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, or serious emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

12. **Speech or language impairment**

    A communication disorder, such as impairment in fluency, articulation, language, or voice/resonance that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

    Language may include function of language (pragmatic), the content of language (semantic), and the form of language (phonology, morphologic, and syntactic systems).

    The impairment may result in a primary disability or it may be secondary to other disabilities.

13. **Traumatic brain injury**

    An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

    The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.

    The injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

14. Visual impairment including blindness

Impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance.

The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

15. Individualized Education Program

Individualized Education Program (IEP) means a written statement for a child with a disability that is generally:

- Developed with consideration of the strengths of the child; concerns of the parent for enhancing the education of their child; special factors including behavior that impedes the child's learning or that of others; language needs in the case of LEP as it relates to the child's IEP; Braille instruction in the case of blind or visually impaired children; communication needs in the case of children who are deaf or hard of hearing; and assistive technology needs regarding devices and/or services;

At least one member of the IEP Team should be the same race and gender as the child with a disability.

- Reviewed at least annually to determine whether the annual goals for the child are being achieved; and

- Revised as appropriate to address any lack of expected growth toward the annual goals and in the general education curriculum if appropriate, and other matters.

IEP Team is a group of individuals consisting of:

- Local education agency representative,
- Parent of a child with a disability,
- Regular education teacher of the child,
- Special education teacher of the child, and
- Others responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising the IEP for a child with a disability.

Special education

Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings.

- Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate, to the needs of an eligible child under the Policies, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability and ensure access of the child to the general curriculum so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.

- At no cost means that all specially-designed instruction is provided without charge, but does not preclude incidental fees that are normally charged to nondisabled students or their parents as a part of the regular program.

The term includes each of the following, if the services otherwise meet the above requirements: speech-language pathology services, travel training, vocational education.

Travel training means providing instruction, as appropriate, to children with significant cognitive disabilities, and any other children with disabilities who require this instruction to enable them to develop awareness of the environment in which they live and learn the skills necessary to move effectively and safely from place to place within the environment (e.g. in school, in the home, at work, and in the community).

16. Related Services

In general, means transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

The term includes, but is not limited to, speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes, school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

The term does not include services that apply to children with surgically implanted devices, including cochlear implants.

Interpreting services

Services provided to children who are deaf or hard of hearing in oral transliteration services, cued language transliteration services, and sign language transliteration and interpreting services, and transcription services, such as communication access real-time translation (CART), C-Print, and TypeWell, and

Special interpreting services for children who are deaf-blind.

Orientation and mobility services

Services provided to children with blindness or visual impairment by qualified personnel to enable those students to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community.

The term includes teaching students the following as appropriate:

- Spatial and environmental concepts and use of information received by the senses (sound, temperature and vibrations) to establish, maintain, or regain orientation and line of travel (e.g., using sound at a traffic light to cross the street);
- To use the long cane or a service animal to supplement visual travel skills or as a tool for safely negotiating the environment for students with no available travel vision;
- To understand and use remaining vision and distance low vision aids; and

- Other concepts, techniques, and tools.

Physical therapy

A continuum of services provided by a licensed physical therapist, or a licensed and supervised physical therapy assistant. School-based physical therapy services are provided to develop and maintain performance levels within an individual student's physical capabilities for independent and safe access to educationally related activities.

Services may include development and maintenance of student's functional ability to participate in and benefit from the student's special education program; modification and adaptation of the student's physical environment; provision of in-service training for school personnel; communication and/or education of the student's teachers and family; communication with state and community agencies; and involvement in total program planning for children with disabilities, including transition planning.

Recreation

The term includes assessment of leisure function, therapeutic recreation services, recreation programs in schools and community agencies, and leisure education.

Transportation

The term includes travel to and from school and between schools, travel in and around school buildings, and specialized equipment (such as special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps), if required to provide special transportation for a child with a disability.

17. Confidentiality

Personally identifiable information

- Information that contains the name of the child, the child's parent, or other family member; the address of the child; a personal identifier, such as the child's social security number or student number; or a list of personal characteristics or other information that would make it possible to identify the child with reasonable certainty.
- All persons collecting or using personally identifiable information must receive training or instruction regarding the state and federal confidentiality and privacy policies.
- Each local education agency shall protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.
- One official in each local education agency shall assume responsibility for insuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. This official may assign personnel in each school to ensure confidentiality.
- Each local education agency shall maintain for public inspection a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

Disclosure of information

- An educational agency may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record of a student without prior parental consent if the disclosure meets certain conditions – such as the disclosure is to other school officials within the agency whom the agency has determined to have legitimate educational interests. *(Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)*

  School officials are personnel employed by a local education agency including teachers, administrators, education specialists, and other personnel i.e. bus drivers and aides who possess the appropriate qualifications, training, and experience to be designated as a public school employee. *(NC Public School Laws; Administrative Code)*

- When the disclosure is in connection with a health or safety emergency, nothing in this part shall prevent a local education agency from disclosing appropriate information maintained under this section to teachers and school officials within the agency who the local education agency has determined have legitimate education interests in the behavior of the student. *(Family Educational Rights and Privacy* Act)

18. Free Appropriate Public Education

A free and appropriate public education (FAPE) is special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; meet the standards of the state education agency including the requirements of IDEA; and include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education.

A local education agency must take steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in these services and activities, including the provision of supplementary aids and services determined appropriate and necessary by the child's IEP Team.

- Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the public agency, referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, and employment of students, including both employment by the public agency and assistance in making outside employment available.

- Children with disabilities must be ensured participation in these nonacademic and extracurricular settings with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the child with a disability.

The local education agency must have policies and procedures that ensure that all children with disabilities and who are suspected of being a child with a disability ages three through twenty-one residing in the local education agency, including children who are homeless children, migrant children, or are wards of the state, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated.

Homeless Children has the meaning given the term homeless children and youths of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence including:

- Children and youths who are sharing housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;

- Children and youths who are living in motels, hotels, temporary trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Children and youths who are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Children and youths who are abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youths who have a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children (as defined by public school law) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described above.

19. Least Restrictive Environment

Least restrictive environment (LRE) means to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities shall be educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

> It is assumed that most children with disabilities will receive the same transportation provided to nondisabled children unless the IEP Team determines otherwise. *(Federal Register – US Department of Education)*

A continuum of alternative placements must be available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services that include instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions, and provisions for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) in conjunction with regular class placement.

The application of the LRE continuum for transportation assignment of a child with a disability is as follows:

- school bus with nondisabled students without accommodations or modifications;
- school bus with nondisabled students with necessary accommodations, modifications, supplemental aids, and services;
- school bus with only children with disabilities with or without accommodations, modifications, supplemental aids, and services;
- school vehicle designated for public school transportation with only children with disabilities with or without supplemental aids and services; and

- school vehicle designated for public school transportation with only the student with a disability. *(LRP Publications – Transportation Answer Book)*

20. Parentally-Placed Private School Children

Parentally-placed private school children with disabilities means children with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private, including religious, schools or facilities that meet the definition of elementary school or secondary school as determined under state law.

- An elementary school is a nonprofit institutional day or residential school, including a public elementary charter school that provides elementary education.
- A secondary school is a nonprofit institutional day or residential school, including a public secondary charter school that provides secondary education, except that it does not include any education beyond grade twelve.
- Registered home schools are recognized as private schools in NC.

The local education agency where the private school is located must locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private schools.

A Services Plan must be developed and implemented for parentally-placed private school children with a written statement describing the special education and related services the local education agency will provide to a child with a disability enrolled in a private school who has been designated to receive special education services. The plan includes the following:

- Location of the services that may be provided on the premises of private, including religious, schools, to the extent consistent with law.
- Any transportation necessary for the child to benefit from or participate in the provided services.
- Transportation from the child's school or the child's home to a site other than the private school and,
- Transportation from the service site to the private school or to the child's home, depending on the timing of the services.
  - Local education agencies are not required to provide transportation from the child's home to the private school.
  - The cost of the transportation may be included in the calculation of the proportionate amount of federal funds provided for the special education and related services of parentally-placed children with disabilities.

21. Transition Services

A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education,

vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

- Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Transition services for a child with a disability may be special education if provided as specially-designed instruction, or a related service if required to assist the child with a disability to benefit from special education.

22. Discipline Procedures

Authority of school personnel

- School personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from the child's current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 consecutive school days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to children without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement).

- A public agency is only required to provide services during periods of removal to a child with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who is similarly removed.

- After a child with a disability has been removed from the child's current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal the public agency must:

  Continue to provide educational services to a child with a disability to enable the child to continue participation in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP and,

  Provide a child with a disability a functional behavioral assessment, (FBA) and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that is does not recur. If a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) already has been developed, it must be reviewed and modified, as necessary, to address the behavior.

- The extent to which educational services are needed in this section is determined by school personnel with at least one of the child's teachers. Services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

- School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change in placement, consistent with the other requirements of this section, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. Circumstances considered should include area of disability, functioning level of the child, intent of the behavior, and other relevant factors.

- In special circumstances, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child:

  a) Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state education agency or local education agency;

     Weapon has the meaning given the term dangerous weapon under The United States Code that means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such a term does not include a pocket knife with blade of less than 2 1/2 inches in length.

  b) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state education agency or local education agency;

     Illegal drug means a controlled substance; but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under the Controlled Substances Act or under any other provision of Federal law.

     Controlled substance means a drug or other substance identified under the Controlled Substances Act.

  c) Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the state education agency or local education agency.

     Serious bodily injury as defined by United States Code is a bodily injury which involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

  Upon the end of not more than 45-day removal to the interim alternative educational setting for the reason (a) through (c) above, the child shall be returned to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the local education agency, through the IEP process, agree to a change of placement.

  The IEP Team determines the interim alternative educational setting for services.

Change of Placement

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of code of student conduct, the local education agency, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the local education agency) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observation, and any relevant information provided by the parent to

determine:

a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability or,

b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local education agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities, except when services are required.

The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the local education agency, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that either condition above (a or b) was met. If condition (b) was met, the local education agency must take immediate stops to remedy those deficiencies.

Upon determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must:

- Either conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the local education agency had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or,

- If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it as necessary to address the behavior; and

- With the exception of special circumstances under the authority of school personnel section, return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the local education agency, through the IEP process, agree to a change of placement. If the removal is a change of placement, determine appropriate services.

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of the code of student conduct, the local education agency must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice.

For disciplinary changes in placement that would exceed 10 consecutive school days, if the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities, except to the extent when services are required.

23. Transportation

Local boards of education are responsible for providing or paying the costs of transportation for children with disabilities enrolled in schools or programs in their local school systems and are responsible for providing or paying the costs of transportation to any private residential or non-residential program, if the student has been placed in or assigned to that private program by the

local board of education.

- Transportation funds for this purpose may be provided through the local board of education's annual transportation budget allotments which are administered by the School Support Division, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. These funds are incorporated in the general transportation plan of each local board.

- For preschool children with disabilities, payment of such transportation costs must be made from either federal or state preschool program funds.

If a child with disabilities is assigned to or enrolled in any residential or non-residential program operated by or under the jurisdiction or control of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Correction or the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Department operating the program or having the program under its jurisdiction or control is responsible for providing or paying the costs of transportation.

- Applicable for programs for school age students with disabilities as well as programs for preschool children with disabilities.

- The only exception is when a child is enrolled in a local school system and is counted for funding purposes by the school system, but attends a class or classes at a Department of Health and Human Services program. In this case, the local school system is responsible for providing the transportation to the Department of Health and Human Services program and return to the local school system or home.

If a local area mental health center places a child with disabilities in an educational program, the local area mental health center shall pay for the transportation of the child to/from the program.

The costs of transportation for a child with disabilities placed in or assigned to a school or program outside the state shall be paid by the local educational agency or state operated agency placing or assigning the child in that school or program.

In no event shall reimbursement for the costs of transportation paid for any one child exceed the School Support Division allowance per mile unless it is demonstrated by the child or his/her parent that such limitation will work a hardship or is unreasonable. This justification must be approved by the local educational agency and appropriate state agency.

1.5 Division of School Support Services Rules and Regulations for the Allocation and Use of Funds for Contract Transportation of Exceptional Children

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of School Support, Transportation Services

1. Appropriate transportation shall be provided for all special education pupils when shown in their individualized education program that special transportation is required.

2. Upon the request of county and city boards of education, funds will be allotted by the Assistant Superintendent for Financial Services within the availability of funds.

3. Transportation arrangements will be administered through the appropriate county or city superintendent's office.

4. Transportation should be provided by public school buses, special vehicles titled to a board of education, by contracts or fares with commercial carriers where practicable and by individual contractors (i.e. parents, family members, volunteers, retirees, etc.).

5. A form of written contract shall be devised and signed by both parties before transportation of children begins. All contracts shall, as a minimum, contain the standards outlined in items 7-12. (Refer to Appendix 1B - Sample Contracts).

6. In arranging contracts, every effort should be made to obtain these transportation services as economically as possible with the following consideration:

- Pupils should be grouped as much as possible by carpooling.
- Payments for contract mileage shall be based on actual necessary mileage required for the sole purpose of providing transportation for students with disabilities to and from the school to which the disabled child is enrolled (*Necessary mileage for an employed contractor is interpreted to be that which is required beyond normal commuting mileage associated with the employment of the contractor).* When contractors have sought employment so they could transport an exceptional child to a specialized school, they should not be penalized for their efforts. Thus, one round trip is permitted. Necessary mileage for non-employed contractors may include two round trips from the home to the school to which the disabled child is enrolled.
- Payment shall be made for the actual number of days the pupils are transported, not to exceed one hundred eighty-one days unless extended school year is required in the student's IEP.
- Frequency of trips should be in compliance with the requirements of the public/private institutional school not to exceed 181 days unless extended school year is required in the student's IEP.
- Payment for contract mileage to individual contractors shall not exceed the current state approved maximum rate of reimbursement.

7. Contract vehicles shall at all times while school pupils are being transported meet the requirements of the Division of Motor Vehicles safety inspection regulations.

8. Drivers of contract vehicles shall hold a valid North Carolina operator's license at all times.

9. The driver of any passenger-carrying vehicle of over 12 passengers, other than a school bus, shall hold the appropriate North Carolina operator's license at all times.

10. Supporting invoices signed by individual contractors must be attached to the Financial Services' copy of the voucher submitted by the various county and city boards of education (contractor's name or company on Form TD-24A).

11. Local administrative units entering into contracts will not assume any responsibility for any funding other than services outlined in the contract.

12. Contractors shall acquire and maintain liability insurance.

13. The initial allotments shall consist of 90% of the previous year's approved annual operating budget.

14. Additional funds will be allotted within the availability of funds after receipt and approval of the Annual Operating Budget and in accordance with the North Carolina Public Schools Allotment Policy Manual.

15. In accordance with Public School Law GS (115C-250) and rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education, funds for contract transportation of children with special needs who are unable because of their disability, to ride the regular school buses may be used to purchase buses and minibuses as well as for the purpose authorized in the budget.

16. The Department of Public Instruction, Transportation Services, shall deliver buses requisitioned by the local school units at the earliest possible date and shall work with the respective school units in providing for the installation of special equipment on these buses as may be required.

17. The Department of Public Instruction shall purchase these buses and equipment initially from the appropriations provided for school bus replacement. A local school unit may pay any portion of the cost for buses delivered under these regulations from sources other than state funds. The Department of Public Instruction shall deposit these funds into the school bus replacement appropriations.

18. If any vehicle purchased under authority of this section is sold prior to the time of replacement by the Department of Public Instruction, proceeds from such sale shall be distributed in a prorated amount to the sources from which the vehicle was originally funded. If the vehicle is replaced by the Department of Public Instruction through its replacement program, the proceeds from such sale shall be transmitted to the Department of Public Instruction in total.

19. The Department of Public Instruction shall approve school bus routes established by a local board of education for the transportation of exceptional children on buses purchased from these funds.

20. Upon the placement of buses into service under these provisions, the operating costs shall be provided form regular allotments.

21. A report of all expenses incurred in transportation of exceptional children on school buses purchased under this provision, and who were previously provided services under contract transportation, shall be maintained and transmitted to the Division of School Services, Transportation.

22. A regular school child who is eligible for school bus transportation shall not be denied transportation on these special buses if space is available.

23. A local board of education shall make every effort to provide for specially trained drivers on buses transporting exceptional children and may supplement salaries paid from transportation funds allotted by the Department of Public Instruction from other sources of funds. The salaries of aides, who may be required on the special buses, shall not be paid from the state allotment of funds for school bus transportation.

1.6 Title 16, North Carolina Administrative Code

Title 16, North Carolina Administrative Code (Excerpts from Subchapters 6B-Student Transportation System and 6H-Federal Programs)

16 NCAC 06B.0102 School Bus Passengers

A. LEAs shall provide instruction in school bus safety to all children during the first five days of school and regularly thereafter during the school year. The LEAs shall include in the instruction basic skills and knowledge vital to the safety in school bus transportation.

B. LEAs shall provide seating for all school bus passengers entitled to transportation according to the rated seating capacity for each specific bus. The LEA shall not allow the number of passengers being transported to exceed the official rated capacity for the type and model bus being used. All riders must be seated before a bus may leave a stop; overcrowding and standees are prohibited.

C. LEAs shall establish uniform procedures for transporting children with special needs to include the following:

- Recommendations by school-based committee;
- Inclusion in the written individualized education program; and
- Approval by the transportation director and superintendent.

16 NCAC 06B.0103 Local Rules and Regulations

LEAs shall adopt and keep on file in the office of the superintendent the rules, regulations, and policies to ensure the safe, orderly, and efficient operation of school buses, including the following:

- The use of school buses under G. S. 115C-242(5)
- A uniform system of discipline on school buses;
- A uniform procedure for the recruitment and selection of school bus drivers;
- Procedures for relieving a driver of driving duties;
- Passenger safety rules;
- Responsibilities of school bus safety attendants; and
- Duties of school personnel in the administration of the school transportation system.

16 NCAC 06H.0106 Non-Instructional Special Education Services

(a) Transportation

(1) LEAs shall provide or pay for the costs of transportation for children with disabilities enrolled in the schools or programs in their local school systems and shall also provide or pay for the costs of transportation to any private residential or nonresidential program if the student has been placed in or assigned to that private program by the LEA. Transportation funds for this purpose may be provided through local boards of education annual budget transportation allotments that are administered by the School Support Division of the Department. These funds shall be incorporated in the general transportation plan of each local board. For preschool children with disabilities, payment of these transportation costs must be made from either federal or state preschool program funds.

(2) If a child with disabilities is assigned to or enrolled in any residential or nonresidential program operated by or under the jurisdiction of the Departments of Health and Human Services or Correction, the department operating the program or having the program under its jurisdiction or control shall provide or pay the costs of transportation. This shall be applicable for programs for school age students with disabilities as well as programs for preschool children with disabilities. The only exception shall be when a child is enrolled in a LEA and is counted for funding purposes by the LEA, but attends a class or classes at a Department of Health and Human Services program. In this case, the LEA shall provide the transportation to the Department of Health and Human Services program and return to the LEA or home.

(3) The costs of transportation for a child with disabilities placed in or assigned to a school or program outside the state shall be paid by the LEA placing or assigning the child.

(4) Reimbursement for transportation costs paid for any one child may not exceed the Department of Transportation allowance per mile unless it is demonstrated by the child or his/her parents that this limitation will work a hardship or is unreasonable. The LEA and the appropriate state agency shall approve this justification.

(b) LEAs shall determine and arrange for the provision of all materials, supplies and equipment essential to the instructional programs for children with special needs.

Appendix 1A - McKINNEY-VENTO 2001—LAW INTO PRACTICE

Transportation

Who is homeless? (Sec. 725)

The term "homeless children and youth"–

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence ...; and

(B) includes–

(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings ...

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

This document was collaboratively developed by:

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)–512-475-8765–*www.naehcy.org*

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)–800-308-2145–*www.serve.org/nche*

National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH)–202-737-6444 ext. 18–*www.nationalhomeless.org*

National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (NLCHP)–202-638-2535 –*www.nlchp.org*

National Network for Youth (NN4Y)–202-783-7949–*www.NN4Youth.org*

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B–Education for Homeless Children and Youth), reauthorized in January 2002, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This brief explains the legislation and offers strategies for implementing it in a school district. Additional briefs on various topics in the law may be found on the websites of the organizations listed below.

Key Provisions

- ❒ Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), otherwise known as school districts, must provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin, at a parent or guardian's request.
- ❒ For unaccompanied youth, LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school of origin at the LEA homeless liaison's request.
- ❒ "School of origin" is defined as the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.
- ❒ If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation. If the student is living outside the school of origin's LEA, the LEA where the student is living and the school of origin's LEA must determine how to divide the responsibility and cost of providing transportation, or they must share the responsibility and cost equally.
- ❒ In addition to providing transportation to the school of origin, LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.

(*See* Endnotes *for the text of the law.*)

Changing schools greatly impedes students' academic and social growth. A "rule of thumb" is that it takes a child four to six months to recover academically after changing schools. Highly mobile students have also been found to have lower test scores and overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools. This diminished achievement hurts students and schools.

Although the McKinney-Vento Act permits students in homeless situations to remain in their schools of origin despite their residential instability, lack of transportation commonly prevents them from continuing in their schools of origin. Therefore, LEAs are now required to provide transportation to the school of origin. The resulting educational stability will enhance students' academic and social growth, while permitting schools to benefit from the increased test scores and achievement shown to result from student continuity.

Strategies for Implementation

- ❒ Coordinate with local housing authorities and community-based organizations to house students near their schools of origin.
- ❒ Re-route school buses (including special education, magnet school, and other buses).
- ❒ Ensure that school buses travel to shelters, transitional living projects, and motels where homeless students reside.
- ❒ Provide sensitivity training to bus drivers and arrange bus stops to keep students' living situations confidential.

continued on reverse

Transportation (continued)

- ❒ Develop close ties among LEA homeless liaisons, school staff, and pupil transportation staff.
- ❒ Designate a district-level point of contact to arrange and coordinate transportation.
- ❒ Provide passes for public transportation, including passes for caregivers when necessary.
- ❒ Collaborate with local public agencies and service providers to develop transportation plans or provide transportation.
- ❒ Take advantage of transportation systems used by public assistance agencies.
- ❒ Coordinate with public assistance agencies, whose clients cannot work unless their children are in school.
- ❒ Reimburse parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth for gas.
- ❒ Obtain corporate or other sponsorship for transportation costs.

For many more implementation strategies, call 800-308-2145 or e-mail *homeless@serve.org* to request a copy of the National Center for Homeless Education's FREE publication on transportation for children and youth in homeless situations developed from the 2000 National Symposium on Transportation.

Sources for mobility data:

Dr. Joy Rogers of the Loyola University Department of Education, Education Report of Rule 706 Expert Panel presented in B.H. v. Johnson, *715 F. Supp. 1387 (N.D. Ill. 1989), 1991.*

"Pervasive Student Mobility: A Moving Target for School Improvement," Finding #9, Study of the Chicago Panel on School Policy and the Center for School Improvement at the University of Chicago *(1996).*

Victoria, Texas' "One Child, One School, One Year" policy, which led to increased attendance in district schools and a significant increase in state education funds, as well as improved test scores.

Every state is required to have a coordinator for the education of homeless children and youth, and every school district is required to have a liaison for homeless students. These individuals will assist you with the implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act. To find out who your state coordinator is, visit the NCHE website at *www.serve.org/nche.*

NCHE
National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE

For further information on the McKinney-Vento Act and resources for implementation, call the NCHE HelpLine at 800-308-2145 or e-mail *homeless@serve.org.*

Local contact information:

Endnotes

(1) In General—Each State shall submit to the Secretary a plan to provide for the education of homeless children and youths within the State. Such plan shall include the following: ... (J) Assurances that ... (iii) the State and its local educational agencies will adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin, as determined in paragraph (3)(A), in accordance with the following, as applicable:

(I) If the homeless child or youth continues to live in the area served by the local educational agency in which the school of origin is located, the child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin shall be provided or arranged by the local educational agency in which the school of origin is located.

(II) If the homeless child's or youth's living arrangements in the area served by the local educational agency of origin terminate and the child or youth, though continuing his or her education in the school of origin, begins living in an area served by another local educational agency, the local educational agency of origin and the local educational agency in which the homeless child or youth is living shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the local educational agencies are unable to agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally....

(4) Comparable Services—Each homeless child or youth to be assisted under this subtitle shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected under paragraph (3), including the following: (A) Transportation services...."

McKinney-Vento Act Sec. 722(g)(1)(J)(iii) and (g)(4)(A); 42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii) and (g)(4)(A).

Appendix 1B — Sample Contracts

Sample #1
NORTH CAROLINA
TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT

_____COUNTY

This Agreement is made and entered into this ____day of _____, 19__, between the _____Board of Education, hereafter referred to as the school Unit and _____, hereafter referred to as the Carrier;

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS _____(the student) is a child with special needs as defined by G.S. 115c-109, and as such is entitled to received educational services from the school unit; and
WHEREAS the school Unit has determined that it is not practicable to transport the student to and from school at _____(the school) by public school bus, special school vehicle or commercial carrier; and
WHEREAS the Carrier has agreed to provide transportation for the student from the student's home to the school and back each school day;
NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements hereinafter stated, the parties hereto covenant and agree as follows:

1. The Carrier will provide transportation for the student between the student's home and the school for the school year 19__- __. During this period, the Carrier will:
   a. provide a motor vehicle which meets all North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles' safety inspection requirements;
   b. hold a valid North Carolina driver's license;
   c. provide and maintain proper liability insurance coverage for individuals who are to be transported;
   d. assume total responsibility for the safety of the student during the time the student is being transported;
   e. submit mileage documentation to the school Unit on a monthly basis;
   f. accept monthly reimbursement from the school Unit for services rendered; and
   g. be responsible for providing a substitute driver if necessary. The _____to act as a substitute driver.
2. The school Unit's Director _____will supervise the administration of this contract.
3. The school Unit will reimburse the Carrier at the rate of $_____ per ____for necessary miles/trips driven in the actual transportation of the student to the school.
4. Either party may suspend or terminate this agreement at any time for cause, upon reasonable notice to the other party.
5. This agreement contains the entire understanding of the parties and it may not be altered, amended, or modified except by written statement, executed by each of the parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this agreement in duplicate originals, one of which is retained by each of the parties, the day and year first above written.

_____BOARD OF EDUCATION

_____
Chairman

Attest:
_____
Secretary

_____
Carrier

_____
(SEAL)

NORTH CAROLINA

_____COUNTY

I, _____, a Notary Public, certify that _____
personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged that he as Secretary of the
_____Board of Education, and that, by authority duly given and a

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this _____day of _____.

_____
Notary Public

My commission expires: _____

NORTH CAROLINA
_____COUNTY

I, _____, a Notary Public, certify that_____
personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged that he as _____
Secretary of _____, a corporation, and that, by authority duly given and as the act of the President, sealed with its corporate seal, and attested to himself by its Secretary.

Witness my hand notarial seal, this _____day of _____, 19__.

_____
Notary Public

My Commission expires: _____

Sample #2

NORTH CAROLINA
TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT

_____COUNTY

This contract is made and entered into this _____day of _____, 19__, between the _____Board of Education, hereafter referred to as the school Unit and _____, hereafter referred to as the Carrier;

WITNESSETH:

THAT WHEREAS, _____(the student) is a child with special needs as defined by G.S. 115c-109 who is in need of transportation from the student's home to _____(the school); and
WHEREAS, the school Unit has determined that it is not practicable for the school Unit to provide transportation for the student by public school bus, special vehicle owned by the school Unit or commercial Carrier, for the reason that _____

WHEREAS, the Carrier has agreed to transport the student according to the terms and conditions of this contract;
NOW THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual covenants and agree as follows:
1. The Carrier shall transport the student in the manner hereafter stated.

2. The school Unit shall direct the Carrier from time to time to implement applicable rules and regulations regarding the transportation of a child with special needs as promulgated by the school Unit, the State Board of Education, or other applicable agency. The Carrier shall immediately implement these rules and regulations. The current rules and regulations are attached to this contract Exhibit "A" and are incorporated herein as a part of this contract. These rules and regulations may be amended from time to time during the term of this contract by the agency which promulgated them.

3. This contract applies only to that period of time during the 19__-__ school year, as adopted by the school Unit, as the student is served by the school Unit. Unless sooner terminated as hereinafter provided, this contract shall immediately terminate at the expiration of the 19_-_ school year, as adopted by the school Unit, or at the expiration of the period of time in which the student is served by the school Unit, whichever occurs first.

4. The school Unit shall pay the Carrier for actual miles driven in transporting the student at the rate of ____cents ($._____) per mile. Each driver shall maintain a daily written log to include miles driven, the name of the student transported, and such other information as the school Unit may require. The Carrier shall submit this log and an accompanying invoice to the school Unit each month. The school Unit shall pay the Carrier only after it has received and approved the log accompanying invoice. The school Unit will not pay the Carrier for any mileage driven during which the student is not present in the vehicle.

The reimbursement rate specified above shall apply for the duration of this contract, unless changed upon the mutual consent of the school Unit and the Carrier after a fluctuation of more than ten cents ($.10) per gallon of gasoline. Either party may request a change in the reimbursement rate upon such a fluctuation.

THIS CONTRACT IS SUBJECT SPECIFICALLY TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS SUPPLIED BY THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, OR OTHER APPLICABLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY, TO THE SCHOOL UNIT FOR TRANSPORTATION OF THE STUDENT. THE CARRIER ACKNOWLEDGES THAT PAYMENT UNDER THIS IS SUBJECT SPECIFICALLY TO THE AVAILABILITY OF SUCH FUNDS.

5. The Carrier shall transport the student only in a vehicle which meets all Division of Motor Vehicle requirements according to the rules of the State Board of Education, and the driver of the vehicle must meet all required qualifications. The carrier shall at all times during the term of this contract maintain any

such vehicle in a state of good repair and cleanliness and in accordance with all applicable vehicle inspection standards. Each driver shall be in good health and suitable appearance while transporting the student under this contract. The Carrier and the Carrier's drivers shall comply with all licensing and insurance requirements which apply to the transportation of a child with special needs. The school unit may inspect at any reasonable time any vehicle the Carrier uses pursuant to this contract. The Carrier shall maintain throughout the term of this contract liability insurance coverage as required by applicable rule, regulation or statute adopted or promulgated by the State of North Carolina, the State Board of Education, or other applicable agency. This insurance shall fully indemnify and hold harmless the school Unit, its individual board members, and its agents and employees from any and all liability whatever arising from personal injury or property damage of any nature whatsoever.

6. The Carrier shall submit to the school Unit in writing the name and address of each driver, whether regular or substitute, which the Carrier proposes to use in transporting the student, before beginning the transportation pursuant to this contract. The Carrier shall no allow any person to operate a vehicle to transport the student pursuant to this contract unless the Carrier has submitted the name and address of the person to the school Unit. Before any driver begins to transport the student pursuant to this contract, the Carrier shall give the driver a copy of this contract. The driver shall execute a written statement to the school Unit certifying that the driver has received a copy of this contract from the Carrier, has read or had heard read the provisions of this contract and understands the terms and conditions of this Contact. The school Unit reserves the right to reject any driver for such cause as it deems appropriate. The Carrier shall be responsible for each driver's actions in the transportation of the student pursuant to this contract. The Carrier specifically agrees to fully indemnify and hold harmless the school Unit, its individual board members, and its agents and employees from any and all liability whatever arising from or out of the conduct of its drivers or other employees, its officers, and /agents.

7. The Carrier's failure to comply with any provision of this contract, with any rule or regulation adopted by the school Unit pursuant to this contract, or with any directive issued by the school Unit pursuant to this contract shall be cause for immediate termination of this contract. The school Unit shall notify the Carrier of this termination in writing by certified mail directed to the Carrier's last known place of business.

8. If the Carrier has any questions concerning the transportation of the student under the terms of this contract, the Carriers shall immediately contract the school Unit in order to resolve those questions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this contract, the day and year first above written.

_____BOARD OF EDUCATION
BY:
_____
Chairman

CARRIER
BY:
_____
ATTEST:

_____
Secretary

(SEAL)

NORTH CAROLINA
_____COUNTY

I, _____, a Notary Public, certify that _____
personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged that he, as Secretary of the
_____Board of Education, and that, by authority duly given and a

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this _____day of _____.

_____
Notary Public

My commission expires: _____

NORTH CAROLINA
_____COUNTY

I, _____, a Notary Public, certify that_____
personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged that he as _____
Secretary of _____, a corporation, and that, by authority duly given and as the act of the
President, sealed with its corporate seal, and attested to himself by its Secretary.

Witness my hand notarial seal, this _____day of _____, 19__.

_____
Notary Public

My Commission expires: _____

CHAPTER 2

Roles and Responsibilities

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2. 3 Responsibilities of Transportation Director or Designee 2-3

2. 4 Responsibilities of the Exceptional Children's Program Director or Designee 2-3

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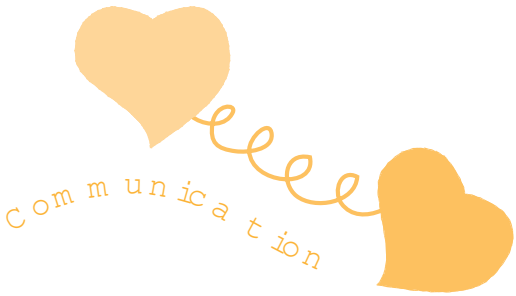
Appendix 2B - Transportation Safety Assistant Job Description 2-8

"The most damaging phrase in the language is: 'It's always been done that way.'"

-Rear Admiral Grace Hopper

2.1 Collaboration and Responsibilities

Communication with all key individuals is essential for the safe and efficient transportation of preschoolers and students with disabilities. It is recommended that each Local Education Agency (LEA) form an Exceptional Children's Transportation Team to determine ways to implement best practice guidelines. These key individuals may include transportation and exceptional children's program administrators, parents, teachers, school physical therapist, school based administrator, school nurse, emergency personnel, and law enforcement. Through collaboration and frequent communication of these key individuals, LEA's can ensure appropriate transportation for students with disabilities.



When a liaison is formed between transportation and exceptional children's program personnel, a framework can be established for addressing issues of mutual concern. Opportunities for inclusive transportation can be discussed and barriers to implementation removed. Location of low incidence special education programs can be planned with consideration for the impact of those decisions on transportation services. Both departments should seek opportunities to provide collaborative training on an ongoing basis. A contact person in the Transportation Department and the Exceptional Children Department should be designated to ensure that issues and concerns will be addressed by either department in a collaborative and timely manner.

Collaboration with Emergency Response Teams including emergency medical services, fire departments and law enforcement, is recommended to prepare for an emergency response that is well informed. Preparatory discussion and collaborative decision making will help ensure that emergency responders are familiar with the students being transported, the type of equipment on the bus, and the individual bus evacuation plans.

Effective collaboration begins with an understanding of each team member's responsibilities for the planning and implementation of transportation services.

2.2 Responsibilities of the IEP Team

One of the responsibilities of the IEP Team is to determine the supportive services required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Transportation is a related service that supports the student's special education. The decision to include transportation as a related service must be based on the student's current ability and educational needs. Some factors to consider include:

- Medical Condition
- Mobility Needs
- Equipment Needs
- Age
- Behavior
- Developmental characteristics
- Other relevant information

The IEP team is required to determine the least restrictive environment for each student; therefore, regular transportation with non-disabled peers should always be the starting point for decision making about the mode of transportation. If the student's needs indicate more specialized transportation as a related service, then the IEP team must determine the special transportation necessary. Transportation may be a related service if:

- Student requires special adaptations on the bus (i. e. child safety restraint system)

- Student requires a bus with a wheelchair lift
- Student requires an alternative vehicle or vehicle with air conditioning
- Student requires pick up/drop off site to be different from that of non-disabled peers (i.e. curb to curb pick up)
- Student requires supervision from a transportation safety assistant
- Student requires driver/transportation safety assistant with specialized training

A transportation representative should be present at the IEP meeting or give prior input to the IEP team when transportation is being considered as a related service. Include the Transportation Director or designee in the scheduling of the IEP meeting and on the invitation to conference, if appropriate.

2.3 Responsibilities of the Transportation Director or Designee

Develop local procedures to address the following:

- Training opportunities for transportation staff
- Developing transportation schedules that do not shorten students' school day
- Providing safe transportation vehicles and equipment that meet appropriate standards
- Reporting that a student's equipment or assistive devices are not working properly
- Developing transportation contracts including responsibilities and supervision
- Participating in the development of the IEP when transportation is being considered as a related service
- Notifying parents of the pick up and drop off times for the student

2.4 Responsibilities of the Exceptional Children's Program Director or Designee

Develop local procedures to address the following:

- Training on areas of disabilities and their impact on transportation
- IEP requirements, and legal issues
- Planning budgets collaboratively with Transportation Director to support the transportation needs of students with disabilities (e.g., the need for Transportation Safety Assistants)
- Providing the Transportation Department information about the unique needs of the students being transported
- Notifying the Transportation Director (or designee) when changes occur in the student's transportation needs
- Collaborating with the Transportation Director or designee to establish clear and effective lines of communication to discuss and resolve issues of transporting children with disabilities in a timely manner

2.5 Responsibilities of Parents

- Ensure that student is ready for transport prior to the designated bus pickup time
- Position the child in the wheelchair correctly and securely
- Maintain all parts of the wheelchair or other equipment in good operational condition for transit
- Notify transportation officials with reasonable advance notice to allow for a route change when a change occurs in the student's pick up or drop off location
- Provide appropriate supervision at time of pick up and drop off

2.6 Responsibilities of Physical Therapists

Physical therapists play many different roles in promoting safe transportation of students with disabilities. Since they are familiar with different diagnoses, the therapists can:

- Provide information to other team members during a student's IEP meeting in order to make the decision regarding the appropriate means to transport
- Provide educational opportunities to transporters about students' disabilities
- Assist transporters in determining appropriate student seat assignment on the bus
- Make recommendations about equipment needed to safely transport students based on their disabilities

Physical therapists are familiar with adaptive equipment; therefore they can:

- Determine the appropriateness of equipment (i.e. wheelchairs) for transport
- Provide support in acquiring equipment (Provide parents with information about loaner wheelchairs, specialized car seats, etc.)
- Assist in acquiring personal adaptive equipment
- Perform minor equipment repairs or, if necessary, contact student's family regarding the need for more complex repairs of personal equipment

Physical therapists are available to assist transportation staff with the following:

- Select and mark securement points for tie-downs on non-transit option wheelchairs
- Provide input regarding methods to secure student's personal equipment that needs to be secured on the bus (i.e. wheelchairs, trays, walkers)
- Develop student evacuation plans
- Provide training in boarding and exiting the bus (steps/wheelchair lift)

2.7 Responsibilities of Driver

- Drive the bus safely and efficiently and meet the required transit needs of the student
- Implement and practice safe evacuation procedures
- Ensure proper securement of the student and equipment on the vehicle. If the driver observes that the assistive device is not in working order, the driver must report the safety concern to the supervisor for a decision to be made regarding the safety risk for transportation.
- Develop knowledge of the student's disability and skills to manage student's personal equipment
- Attend recommended and required training for safe vehicle operation and provision of specialized transportation
- Maintain good order and conduct on the bus
- Communicate effectively with parents and other school team members
- Work effectively with transportation safety assistant (TSA)
- Be able to implement all the duties assigned to the TSA
- Assume responsibilities of the TSA in his/her absence
- Observe confidentiality of information about individual students

2.8 Responsibilities of Transportation Safety Assistant (TSA)

When specialized transportation is required for students with special needs, a Transportation Safety Assistant (TSA) may be assigned to a bus to assist with the safety, movement, management, and care of those students. The TSA and the bus driver must work as a team to provide appropriate transportation services for their students.

The responsibilities of the Transportation Safety Assistant may include the following:

- Assist students with loading/unloading the school bus
- Assist students to move to their assigned seated location
- Restrain students in Child Safety Restraint System as required by the IEP/504 Plan
- Secure all wheeled mobility devices
- Restrain students in wheelchairs with approved lap/shoulder belt occupant restraint system
- Secure students' personal equipment
- Assist in evacuating students during an emergency or evacuation drill
- Maintain confidentiality of each individual student's information
- Communicate appropriate information to parents and other school team members
- Monitor students' behaviors and implement students' individual behavior plans as developed by school staff
- Understand how the bus ride impacts students with special needs
- Attend all required training.

2.9 Responsibilities of Local School Board

LEA's shall adopt and keep on file in the office of the superintendent rules, regulations, and policies to ensure the safe, orderly, and efficient operation of school buses, including the following:

- The use of school buses under G. S. 115C-242(5)
- A uniform system of discipline on school buses
- A uniform procedure for the recruitment and selection of school bus drivers
- Procedures for relieving a driver of driving duties
- Passenger safety rules
- Responsibilities of School Bus Monitors/Transportation Safety Assistant
- Duties of school personnel
- The administration of the school transportation program

2.10 Responsibilities of the State Department

The Transportation Services Section and the Division of Exceptional Children provide leadership, technical assistance, service, and support to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and local education agencies (LEAs) in all areas of pupil transportation and services for children and youth with disabilities respectively.

The objectives of the Transportation Services Section include the following:

- Provide a sufficient, safe, and reliable system of transportation for eligible pupils in North Carolina's public schools
- Ensure that a durable, safe, well-maintained fleet of school buses is available
- Ensure an equitable distribution of state funds among LEAs that will promote safety, quality and extent of service as required by state law and State Board Policy
- Provide information systems and technical assistance to help LEAs provide transportation service as efficiently as possible without compromising the quality of service
- Provide for LEA fiscal responsibility, decision-making authority, and accountability

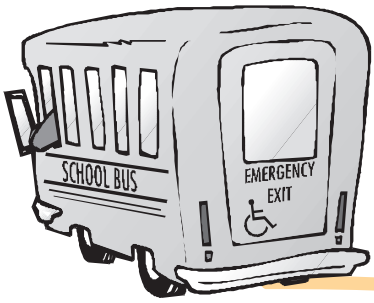
The responsibilities of the Division of Exceptional Children include the following:

- Provide division services availability to all LEAs, including charter schools, and parents/consumers
- Provide consultative services to LEAs in planning, establishing, and maintaining programs/services for the instruction of children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment
- Develop a plan for a statewide census, collecting information, and reporting to the State Board of Education
- Provide consultative services to LEAs in developing and implementing the IEP for children with disabilities and monitoring these programs
- Cooperate with other divisions in the NCDPI and other departments, agencies, and institutions of higher education to foster a collaborative effort on behalf of all children with disabilities
- To disseminate information needed by parents, laypersons, legislators, organizations, and agencies upon request to keep them properly informed and to assist their understanding of programs for children with disabilities
- To provide consultative services and technical assistance in the areas of curriculum development, instructional materials, adaptive devices, and use of technology for children with disabilities
- To provide and support staff development activities to improve and upgrade competencies of regular and special education teachers, administrators, and support personnel as they impact on children with disabilities
- To coordinate and administer the activities of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- To monitor LEAs, charter schools, and state-operated programs for compliance with state and federal laws

Appendix 2A - School Bus Driver Job Description

General Statement of Duties
Performs duties of transporting students in accordance with federal, state and local rules and regulations and school board policy.

Illustrative Examples of Work
- Drives a school bus safely and professionally
- Maintains order and discipline of students assigned to the school bus in accordance with the Schools Board Policies pertaining to discipline and School Code of Conduct
- Assists with loading and unloading the school bus; assists students with special needs; operates wheelchair lifts; secures wheelchair; assists children from wheelchairs to seats; assists children in wheelchairs in getting to and from loading area
- Completes daily pre-trip and post-trip inspections of a school bus
- Complies with federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations
- Complies with School Board Policies and rules set forth by the school's transportation department
- Maintains logs and complete reports
- Participates in training and workshops
- Performs other duties as may be assigned



TAKE NOTE!

This specification has been designed to represent the general nature and level of work found in positions in this class. As such, it is not intended to contain all of the duties and qualifications required of an employee in a single position (job). Consequently, it is not to be perceived as a position (job) descriptive or as identification of essential functions as required by ADA. Always contact your school system in which you are interested for a finalized job description.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
- Ability to meet and maintain legal and physical requirements for North Carolina School Bus Certification and local rules
- Ability to operate and maneuver a school bus with proficiency
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with all levels (i.e., administrators, parents, students, and the general public)
- Ability to exercise good judgment in evaluating situations
- Ability to earn the respect of students of all ages and act sensitively to their needs
- Ability to perform medium work exerting in excess of 50 pounds of force occasionally, and/or up to 20 pounds of force frequently, and/or up to ten pounds of force constantly to move objects

Education and Experience Requirements
- High school diploma or general education diploma (GED)

Special Requirements
- Must be able to obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), school bus restriction
- Must be able to successfully complete a medical examination
- May be required to successfully complete a physical performance evaluation, meeting standards set forth by the School Bus & Traffic Safety Section of the NC Division of Motor Vehicles and the Schools Transportation Department

Appendix 2B - Transportation Safety Assistant Job Description

Transportation Safety Assistant Job Description

Nature of Work
An employee in this class monitors students behavior and attends to the special needs of exceptional students while they are using school buses. The employee receives detailed instruction of the duties and responsibilities of this work. Independent judgment is exercised in emergencies by selecting the action to take from ones that have been planned by higher authority. Improper use of special equipment for exceptional students could result in injury to those students. The employee serves under the direct supervision of the principal or transportation director.

Illustrative Examples of Work
- Helps exceptional students in manipulating equipment they must use on the bus and entering and exiting the bus
- Seats students in their assigned location
- Monitors students' behavior
- Reports problems and concerns of students to the designated authority
- Intervenes between students having conflict
- Substitutes as driver when necessary

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
- Skill in lifting and placing students comfortably
- Skill in accurately operating and adjusting the special equipment
- Ability to learn and remember the bus route
- Ability to understand the individual needs of exceptional students

Suggested Training and Experience
Education and/or experience that demonstrates the qualifications to perform the job satisfactorily.

Special Requirement
Commercial Driver's License

TAKE NOTE!

This specification has been designed to represent the general nature and level of work found in positions in this class. As such, it is not intended to contain all of the duties and qualifications required of an employee in a single position (job). Consequently, it is not to be perceived as a position (job) descriptive or as identification of essential functions as required by ADA. Always contact your school system in which you are interested for a finalized job description.

CHAPTER 3

Training for Transporters

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"We keep moving forward, opening up new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

-Walt Disney

3.1 Comprehensive Training

Comprehensive and ongoing training of transportation administrative personnel, bus drivers and transportation safety assistants serving students with special needs is critical to ensure the safety of the students being transported. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 require that all personnel serving children with disabilities be trained regarding the specific needs of the population they serve.

Each school district is responsible for developing a comprehensive training curriculum that demonstrates its commitment to safe and efficient transportation for preschoolers and students with special needs. Due to the constantly evolving situations surrounding special needs transportation, this curriculum needs to be continually updated and tailored to address the unique needs each district may encounter.

This chapter outlines recommendations for areas that should be included when providing quality professional training for transportation personnel. These recommendations should not be considered to be all-inclusive but meant to provide a foundation upon which to build an extensive training program. Also included in this chapter are suggested resources and methods for providing training, as well as the need for and methods of documentation of training.

3.2 Developing a Comprehensive Training Curriculum

Due to the complexities and diverse challenges encountered by those transporting preschoolers and students with various disabilities, a training curriculum must be developed that addresses numerous and diverse areas. School districts should draw upon the expertise of professionals within their school system and community to develop and/or implement a comprehensive training curriculum. By relying on professionals from various areas (e.g., special educators, behavioral specialists, administrators, nurses, emergency responders, speech/language pathologists, physical and occupational therapists, equipment manufacturers, etc.) a training curriculum can be developed and delivered in a comprehensive and cost effective manner.

It would be beneficial to have a person assigned as a training coordinator whose primary responsibility would be to establish, implement and document a comprehensive training curriculum for all transportation personnel. It is imperative that the training coordinator obtains current information related to each component of training and be knowledgeable of current equipment and best practice guidelines.

During training sessions it is important to provide information related to how and to whom should be contacted should questions or problems arise during the performance of their job responsibilities. For instance, if a wheelchair is malfunctioning, should the student be transported in it? How and to whom should it be reported? Being aware of how to handle problems before they are encountered provides bus drivers and transportation safety assistants with the knowledge necessary to ensure safety for students being transported.

Re-training sessions must also be established at regular intervals to ensure that knowledge and skills have been retained. Consistent monitoring of compliance with established procedures is essential. Unannounced observations are one method of ensuring compliance and a means of determining when re-training sessions are needed.

Transportation personnel working with students with special needs should receive the training provided to those working with non-disabled students as well as additional training based on the population of students they serve. When developing and conducting training for transportation personnel working with the special needs population, it is recommended that all training areas listed in the following table be included. Training areas should be modified to address legal obligations and specific needs of the students being transported.

The following table also includes suggestions of resources for trainers and training materials.

TRAINING AREAS	RESOURCES FOR TRAINING
Behavior Management Intervention Strategies Violence Sexual Harassment Referrals & Suspensions	Behavioral Specialists and Teachers, EC Administrators, School Administrators, School System Human Resource Department
Communication Skills Collaboration with 'team members' Interaction with students Customer Service	Transportation Administrators, EC Administrators, EC Teachers, SLP
Communications Equipment Procedures	Transportation Personnel
Confidentiality Requirements	Transportation Administrators, EC Administrators, School Administrators, School System Human Resource Department
Disability Characteristics and Medical Conditions Medically Fragile Children Transport of Student's Medication Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Orders	EC Administrators, OT, PT, SLP, RN Refer to Chapter 4, 'Disabilities & Medical Conditions' (handouts on specific disabilities & medical conditions)
Emergency Information Management	Transportation Administrators
Equipment Handling Bus & Bus Equipment Wheelchairs Wheelchair Securement Systems Occupant Restraint Systems Child Safety Restraint Systems Student's Personal Equipment	Department of Motor Vehicles, Transportation Personnel, Manufacturers' Reps, PT, SLP, OT, Equipment Suppliers, RN, Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician, Manufacturer's literature and videos Refer to Chapter 7, 'Specialized Equipment – Descriptions & Procedures' (handouts for teaching specific procedures)
Evacuation Procedures Developing & Implementing Evacuation Plans Body Mechanics & Lifting Techniques	Transportation Personnel, EMT, RN, PT, EC Teachers Refer to Chapter 8, 'Emergency Evacuation'
Laws, Policies & Regulations Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Individualized Education Plans (IEP) Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	Transportation Administrators, EC Administrators Refer to Chapter 1, 'Laws, Policies, & Regulations'
Loading & Unloading Procedures Preschoolers Students who walk but require assistance Students using wheelchairs or walker/crutches	Transportation Personnel, PT Refer to Chapter 7, 'Specialized Equipment – Descriptions & Procedures' (handouts for loading and unloading students using walker/crutches and wheelchairs)
Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures	Transportation Personnel
Record Keeping & Report Writing	Transportation Personnel
Service Animals	Orientation & Mobility Specialists, Service Animal Trainers, EC Administrators, Transportation Administrators
Universal Precautions & Communicable Diseases Blood Born Pathogens First Aid	RN, Local Health Department, First Responders, Professional Videos

Key

EC Exceptional Children	PT Physical Therapist
EMT Emergency Medical Technician	RN Registered Nurse
OT Occupational Therapist	SLP Speech/Language Pathologist

KEY POINTS RELATED TO TRAINING AREAS

Behavior Management

Children who have been identified as students with disabilities exhibit many of the same behaviors that other students exhibit on the school bus or in other settings. However, because of their disabilities the behaviors of these students may be more disruptive, last longer, and seem inappropriate for the situation. Transportation personnel must be trained in ways to manage typical behavioral problems as well as those that present unique challenges.

- Intervention strategies – In order to manage students' behaviors during the bus ride, bus drivers and transportation safety assistants must be trained in behavior management techniques and intervention strategies. Chapter 5, 'Behavior Management and Discipline', offers suggestions for procedures that can be put into place on a school bus that will promote a safe environment for students and bus personnel.
- Violence – School-related violence is on the rise throughout the nation. School buses are not immune from its occurrence. The driver is the key to preventing violence on the bus. It is critical to equip the driver and transportation safety assistant with the appropriate skills to identify a situation when a problem is developing and to use techniques to prevent violence from occurring.
- Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates the civil rights of an individual. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. The harassment can range from mild annoyances to severe abuse including forced sexual activity. Students and employees can be victims of sexual harassment. Training must include education about sexual harassment to prevent an incident.
- Referrals and Suspensions – The regular bus discipline referral processes for the school are followed for exceptional children unless the school or district has something else in place. Drivers and transportation safety assistants must understand why and how to make referrals for students' bad behaviors on the bus. Chapter 5 discusses discipline and an example of a Bus Suspension Form is provided as Appendix 5D.

Communication Skills

Effective communication is essential for the safe and efficient transportation of preschoolers and students with disabilities. Training that provides transportation personnel with the skills required for effective communication is critical.

- Collaboration with 'team members' – Individuals who would be considered 'team members' include but are not limited to the following: transportation and exceptional children program administrators, parents, teachers, school based administrators, bus drivers, transportation safety assistants, EC teachers, school nurses, emergency and law enforcement personnel. An open line of communication and collaboration between 'team members' promotes the safety and well being of students.
- Interaction with students - Students with autism, deafness & hearing impairments, developmental delays, emotional disabilities, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, speech or language impairments, etc. may have difficulty with typical forms of communication. Teachers and parents who are most familiar with the individual student's form of communication are valuable resources to transportation personnel. Bus drivers and transportation safety assistants must be trained in how to communicate with particular students on their buses. Chapter 4 provides general suggestions for ways to communicate with students in each specific category in Section 4.4.
- Customer Service – Students and their parents are 'customers' of the school system. It is important that they are treated in a friendly and professional manner at all times. Proper communication between transportation personnel and parents/students enhances the level of customer satisfaction. Training related to meeting the expectations of parents/students is important to developing a positive approach to customer service.

Communications Equipment Procedures

To ensure students' safety, school bus personnel must have communications equipment on board. This may come in the way of a two-way radio, mobile phone, or some other device that provides similar communication capability. Live communication is critical if the bus or bus equipment fails to operate properly; if there is a medical emergency on the bus; if the bus is involved in a crash, etc. Training needs to include the answers for questions such as the following: how to operate the communication device; when the device should be used; who may receive communication; and what sorts of information may be relayed by way of the device.

Confidentiality Requirements

There are provisions under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that protect the confidentiality of a student's educational records. These safeguards are related to the use of personally identifiable information and who may have access to a student's records. Identifiable information includes such things as a student's name, address, student number, and a list of characteristics or other information that could be used to identify the student. Consent must be given before any personal information can be disclosed by a school system. Bus personnel must be trained in established policies/procedures related to confidentiality. Chapter 1 discusses confidentiality in more detail in section 1.4.

Disability Characteristics and Medical Conditions

Each year the number of students transported with disabilities and the severity of disabilities continues to increase. It is important for transportation personnel to understand the various characteristics of the disabilities of the students they transport.

Chapter 4 provides transporters with an overview of various disabilities and medical conditions and how typical characteristics of these conditions may impact the bus ride. Section 4.4 of that chapter is in a format that can be copied and distributed to transporters when they are assigned a student with a specific disability.

- Medically Fragile Children are defined as students who require specialized technological health care procedures for life support and/or health support. An example of a medically fragile student would be one that requires the use of oxygen. In that situation, transportation personnel would need to be trained in how to secure oxygen on the school bus. Section 7.6 of Chapter 7 provides information related to oxygen transport. There are other issues related to medically fragile children in addition to transporting oxygen that would need to be part of a training curriculum.
- Transport of Student's Medication - Students may need to take medications during the school day and parents may sometimes send the medicine to school with their child. Each school district should have written policies regarding procedures for transporting medication. These policies should include a statement that students are not permitted to transport the medication themselves.
- Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Orders are defined as an order from a parent, legal guardian or court that prohibits the use of emergency measures to prolong the life of an individual. School districts need to have a policy and training regarding how to deal with students with DNR orders when they are on the school bus.

Emergency Information Management

All students with special needs should have current emergency information that is kept in a convenient and safe location. Information about an individual student assists in proper identification during an emergency situation. Emergency medical responders may need critical medical information about students to be able to make appropriate decisions regarding treatment at the scene if necessary. Each school system should have policies in place that define how to obtain emergency information and how it should be handled. Training in proper management of emergency information is essential to ensure a student's confidentiality. (Appendix 8B offers an example of an Emergency Information Card.)

Equipment Handling

Bus drivers and transportation safety assistants must be trained in how to drive and handle the school bus as well as utilizing the specialized equipment required for transporting students with special needs.

- Bus & Bus Equipment – Section 7.3, 'Vehicle Equipment', of Chapter 7 describes different types of specialized equipment that may be found on a bus transporting students with special needs. Power lifts, reinforced seats, and emergency equipment such as belt cutters, evacuation blankets, are included. Bus personnel must demonstrate competence in their ability to operate bus equipment.
- Wheelchairs – Students who have significant difficulty with walking or who are unable to walk must rely on wheelchairs or other types of wheeled mobility devices. Bus personnel must be familiar with manual and power wheelchairs in order to safely manage them during transportation. Section 7.7, 'Wheeled Mobility Devices', of Chapter 7 describes different types of mobility devices and provides information about wheelchairs – including information about how to determine appropriate securement sites on a wheelchair.
- Wheelchair Securement Systems refers to the devices used to secure a wheelchair to the school bus. Wheelchair tie downs consist of buckles, floor anchors and webbing/straps. Bus personnel must be trained in how to operate all the components of the securement system as well as how to attach it to appropriate securement sites on the wheelchair. 'Procedures for Using Wheelchair Tie Down Straps' can be found on page 7-41.
- Occupant Restraint Systems refers to the devices used to restrain the occupant of a wheelchair or mobility aid while being transported. There are two types of occupant restraint systems as follows:
  - Parallel systems - the floor anchorage for the lap belt is independent of the rear tie down assembly, i.e., the lap belt is directly anchored to the floor.
  - Integrated systems - the lap belt attaches directly to and is dependent upon the rear tie down assembly. 'Procedures for Using Occupant Restraint System' can be found on page 7-42.
- Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRSs) are crash tested devices or systems that are specially designed to provide infant/child crash protection and comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 213. The types of CSRSs typically found on school buses are as follows:
  - Integrated Lap/Shoulder Belts
  - Integrated Child Restraints
  - Add-On Seats
  - Safety Vests
  - Car Seats

  Section 7.4 of Chapter 7, 'Specialized Equipment: Descriptions & Procedures' describes different types of CSRSs. Handouts in the appendices of that chapter describe the procedures for securing the CSRS on the bus and restraining the student in the device.
- Student's Personal Equipment – Students with special needs may have a variety of medical and physical conditions that require the use of adaptive equipment or special supplies. Some different types of personal equipment are as follows:
  - Assistive technology devices
  - Augmentative communication devices
  - Assistive walking devices – canes, crutches, walkers
  - Medical support equipment – oxygen, respirators, suction machines, etc.
  - Wheelchair trays
  - Wheeled Mobility Devices – scooters, strollers, manual & power wheelchairs, etc.

  Section 7.6, 'Students' Equipment' of Chapter 7 describes different types of student's personal equipment. Personal equipment/supplies may need to be transported on the school bus. All equipment must be secured inside the bus with straps made to withstand the pulling force of 5 times the weight of the object. Crash tested straps, such as lap belts or wheelchair tie downs, may be used for securement. Bungee cords may not be used to secure equipment.

Evacuation Procedures

To ensure safety for students, a bus driver and bus transportation safety assistant must know what to do if a crash or some other type of an emergency should occur. Preschoolers and students with disabilities should follow the same emergency evacuation procedures and drills as non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible. Special plans will need to be developed for those students who need to evacuate in a different manner.

- Developing & Implementing Evacuation Plans – Each school bus must have a written evacuation plan specifically designed to meet the needs of the students on that bus. Chapter 8, 'Emergency Evacuation', is written to explain in detail how to develop and implement evacuation procedures.
- Body Mechanics & Lifting Techniques – Body mechanics refers to how a person uses his/her body to perform activities encountered throughout the day. Good body mechanics refers to performing those activities in a coordinated, efficient manner that prevents injury. It is important to utilize good body mechanics at all times but especially to prevent back injuries during lifting which is frequently required during emergency evacuations. Physical therapists are trained to teach good body mechanics and can be called upon to train transportation personnel in proper body mechanics and lifting techniques. Guidelines for lifting are included in section 8.2, 'Evacuation Methods' of Chapter 8.

Laws, Policies & Regulations

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is our nation's special education law. It was initially enacted by congress in 1975 to ensure that children with disabilities have an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education, just like other children. This law mandates how states and school districts provide special education and related services to children with disabilities. Transportation is included as a related service under this law.
- Individualized Education Plans (IEP) – After a child is found eligible to receive special education, an IEP is developed. An IEP is a written plan of the educational program designed to meet a child's individual needs. Included in the IEP are the educational goals for that child and a plan for how that child is going to meet his/her goals. The need for and method of transportation is documented in the IEP.
- Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) are part of education laws at the federal and state level. An IFSP is designed to assist families in meeting the developmental needs of a child with special needs from birth to age three.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a federal law that protects the rights of individuals with disabilities involved in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance. Reasonable accommodations for participation and accessibility to programs are mandated if necessary for a student with disabilities to receive a free appropriate education. Unlike IDEA, students whose rights are protected by 504 do not have to demonstrate a need for special education services. Special needs transportation services can be required under Section 504.

Chapter 1, 'Laws, Policies and Regulations', provides an overview of the federal laws, NC statutes, and policies governing services for children with disabilities.

Loading & Unloading Procedures

Students with special needs will often be able to load/unload the school bus using the steps in the same manner as non-disabled students. If a student is able to walk but has difficulties with balance, decreased muscle strength or diminished stamina, he/she may require assistance to negotiate the bus steps.

- Preschoolers - These children will need to be assisted and/or supervised up and down the bus steps depending on their age and developmental levels.
- Students Using Wheelchair or Walker/Crutches – Students using wheelchairs will need to be loaded/unloaded using the power lift. Appendix 7G, 'Procedures for School Bus Loading/Unloading of Student Using Wheelchair', can be supplied to bus drivers and transportation safety assistants during training. 'Procedures for School Bus Loading/Unloading of Student Using Walker or Crutches' can be found on page 7-33.

Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures

Pick-up and drop-off procedures typically include such things as sites for pick-up/drop-off; notification of bus arrival at pick-up/drop/off sites; designated length of wait time at a pick-up/drop-off sites; what should be done if no authorized person is available to receive the student; when and how to notify parents of a change in pick-up/drop-off times on a particular day; how students are to load/unload the bus, etc. Drivers and

transportation safety assistants must be knowledgeable of pick-up/drop-off procedures to ensure that students are provided transportation as designated on their IEPs.

Record Keeping & Report Writing

Each school district will have specific forms and reports that need to be completed by transportation personnel. Some forms that may be required could be those for reimbursement of parents for mileage when they provide their child's transportation; provision of a nurse provided by private insurance or Medicaid; administration of medical services, etc. Bus personnel may be required to maintain records such as daily attendance logs, bus seating charts, student injury reports, student behavior incident reports, school bus evacuation plans, etc. Transportation personnel need to be informed of the necessity, the existence, and procedures for completing required forms, records and reports. Frequently used forms and instructions for completing them could be included in a handbook for easy reference.

Service Animals

The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Service animals perform functions and tasks that an individual with a disability cannot perform. The most familiar type of service animal is a guide dog that is used by some individuals who are blind. There are service animals that assist persons with other types of disabilities, e.g., alerting persons with hearing impairments to sounds; carrying or picking up objects for persons who have difficulty walking, etc. Service animals are working animals, not pets.

School systems need to have policies regarding transport of service animals. If they are allowed on school buses, training is needed regarding how to implement procedures regarding handling service animals.

Universal Precautions & Communicable Diseases

Universal precautions are techniques that are recommended to prevent the spread of infection(s). The approach used when discussing universal precautions is that everyone should be treated as if they are infected; therefore, precautions are taken to decrease the risk of contracting a disease through contact with blood and/or some body fluids. Some of the infections that can be spread through contact with blood and body fluids include HIV, Hepatitis A, B, C, and tuberculosis (TB). Using universal precautions includes the use of such things as gloves, masks, goggles or glasses, etc.

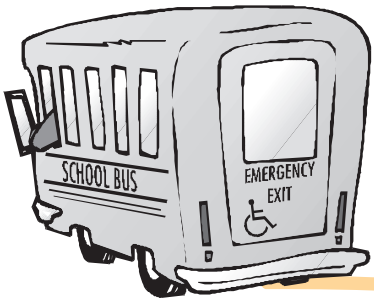
- Blood born pathogens are bacteria and viruses that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. Bus drivers and transportation safety assistants must be educated about the spread of disease through blood and body fluids. They must be instructed in how to use universal precautions, including the body fluid clean-up kits that are available on all school buses.
- First Aid is defined as emergency treatment given to an ill or injured person before regular medical help is available. First aid kits are available on all school buses and bus personnel must be trained in basic first aid procedures.

3.3 Methods for Providing Training

A professional learning environment should be established in which to provide training for transportation personnel. It is imperative that trainees understand the importance of the material being presented and the significance it has in being able to perform their job responsibilities while ensuring their safety and that of the students they transport.

Typically training is conducted in a classroom setting and presented in a lecture format. Objectives should be introduced at the beginning of each training session to alert participants to what they are expected to learn. Pre-tests could be used to assess the group's current level of knowledge as well as emphasize objectives. Post-tests could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the training. Refer to Appendix 3A for example of a test that could be used as a pre-test and/or a post-test following a training session on transporting students who use a wheelchair or need a child safety restraint system.

Using visual aids such as videos, transparencies on overhead projectors, Power Point presentations, etc. is a great means of reinforcing the material being presented. Supplying handouts, fact sheets or brochures to participants aids in the learning process by providing them with written information that can be used as an outline during the training session and for review afterwards.



Many equipment manufacturers offer training materials such as brochures, videos, etc. Their websites typically list training materials that are available either through free download or purchase. Some manufacturers will offer on-site training and certification.

TAKE NOTE!

Hands-on training is essential in areas requiring specific skills such as operating power lifts, loading/ unloading wheelchairs, securing child safety restraint systems, etc. Close observation of a trainee's technique during hands-on training is critical. Specific skills must be practiced in the bus environment to reinforce learning. A competency-based performance instrument should be used to evaluate a trainee's proficiency in performing specific skills.

While 'classroom' instruction is necessary, it is also essential that hands-on training be included in the areas requiring specific skills, e.g., operating power lifts, loading/ unloading wheelchairs, securing child safety restraint systems, etc. When training personnel to utilize specific pieces of equipment, it is critical to have that equipment available for hands-on practice. Some school districts have set up training labs with such things as bus seats to practice securing child safety restraint systems and boards with floor anchorage tracks on which to practice securing wheelchairs.

Close observation of a trainee's technique during hands-on training is critical. It is important to correct mistakes as they are being made to ensure that the skills have been learned correctly. If the group is too large for one person to closely supervise, then more observers should be added during this aspect of the training session.

After specific skills are taught in a 'classroom', these skills must be practiced in the bus environment where circumstances are typically less than perfect. Practicing new skills in the environment in which they will be used reinforces these skills and allows trainees to gain confidence in their ability to independently perform essential tasks.

Using various approaches and multiple trainers makes training sessions more interesting and appealing to trainees. In larger school districts, it may be beneficial to have 'train the trainers sessions' to expand the number of people capable of responding to questions/problems as they arise.

3.4 Documenting Training for Accountability

In order to establish accountability and demonstrate the extent of training provided to transportation personnel, documentation of such training is essential. Documentation can help to organize a training curriculum and to determine what type of training is needed, when it should occur and who needs to be trained. It is also evidence of the school district's commitment to providing quality training that ensures safety of transportation personnel and students.

There are numerous methods of documentation that will provide evidence of training for transportation personnel. The ones mentioned in this section are only representative of a few types. It is important that school districts decide upon a method(s) of documentation and systematically complete it in a timely manner.

Sign in Sheets

The most basic form of documentation related to training is a sign-in sheet. A sign-in sheet for each training session should be used to quickly gather essential information. The sign-in sheet should include the following information:

- When the training occurred – date and time
- What topic(s) were covered during the training session
- Who provided the training
- Who received the training

If handouts, brochures, etc. were presented during the training session, they could be attached to the sign-in sheet to further demonstrate content of that particular session.

Databases

It would be beneficial to develop a database to document if and when each member of the transportation team was trained in specific areas. A database would provide a quick reference for a training coordinator to utilize ensuring that all personnel have been trained and retrained in the areas required to perform their specific job responsibilities.

A database would also provide transportation administrators with essential information regarding which drivers and transportation safety assistants would be capable of providing transportation for field trips for students with disabilities. This would, for instance, eliminate the possibility of having a bus driver and/or transportation safety assistant who does not know how to operate a power lift being assigned to transport students using wheelchairs.

Checklists

Bus drivers and transportation safety assistants should also be encouraged to assume the responsibility for receiving the training necessary to perform their specific job responsibilities. If they are assigned a student with special needs that they have not encountered, they should notify their supervisor that they need additional training.

Appendix 3B provides an example of documentation that lists areas of training that are available and demonstrates the extent of training received by a specific individual.

To ensure that bus drivers and transportation safety assistants possess the skills necessary to transport students requiring specialized equipment, a competency-based performance instrument that includes on-the-job observation should be used to evaluate their proficiency. The performance checklists in Appendices 3C, 3D and 3E are examples of that type of documentation. These checklists could also be used during training to teach bus drivers and transportation safety assistants what steps must be followed to manage students with certain types of specialized equipment.

Appendix 3A – Sample of Pre/Post Test

EXAM - TRANSPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Job Title: _____ **Area:** _____

1. Explain the concept of compartmentalization.

_____

_____

2. Identify the following child safety restraint systems approved for use on the bus:

A _____

B _____

C _____

3. It is okay for unrestrained students to sit behind students who are secured in a STAR restraint. True or False

4. The safety vest seat mount should be attached to the bus seat back so that the adjustable hooks on the safety vest seat mount are at the top of the seat back (near the student's shoulders). True or False

5. Safety vests should be put on the student prior to getting on the bus. True or False

6. The zipper on the safety vest should be in the <u>front</u> or the <u>back</u> of the student?
Circle correct answer

7. Describe ways that adaptive equipment such as a student's walker can be secured on the bus.

_____

8. When loading the student in a wheelchair on the bus lift, the student and wheelchair should face toward the bus. True or False

9. Students in power wheelchairs should never drive their power wheelchairs when the lift is in the raised position. True or False

10. Wheelchair tie down straps can be attached to the footrest on a student's wheelchair.
True or False

Appendix 3B – Acknowledgement of Transportation Training

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received Transportation Training enabling me to transport and/or assist with transporting preschoolers and students with special needs. My training will ensure that preschoolers and students with special needs will have a positive, safe and efficient experience on the school bus.

The areas in which I have received training are indicated below:

TRAINING AREAS	COMPLETION DATE
Behavior Management Intervention Strategies Violence Sexual Harassment Referrals & Suspensions	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Communication Skills Collaboration with 'team members' Interaction with students Customer Service	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Communications Equipment Procedures	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Confidentiality Requirements	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Disability Characteristics and Medical Conditions Medically Fragile Children Transport of Student's Medication Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Orders	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Emergency Information Management	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Equipment Handling Bus & Bus Equipment Wheelchairs Wheelchair Securement Systems Occupant Restraint Systems Child Safety Restraint Systems Student's Personal Equipment	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Evacuation Procedures Developing & Implementing Evacuation Plans Body Mechanics & Lifting Techniques	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Laws, Policies & Regulations Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Individualized Education Plans (IEP) Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____

Loading & Unloading Procedures Preschoolers Students who walk but require assistance Students using wheelchairs or walker/crutches	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Record Keeping & Report Writing	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Service Animals	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____
Universal Precautions & Communicable Diseases Blood Born Pathogens First Aid	Date Completed: _____ Instructor's Signature: _____

Appendix 3C – (Documemtation) - Procedures for Transporting Student Using Wheelchairs

PROCEDURES FOR TRANSPORTING STUDENTS USING WHEELHCAIRS

Name: _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Loading/Unloading Wheelchair on the Lift	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Student's seat belt is fastened prior to being placed on the lift.			
Wheelchair is placed on lift facing out.			
Wheel locks on wheelchair are secured.			
Power is switched off (if power wheelchair).			
Adult's hand is on wheelchair during lift operation.			

Positioning Wheelchair on Bus	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Wheelchair is placed forward facing.			
Wheel locks on wheelchair are secured.			
Power is switched off (if power wheelchair).			

Securing Wheelchair on Bus: Front Straps	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Buckles on front tie down straps are the same.			
Front tie down straps are attached to floor forward of and 3-8 inches outside front wheels of the wheelchair.			
Front tie down straps are attached on wheelchair frame at marked sites. (If sites not marked – are the sites appropriate?)			
Front tie down straps are at a 30-60 degree angle.			
Front tie down straps are tight.			

Securing Wheelchair on Bus: Rear Straps	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Buckles on rear tie down straps are the same.			
Rear tie down straps are attached to floor behind and just inside rear wheels of the wheelchair.			
Rear tie down straps are attached on wheelchair frame at marked sites. (If sites not marked – are the sites appropriate?)			
Rear tie down straps are at a 30-45 degree angle.			
Rear tie down straps are tight.			

Attaching the Lap Belt	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Lap belt is snug and across the student's pelvis.			
Lap belt is attached to the floor tracking near the rear tie down straps (parallel system) or to the rear tie down straps (integrated system).			
Buckle is placed over the student's hip (hip away from the bus wall).			

Attaching the Shoulder Belt	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Wall attachment is slightly behind student.			
Belt is diagonally across the upper chest near the collarbone.			
Shoulder belt is attached to lap belt buckle.			

Final Check	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Wheel locks loosened and no wheelchair movement when shaken.			
Wheel locks reapplied after 'shake test'.			

Checklist completed by: _____ **Title:** _____

Reviewed with trainee? Yes _____ **No** _____

Trainee's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 3D — (Documentation) - Procedures for Transporting Students Using Child Safety Restraint Systems (STAR Restraint - Integrated Child Restraint - Safety Vest)

PROCEDURES FOR TRANSPORTING STUDENTS USING CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINT SYSTEMS
(STAR Restraint - Integrated Child Restraint - Safety Vest)

Name: _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Installing STAR Restraint	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Gray, tan and black straps are placed around bus seat back.			
Gray and tan straps are placed between bus seat & back.			
Gray and tan straps are attached to each other.			
Black strap at front of base is placed underneath the bus seat.			
Black straps are attached to each other.			
All straps are snug and their free ends are secured.			

Restraining Student in Integrated Child Restraint OR STAR Restraint	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Student's backpack is removed.			
Student is positioned on seat with hips as far back as possible.			
Straps are placed over student's shoulders.			
On STAR – comfort slides are adjusted to student's shoulder height.			
Buckle is securely fastened.			
Harness retainer clip is adjusted to student's armpit level.			
Harness straps are flat & snug (can't pinch excess webbing above shoulders or below harness clip).			
On STAR – chest strap (if present) is snug and close to armpit level.			

Installing Safety Vest Seat Mount	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Seat mount is wrapped and secured around the bus seat back.			
Buckle's push button closure is facing the seat back.			
Non-adjustable hip snap hooks are on the bus seat and adjustable webbing snap hooks are on top of the seat back.			
Seat mount is tight (creates an indentation in top of bus seat).			

Restraining Student Wearing Safety Vest	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Student is wearing safety vest appropriately (zipper in back, snug, crotch straps hooked if present).			
Student's backpack is removed.			
Student is positioned on seat with hips as far back as possible.			
Lower seat mount hooks are attached to D rings on vest first.			
Webbing on shoulder snap hooks is adjusted to keep student's shoulders against seat back.			
Webbing is back threaded in black webbing guides to prevent slipping.			
Shoulder snap hooks are attached to metal slots on vest.			

Trainee is knowledgeable that seat behind student using STAR restraint or safety vest must be unoccupied or be used by a student in a child safety restraint system.			

Checklist completed by: _____ **Title:** _____
Reviewed with trainee? Yes _____ **No** _____
Trainee's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 3E — (Documentation) - Procedures for Transporting Students Using Child Safety Restraints Systems (Car Seat)

PROCEDURES FOR TRANSPORTING STUDENTS USING CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINT SYSTEMS (Car Seat)

Name: _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Installing Car Seat	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Before car seat is installed, it is checked for cracks in shell, intact harness retainer clip, and frayed or twisted harness straps.			
Before car seat is installed, harness straps are placed in correct slots. Rear facing – slots are even with or below child's shoulders. Forward-facing – top slots are used unless the manufacturer allows use of lower slots that are even with or above child's shoulders.			
Car seat is placed on a reinforced bus seat.			
Car seat is placed in correct position on bus seat, i.e., rear or forward facing.			
Rear-facing seat is placed at correct recline angle.			
Forward-facing seat is placed in an upright position.			
Car seat is placed next to window if another passenger shares seat.			
Car seat is not placed next to an emergency exit.			
Seat belt used to secure car seat is labeled "meets FMVSS 209".			
Seat belt buckle is positioned toward the bus aisle.			
Seat belt is routed through correct belt path for rear or forward facing as indicated by manufacturer.			
Hand or knee is placed in car seat to compress the bus seat when tightening the seat belt.			
Car seat is tightly secured. (Grip seat near the base at the belt path; seat does not move side to side more than 1".)			

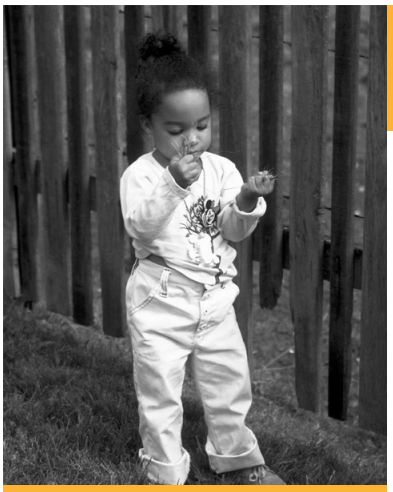
Restraining Child in Car Seat	***Yes***	***No***	***Comments***
Child is positioned in car seat with hips as far back as possible.			
Straps are placed over child's shoulders.			
Buckle is secured.			
Harness retainer clip is adjusted to child's armpit level.			
Harness straps are flat & snug (can't pinch excess webbing above shoulders or below harness clip).			

Checklist completed by: _____ **Title:** _____

Reviewed with trainee? Yes _____ **No** _____

Trainee's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

CHAPTER 4



Disabilities and Medical Conditions

4.1 Transporting Students with Disabilities 4-3

4.2 Pertinent Medical Information 4-4

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"Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing; it's when you've had everything to do, and you've done it."

- Margaret Thatcher

Disabilities and Medical Conditions

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4.1 Transporting Students With Disabilities

Each year the number of students transported with disabilities and the severity of disabilities continues to increase. It is important for transportation personnel to understand the various characteristics of the disabilities of the students they transport. However, it is just as important that transporters not stereotype students with disabilities. Students should be viewed first as students and secondly as students with disabilities.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide transporters with an overview of the laws, medical information, training needs, and information on specific disabilities and their impact on the bus ride. Section 2.4 'Students with Disabilities and the Bus Ride' is in a format that can be copied and distributed to transporters when they are assigned a student with a specific disability. This section provides an overview of various disabilities and medical conditions and how typical characteristics of these conditions may impact the bus ride.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) addresses the educational needs of children who require special education and related services and meet eligibility criteria in a least one of the categories of disabilities. In North Carolina, there are 14 areas of eligibility for 'children with a disability'. The term 'child with a disability' means a child evaluated in accordance with North Carolina procedures as having autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, developmental delay, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, serious emotional disability, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment, and who, by reason of the disability, needs special education and related services. (*North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities; 11/1/2007* - Refer to Chapter 1 - Laws, Policies, and Regulations)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination and provides protection against discrimination on the basis of one's disability. All students who are disabled under IDEA are considered to be disabled under Section 504. However, students determined to be disabled under Section 504 are not necessarily eligible for special education services under IDEA. Under Section 504, the definition of a disability is broader than the definition of a disability in IDEA. The individual must have a history or a record of an impairment that is mental or physical, affect a major life activity, and be substantial.

Students protected by Section 504 must have equal access to health services, recreational activities, athletics, student employment, clubs, specific courses, and field trips. There is not an inclusive listing of specific diseases and conditions, which may qualify as disabling conditions.

4.2 Pertinent Medical Information

Transportation providers, drivers, and safety assistants must be informed of pertinent medical information on the students they transport in order to provide a safe ride. To promote safety and to minimize unwanted behaviors, transporters will need to have access to the following information:

- **Emergency Medical Card**: This card should include the student's disability, medical information and behavioral needs. This information should be kept on the bus in a secure location in the event of an emergency. (Refer to Appendix A - Confidential Emergency Information Card.)
- **Procedures for Transporting Medications:** Each school district should have a written policy on procedures for transporting medication.
- **Procedures for Do Not Resuscitate Orders (DNR):** Each school district should have a written policy for DNR orders.

BEST PRACTICES

Transportation providers, drivers, and safety assistants need to be informed of pertinent medical information and should be trained in medical issues that are specific to the students they transport.

4.3 Training Needs Related to Specific Health Conditions

Transportation providers, drivers, and safety assistants must be trained in the following areas:

- Blood Borne Pathogens and Universal Precaution Procedures
- Policies and Procedures for Confidentiality

Per Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), transportation providers must be informed of his or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's Individual Education Program (IEP) and the specific accommodations, modifications and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP. (*IDEA: 34 CFR 300.323 (d) (1))*

Transportation providers, drivers, and safety assistants should have access to:

- Health Care Plans and/or Emergency Medical Cards for students on their bus

Transportation providers, drivers, and safety assistants should be trained in the following areas:

- Types of disabilities and health conditions for students on their bus
- Emergency procedures for individual students if indicated on Health Care Plans
- Assistive devices if used by students on their bus i.e. wheelchairs, walkers, etc. (Refer to Chapter 6 - Specialized Equipment Descriptions and Procedures; Section 6.6 Student's Equipment)
- Strategies for Behavior Management (Refer to Chapter 3 - Behavior Management and Discipline)

4.4 Students With Disabilities and The Bus Ride

Autism & 'The Bus Ride'

What is Autism?
Autism is a developmental disorder that is characterized by significant impairment in social interactions and communication skills.

How does having Autism affect the student?

Students with autism may exhibit a wide range of intellectual abilities and a variety of behaviors. Students may exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- Unaware or unresponsive to others (appear to be 'in their own world')
- Repetitive behaviors such as rocking back and forth, repeating phrases, or repeating an activity over and over again
- Difficulty with communication (initiating conversations and/or responding when spoken to)
- Extreme sensitivity to noises (i.e. may become agitated with loud voices)
- Extreme sensitivity to someone or something touching them (i.e. may become agitated, may 'pick' at their own clothing, and/or may avoid contact)
- Hyperactive or lethargic behaviors
- Emotional outbursts
- Excessive reactions to change in daily routines

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Autism

- Obtain information about student's specific characteristics and communication abilities from the school staff.
- Consult with classroom staff on behavior strategies that can be incorporated during the bus ride.
- Maintain a similar routine to avoid undesirable behaviors.
- Give verbal commands using a calm voice in simple one or two word phrases.
- Maintain close supervision since the student may have no fear of danger.
- Minimize contact with the student since some students may be irritated by touch.
- Allow the student to hold a familiar object if needed to remain 'calm' during the bus ride.
- Consult with school staff if the student has difficulty staying on the bus seat. A child safety restraint system may need to be used.

Deaf-Blindness and 'The Bus Ride'

What is Deaf-Blindness?
Deaf-blindness is a disability in which hearing and visual impairments occur together resulting in severe communication and educational difficulties.

How does being Deaf-Blind affect the student?
Students with deaf-blindness disabilities are not necessarily deaf and blind. They may have enough vision to recognize familiar people and objects, see sign language and read large print. Students may have sufficient hearing to recognize sounds and some amplified speech. Students often feel isolated from others since they have a difficult time seeing and communicating. Students may also become agitated or upset with new or unexpected situations.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Deaf-Blindness

- Obtain information about student's vision, hearing, and communicaton abilities from the school staff.
- Consult with school staff on alternative methods to provide physical assistance with loading and unloading on the bus. The student may need additional cues to notify him/her when it is time to get off the bus.
- Provide consistent routines, seating, and methods of assistance to make student feel more at ease and to enable him/her to learn the bus environment.
- Refer to Consideratons for the Bus Ride in the Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment sections.

Deafness and 'The Bus Ride'

What is Deafness?
Deafness is a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is unable to process sounds or spoken words through hearing.

How does being Deaf affect the student?
The student is unable to understand spoken language even with amplification. Students who are deaf have more difficulty learning verbal communication than students who have normal hearing. Students may communicate using one or more of the following methods:

- Sign language
- Lip reading
- Augmentative communication device
- Interpreter for hearing impaired

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Deafness

- Obtain information about student's communication methods from the school staff.
- Speak clearly at a normal rate when giving directions since the student may be lip reading. Use facial expressions, hand motions, or written directions as recommended by school staff.
- Obtain information about student's abilities from the school staff.
- Consult with school staff to determine if student needs special assistance on/off the bus or special seating during transport.

Developmental Delay and 'The Bus Ride'

What is a Developmental Delay?
Developmental delay refers to a child who is between three and seven years of age whose development and/or behavior are significantly delayed.

How does having a Developmental Delay affect the student?
The affects may vary greatly with each student depending on the areas of delay. Students with developmental delay may have delays in one or more of the following areas:

- Physical development (body movement and motor skills)
- Cognitive development (thinking and learning)
- Communication development
- Social or emotional development
- Adaptive development (self care and daily living skills)

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Developmental Delay

- Provide directions in clear and simple language.
- Maintain close supervision since the student may have no fear of danger and may not understand the directions.

Emotional Disability & 'The Bus Ride'

What is an Emotional Disability?

An emotional disability is a condition in which a student exhibits long-standing patterns of inappropriate behavior that interferes with his/her educational performance.

A student with an emotional disability has one or more of the following that cannot be attributed to physical, sensory, or intellectual deficits:

- Inability to make educational progress
- Inability to maintain satisfactory relationships
- Inappropriate or immature behavior under normal conditions
- A general mood of unhappiness or depression
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains, or fears associated with personal or school problems

How does a having an Emotional Disability affect the student?

The student's behavior may range from appropriate to non-compliant. These behaviors may fluctuate throughout the day. Students may exhibit some of the following inappropriate behaviors:

- Hyperactivity and difficulty staying seated
- Immaturity (emotional outbursts, temper tantrums, poor coping skills)
- Withdrawal from interactions with others
- Excessive response and/or aggression to situations (screaming, hitting, inappropriate language, etc.)

Students often do not 'look' differently from other students; therefore, their special needs may not be apparent.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Emotional Disability

- Obtain informaton about student's behavior patterns (including likes and dislikes) from the school staff.
- Consult with school staff on behavior strategies that can be incorporated during the bus ride to minimize undesirable behavior.
- Provide consistent bus rules and repeat as necessary.
- Provide consistent and fair consequences for not following the rules.
- Maintain a professional attitude if student's behavior escalates. Do not yell or threaten student if his/her behavior is inappropriate.
- Assign bus seat near the front or with a student who is a positive influence.
- Consult with school staff if the student is disruptive or fails to stay on the bus seat. A child safety restraint system may be needed.

Hearing Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'

What is a Hearing Impairment?

Hearing impairment is a loss in hearing that adversely affects a student's educational performance. This hearing loss is not as severe as deafness.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Hearing Impairment

- Consult with school staff on alternative methods of communication. Students may use one or more of the following: sign language, lip read, writing or picture symbols.
- Speak clearly at a normal rate when giving directions since the student may be lip reading. Use facial expressions, hand motions, or written directions as recommended by school staff.

How does a Hearing Impairment affect the student?

Students typically hear some sounds. Depending on the type of hearing loss, students may benefit from hearing aids and/or amplification systems. Students who are hard of hearing have more difficulty learning verbal communication than students who have normal hearing.

Students may communicate using one or more of the following methods:

- Sign language
- Lip reading
- Augmentative communication device
- Interpreter for hearing impaired

Students may feel isolated from others since they have a difficult time hearing and communicating with their peers.

Intellectual Disability and 'The Bus Ride'

What is an Intellectual Disability?

Intellectual disability refers to below average intellectual functioning with a decreased rate of learning.

Depending on the severity of the intellectual disability, students may be in one of the following Exceptional Children categories:

- Mild Intellectual Disability
- Moderate Intellectual Disability
- Severe Intellectual Disability

How do Intellectual Disabilities affect the student?

- Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities:
  - Typically follow simple directions and rules
  - May display behaviors that are more immature as compared to other students
- Students with Moderate Intellectual Disabilities:
  - Typically have difficulty following simple directions and rules and may need modeling and repetition
  - May act immature and may not be concerned with safety
  - May have difficulty remembering things
- Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities:
  - Typically unable to follow directions and rules
  - Often have additional physical impairments which may range from difficulty with balance when walking to using a wheelchair for mobility
  - Have limited speech and communication skills
  - Usually lack bladder and bowel control and therefore wear diapers/pull-ups

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Intellectual Disability

- Obtain information about student's behavior patters (including likes and dislikes) from the school staff.
- Consult with school physical therapist if the student also has physical disabilities requiring additional assistance on/off the bus or if the student uses special equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs.
- Provide consistent routines, seat assignments, and rules.
- Give verbal commands in simple one or two word phrases.
- Provide supervision for safety when students are getting on/off the bus.
- Consult with school staff if the student has difficulty staying on the bus seat. A child safety restraint system may be needed.

Multiple Disabilities and 'The Bus Ride'

What are Multiple Disabilities?
Multiple disabilities refers to two or more disabilities occurring together (i.e. intellectual disability and blindness; intellectual disability and orthopedic impairment; etc.). The combination of these disabilities causes developmental and educational problems.

How does having Multiple Disabilities affect the student?
The affects will vary greatly with each student depending on the specific disabilities. Refer to the information provided for each disability that the student has.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Multiple Disabilities

- Obtain information about the student's communication and functional abilities from school staff.
- Consult with school physical therapist if the student also has physical disabilities requiring additional assistance on/off the bus or if the student uses special equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs.
- Provide consistent routines, seat assignments, and rules.
- Give verbal commands in simple one or two word phrases.
- Consult with school staff if the student has difficulty staying on the bus seat. A child safety restraint system may be needed.

Orthopedic Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'

Orthopedic impairment refers to a severe physical impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance. Orthopedic impairments may result from numerous causes. The following are a few of the more common orthopedic impairments that may affect a student's educational and functional performance.

Orthopedic Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Cerebral Palsy

What is Cerebral Palsy (CP)?

Cerebral Palsy is a medical condition caused by damage to the developing brain before, during, or after birth. Individuals with cerebral palsy have abnormal movement patterns. CP is often classified by the body parts affected.

- Diplegia - legs are primarily affected with mild to no arm involvement
- Hemiplegia - one side of the body is affected (i.e. right arm and right leg)
- Quadriplegia - both arms and legs are affected along with the torso

How does having Cerebral Palsy affect the student?

The abilities/disabilities the student exhibits depends upon the extent and location of the brain damage.

- Intelligence may range from above average to severe intellectual impairments.
- Speech may range from normal to inability to speak at all. Students who are unable to speak or have difficulty speaking may understand everything said to them.
- Movement may range from difficulty moving one side of the body to inability to move both arms and legs. Movements may be 'stiff' or may be uncontrolled and excessive.

Students may also have the following medical conditions:

- Shunt - a tube located on one side of the head to drain fluid from the brain
- Seizures – a sudden and brief change in brain function
- Potential for orthopedic surgeries – resulting in the need for casts

Students may use one or more of the following adaptive devices or specialized equipment:

- Leg braces on one or both legs
- Walking devices such as canes, crutches, or walkers
- Wheelchairs (manual or power)
- Wheelchair trays
- Hand splints on one or both hands
- Assistive technology devices

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Cerebral Palsy

- Obtain information about the student's medical conditions, communication abilities and functional abilities from school staff.
- Consult with the school physical therapist if the student has difficulty going up/down the bus steps.
- Consult with school staff if the student has difficulty staying on the bus seat. A child safety restraint system may be needed.
- Take special precautions when loading/ unloading students in wheelchairs since some students may have difficulty controlling movements of their arms and legs.
- Avoid sudden movements, increased excitement, and loud noises/voices. These may cause uncontrolled movements to increase.
- Secure students' adaptive equipment (i.e. walkers, crutches, assistive technology devices, etc.) on the bus with approved straps.
- Follow proper procedures for loading/ unloading wheelchairs, securing wheelchairs, and restraining students who are transported in wheelchairs.
- Consult with school physical therapist if the student's mobility and positioning are affected by recent surgeries. Students with casts may need special accommodations.

For Students with Shunts:

- Do Not place the shoulder belt across the student's neck if student is in a wheelchair. It could put pressure on the shunt.
- Notify school staff and/or parents/guardians if the student receives a blow or injury to the head since this may cause the shunt to work improperly.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

For Students who Experience Seizures:

- Do not restrain the student.
- Remove harmful objects from the immediate area.
- Note the length of the episode.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance if the student has difficulty breathing, has one seizure after another or if the seizure exceeds five minutes.

Orthopedic Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Osteogenesis Imperfecta

What is Osteogenesis Imperfecta (Brittle Bone Disease)?
Osteogenesis Imperfecta is a genetic disorder characterized by bones that break easily. This disease is commonly referred to as brittle bone disease.

How does having Osteogenesis Imperfecta affect the student?
The student's bones can be broken very easily by minor bumps, pressure from contact during lifting and/or spontaneously for no apparent reason.

Some students walk with or without assistive devices; however, many students need to use a wheelchair for mobility.

Students may have the following characteristics:

- Small arms and legs (short stature)
- Frequent fractures
- Deformed bones due to the multiple fractures
- Tendency to bruise easily
- Muscle weakness
- Loose joints (joint laxity)
- Spinal curvature
- Excessive sweating or heat intolerance

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Osteogenesis Imperfecta

- Obtain information about the student's medical condition and functional abilities from school staff.
- Take special precautions so that the student avoids physical contact with other students during bus loading and unloading.
- Consult with the school physical therapist for proper seating on the bus for students who do not use wheelchairs. These students may need to be restrained in a child safety restraint system for added protection.
- Follow proper procedures for loading/ unloading wheelchairs, securing wheelchairs, and restraining students who are transported in wheelchairs.
- Encourage students to sit in the middle of the bus whenever possible since the ride in the middle of the bus tends to be smoother than over the wheel axles.
- Do not move the student if a fracture is suspected. Contact parents/guardians or emergency medical assistance.

Orthopedic Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Spina Bifida

What is Spina Bifida?

This is a condition caused by a birth defect of the spine and spinal cord resulting in partial or complete paralysis below the spinal level involved.

How does having Spina Bifida affect the student?

Students with spina bifida typically have the following medical conditions:

- Paralysis - ranging from the ability to move legs with the exception of ankle and toe movements to complete paralysis from the waist down
- Impaired sensation of legs - students may not feel pain if their legs are bumped or injured
- Lack of bowel and bladder control - students may need to wear diapers and/or to be on a schedule to have their bladders emptied by catheterization
- Shunt – a tube located on one side of the head to drain fluid from the brain
- Latex Allergy – which may become so severe that the student has difficulty breathing

Some students with spina bifida may have learning disabilities while others have normal intelligence. The students with learning disabilities may appear to be very friendly and readily engage in social chatter, but will have difficulty with more in-depth conversations.

Students may use one or more of the following adaptive devices:

- Leg braces on one or both legs
- Walking devices such as canes, crutches, or walkers
- Wheelchairs (manual or power)

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Spina Bifida

- Obtain information on the student's medical conditions and functional levels from the school staff.
- Take special precautions when loading/unloading students in wheelchairs since students have impaired sensations in their legs and may not be aware if they are bumped/scraped or if their legs slide off the footrest of the wheelchair. These students may not complain of pain since they may not feel if they are injured.
- Take extra care if embarrassing situations occur with students who do not have control of their bladder and bowel. Students who are on a schedule for catheterization to empty their bladder may need to have the length of their bus ride adjusted.
- Secure student's adaptive equipment (i.e. walkers, crutches, etc.) on the bus with approved straps.
- Follow proper procedures for loading/unloading wheelchairs, securing wheelchairs, and restraining students who are transported in wheelchairs.

For Students with Shunts:

- Do Not place the shoulder belt across the student's neck if student is in a wheelchair. It could put pressure on the shunt.
- Notify school staff and/or parents/guardians if the student receives a blow or injury to the head since this may cause the shunt to work improperly.
- Notify appropriate school staff and/or parents/guardians if the student experiences headaches, vomiting, and/or excessive drowsiness.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

For Students with Latex Allergies:

- Keep items that contain latex away from the student. Do not use latex gloves; use non-latex gloves instead. Common items that may contain latex include: rubber bands, balloons, and erasers.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'

Other health impairment is a disability that adversely affects a student's educational performance due to limited strength, vitality or alertness. Other health impairments may include chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia. The following are a few of the more common 'other health impairments' that may affect student's educational and functional performance.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Asthma

What is Asthma?
Asthma is a chronic disease that affects the airways (the tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs). The inside walls of the airways become inflamed and narrow when irritated resulting in less air to the lungs.

How does having Asthma affect the student?
The student may experience the following asthma symptoms:

- Wheezing (whistle sound with breathing)
- Coughing
- Chest tightness or chest pressure
- Trouble breathing (shortness of breath or a feeling of not being able to get enough air in or out of lungs)

Asthma symptoms may be brought on by exercise, allergens, irritants, and viral infections. In a severe asthma attack, the airways can close preventing oxygen from getting to vital organs. An asthma attack may be a serious medical emergency. Students with asthma may have inhalers which allow medicines to go straight to the airways and the lungs.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Asthma

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Allow students to have medication and/or special inhalers with them on the bus per their health care plan.
- Encourage students to sit towards the front of the bus away from exhaust fumes. Some students may need to be transported on a bus with air conditioning and good ventilation per student's IEP/504 Plan.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

What is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)?
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a condition that results in difficulty sitting still, controlling behavior and paying attention.

How does having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder affect the student?
The student may exhibit one or more of the following:

- Restlessness and difficulty staying seated
- Short attention span and difficulty staying focused
- Impulsive behaviors
- Poor memory
- Frequent talking
- Difficulty waiting

Students with ADHD may feel anxious, unsure of themselves, or depressed due to problems that arise at home and school as a result of the ADHD. Students often do not 'look' or act differently from other students; therefore, their special needs may not be apparent.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- Obtain information about student's behavior patterns (including likes and dislikes) from the school staff.
- Consult with school staff on behavior strategies that can be incorporated during the bus ride to minimize undesirable behavior.
- Provide consistent and clear directions and rules. Repeat as necessary.
- Provide consistent and fair consequences for not following the rules.
- Maintain a professional attitude if student's behavior escalates. Do not yell or threaten student if his/her behavior is inappropriate.
- Assign a bus seat near the front or with a student who is a positive influence.
- Consult with school staff if the student is disruptive or fails to stay on the bus seat. A child safety restraint system may be needed.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Cystic Fibrosis

What is Cystic Fibrosis?
Cystic Fibrosis is a disease that affects the lungs and the digestive system. The body produces unusually thick mucus that clogs the lungs and leads to life threatening lung infections. This thick mucus can also block the digestive tract and pancreas.

How does having Cystic Fibrosis affect the student?
Students may exhibit one or all of the following:

- Persistent coughing
- Frequent lung infections
- Wheezing or shortness of breath
- Poor growth/weight gain

Special Considerations for he Bus Ride: Cystic Fibrosis

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Allow students to have medication and/or special inhalers with them on the bus per their health care plan.
- Encourage students to sit towards the front of the bus away from exhaust fumes. Some students may need to be transported on a bus with air conditioning and good ventilation per student's IEP/504 Plan.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Diabetes

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a serious chronic disease that impairs the body's ability to make insulin or use it properly. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other foods into energy.

How does Diabetes affect the student?

Most students with diabetes have treatments in place to manage their condition either through diet, exercise, medication, insulin injections and/or insulin pumps.

Two kinds of problems can occur with diabetes:

- Hyperglycemia occurs when blood sugar levels get too high. Students may experience symptoms such as increased hunger and thirst and frequent urination.
- Hypoglycemia occurs when blood sugar levels get too low. Hypoglycemia is the most common problem in children with diabetes. Students may experience symptoms such as headaches, extreme hunger, blurry or double vision, fatigue, and weakness. In severe cases insulin shock may occur resulting in confusion, seizures, and loss of consciousness.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Diabetes

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Allow student to have access to digestible sugar, orange juice, regular soda pop, or candy per student's health care plan.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Epilepsy

What is Epilepsy?

Epilepsy is a physical condition that occurs when there is a sudden and brief change in how the brain works. These physical changes are called epileptic seizures; therefore epilepsy is often referred to as a seizure disorder. Some students may experience a seizure and not have epilepsy (i.e. seizures as the result of high fevers or as the result of an imbalance of body fluids).

How does having Epilepsy affect the student?

Students with epilepsy may experience one or more of the following:

- Blackouts or periods of confusion
- Episodes of staring or periods of unresponsiveness
- Involuntary movement of arms and legs (jerky movements)
- Fainting spells

Following a mild seizure (lapse of consciousness for a brief period), the student may not realize that anything

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Epilepsy

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Repeat directions if the student has had a mild seizure since the student will have a lapse in consciousness and will not recall what was said and will not respond to the adult during the seizure.

For Students who Experience Seizures:

- Do not restrain the student.
- Remove harmful objects from the immediate area.
- Note the length of the episode.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance if the student has difficulty breathing, has one seizure after another or if the seizure exceeds five minutes.

has happened. The student may have a glassy stare and appear dazed.

For more involved seizures (lapse of consciousness for more than two minutes) the student may experience uncontrolled 'jerky' movements of his/her entire body. Following the seizure, the student may appear sleepy, disoriented, and unresponsive.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Hemophilia

What is Hemophilia?
Hemophilia is an inherited bleeding disorder characterized by the inability of the blood to clot which leads to excessive bleeding.

How does having Hemophilia affect the student?
The student may bruise easily even after a slight bump. A minor cut could lead to excessive bleeding.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Hemophilia

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Take special precautions to minimize physical contact with other students during bus loading and unloading.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing, excessive bleeding, or a change in level of consciousness.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Leukemia

What is Leukemia?
Leukemia is a term that is used to describe a variety of cancers that begin in the blood-forming tissues of the bone marrow. The bone marrow makes an over abundance of diseased white cells that can not perform their usual function of fighting infections.

How does having Leukemia affect the student?
The student may experience the following:

- Fatigue and low endurance
- Pale skin
- Bleeding and bruising
- Little or no defense against infection resulting in frequent absences
- Hair loss
- Nausea and vomiting

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Leukemia

- The student may have frequent and long-term absences from school.
- The student may experience extreme fatigue and low endurance.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'— Muscular Dystrophy & Spinal Muscular Atrophy

What is Muscular Dystrophy? (MD)
Muscular dystrophies are a group of genetic diseases of the muscles resulting in increased weakness over time. Some forms of MD are seen in infancy or early childhood while others may not appear until middle age or later. Duchenne MD is the most common form of MD and primarily affects boys.

What is Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA)?
Spinal muscular atrophy is a genetic disease that affects the nerve cells that send messages to muscles. SMA involves the loss of these nerve cells; therefore, muscles become less active resulting in increased weakness over time. There are four different types of SMA; one starts in early infancy; two types start in childhood; and another starts in adulthood.

How does having Muscular Dystrophy or Spinal Muscular Atrophy affect the student?
Some students may experience severe muscle weakness at birth while others may experience weakness around the age of four (as in Duchenne MD). The majority of these students will continue to get weaker as they get older.

Students who walk are at risk for frequent falls due to muscle weakness. These students may need help getting up from the ground if they do fall. Students with severe weakness often use a manual or a power wheelchair.

Students with MD and SMA often have severe respiratory (breathing) problems, particularly as they get older.

Students may use one or more of the following adaptive devices or specialized equipment:

- Leg braces
- Walking devices such as canes, crutches, or walkers
- Wheelchairs (manual or power)
- Wheelchair trays
- Assistive technology devices for writing in the classroom
- Portable oxygen tank

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Muscular Dystrophy & Spinal Muscular Atrophy

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and functional abilities from school staff.
- Avoid pointing out that the student is losing abilities over time. This is a progressive disease and the muscles will continue to get weaker over time.
- Consult with the school physical therapist if the student has difficulty going up/down the bus steps. The student should never be allowed to stand on the wheelchair lift.
- Consult with the school physical therapist if the student has trouble sitting upright in his/her wheelchair.
- Assist the student with repositioning his/her arms or legs if they slide off the wheelchair armrests or foot rests. The student may not have sufficient strength to reposition his/her arms and legs.
- Encourage students to sit towards the front of the bus away from exhaust fumes. Some students may need to be transported on a bus with air conditioning and good ventilation per student's IEP/504 Plan. Try to reduce the amount of exhaust fumes in the bus by turning off the engine during wheelchair loading and unloading.
- Secure student's adaptive equipment (i.e. walkers, crutches, assistive technology devices, etc.) on the bus with approved straps.
- Follow proper procedures for loading/ unloading wheelchairs, securing wheelchairs, and restraining students who are transported in wheelchairs.

Other Health Impairment and 'The Bus Ride' - Spinal Cord Injury

What is a Spinal Cord Injury?
This is an injury to the spinal cord that may result in partial or complete paralysis below the level of injury.

How does having a Spinal Cord Injury affect the student?
Students may not be able to move their legs or legs and arms, and they may have a complete loss of feeling in the paralyzed area. Students may also have a loss of bladder and bowel control. Some students may have to wear a diaper or be on a schedule to have their bladder emptied by catheterization.

Students may use one or more of the following adaptive devices or specialized equipment:

- Leg braces
- Walking devices such as canes, crutches, or walkers
- Wheelchairs (manual or power)
- Wheelchair trays
- Assistive technology devices for writing in the classroom
- Portable oxygen tank

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Spinal Cord Injury

- Obtain information on the student's medical conditions and functional levels from the school staff.
- Take special precautions when loading/unloading students in wheelchairs since students have impaired sensations in their legs and may not be aware if they are bumped/scraped or if their legs slide off the footrest of the wheelchair. Students may not complain of pain since they may not feel if they are injured.
- Take extra care if embarrassing situations occur with students who do not have control of their bladder and bowel. Students who are on a schedule for catheterization to empty their bladder may need to have the length of their bus ride adjusted.
- Secure student's adaptive equipment (i.e. walkers, crutches, assistive technology devices, etc.) on the bus with approved straps.
- Follow proper procedures for loading/unloading wheelchairs, securing wheelchairs, and restraining students who are transported in wheelchairs.

Specific Learning Disability and 'The Bus Ride'

What is a Learning Disability?

Learning disability is term used to describe specific kinds of learning problems. Students usually do not perform or do as well as their ability or intelligence suggests that they could. Learning disabilities vary from student to student and may occur with other disabilities.

How does having a Learning Disability affect the student?

Students with a learning disability may have difficulty learning and using skills such as: reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and doing math. The student may have difficulty with one or more of the following:

- Expressing ideas
- Understanding and following directions
- Learning new tasks
- Remembering previously learned tasks

Students often do not 'look' or act differently from other students; therefore, their special needs may not be apparent. Some students may act inappropriately in an attempt to cover up their learning disability often preferring to be considered a 'problem student' versus a student with a learning disability.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Specific Learning Disability

- Obtain information on the student's abilities from the school staff.
- Be patience since repetition may be necessary to help student understand directions and/or to understand what the student is saying.
- Assist with peer interactions if necessary since students with learning disabilities may be teased by peers.

Speech or Language Impairment and 'The Bus Ride'

What is a Speech or Language Impairment?

Speech and language impairments are disorders that affect a student's ability to talk, understand, read and write. Speech or language disorders have many different causes and may range from a few speech sound errors to a total loss of the ability to use and understand speech to communicate.

How does having a speech or language impairment affect the student?

The students with a speech impairment may have difficulty speaking and being understood when talking to peers and adults. Students with a language impairment may exhibit difficulty with understanding and/or using spoken and written language.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Speech or Language Impairment

- Obtain information on the student's communication abilities from the school staff.
- Consult with the school staff and the Speech Language Pathologist if the student uses an alternative means of communication (i.e. symbols, alternative communication devices, and/or sign language).
- Be patient since repetition may be necessary to help the student understand directions and/or to understand what the student is saying.
- Assist with peer interactions if necessary since students with communication difficulties may be teased by peers.

Traumatic Brain Injury and 'The Bus Ride'

What is a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)?
Traumatic brain injury is an injury to the brain caused by an external force resulting in a functional disability or psychosocial impairment to the extent that it affects a student's educational performance.

How does having a Traumatic Brain Injury affect the student?
The student may display a wide variety of deficits depending on the extent and location of the brain injury. The deficits may include difficulty with the following: memory, attention, learning, abstract thinking, motor skills, speech and behavior.

Students may also display the following:

- Headaches
- Seizures
- Increased muscle tone (stiffness)
- Short and long term memory difficulties
- Poor judgment
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mood changes which may vary from anxiety to depression to frustration
- Inappropriate behaviors such as impulsivity
- Poor control over emotions (i.e. excessive crying or laughing at inappropriate times)

Brain injuries can range from mild to severe. The student's abilities may improve as the student heals (especially during the first year).

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Traumatic Brain Injury

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition, communication abilities, and functional skills from the school staff.
- Consult with school staff if the student has a physical disability to determine if the student requires special assistance, special equipment, or special seating.
- Provide appropriate supervision since the student may display impulsive behaviors.
- Be patient since repetition may be necessary to help the student understand directions and/or to understand what the student is saying.

Visual Impairment and Blindness and 'The Bus Ride'

What is a Visual Impairment?
A visual impairment is an impairment in vision that even with correction adversely affects a student's educational performance.

How does a Visual Impairment affect the student?
Students who are identified as visually impaired have visual impairments that range from partial sight to blindness. Students may feel isolated from others since they have a difficult time seeing others and their environment.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Visual Impairment and Blindess

- Obtain information on the student's visual abilities and functional skills from the school staff. This information should also include any provisions necessary for drop off (i.e. if student needs adult to meet him/her at the bus stop).
- Provide consistent routines, seating, and methods of assistance to make the students feel more at ease and to enable them to learn their environment.
- Communicate directions clearly to compensate for the student's inability to see. Students may need to be informed when they arrive at their bus stop.
- Consult with school staff on the best method to assist the students on/off the bus. Some students may not need any help; others may need to hold onto someone's arm.

4.5 Students With Medical Conditions and The Bus Ride

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride' — Anaphylactic Shock

What is Anaphylactic Shock?
Anaphylactic shock is an extreme allergic reaction. Exposure to any substance could cause an allergic reaction. The most common causes of anaphylactic shock are exposure to one of the following:

- Peanuts and other nuts
- Dairy products
- Wasp or bee stings
- Latex products
- Medicines

What affect does Anaphylactic Shock have on the student?
This is a life-threatening medical emergency. The student's blood pressure drops resulting in swelling especially around the face and throat. The airways swell resulting in difficulty with breathing. Anaphylactic shock is fatal if not treated immediately.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Anaphylactic Shock

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride' — Colostomy

What is a Colostomy?
A colostomy is a surgical procedure that creates an opening in the abdomen (stomach) for the drainage of stool from the large intestine (colon). A special bag over the opening in the stomach wall is usually necessary to collect stools. A colostomy may be necessary as the result of cancer, disease, or trauma. The colostomy may be temporary or permanent.

How does having Colostomy affect the student?
In most cases the student will resume normal activities and most people will not be aware that the student has a colostomy.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Colostomy

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from the school staff. In most cases the bus driver and safety assistant will not be aware that a student has a colostomy.
- Take extra care with students who are in wheelchairs to ensure that the occupant restraint belts are not pressing on the colostomy bag.

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride' — Gastrostomy

What is a Gastrostomy (G-Tube)?
A G-tube is a feeding tube surgically placed through the skin and stomach wall directly into the stomach to help the student get adequate nutrition. G-tubes may be needed temporarily or permanently for the following situations:

- Birth abnormalities of the mouth, esophagus, and stomach
- Inability to swallow correctly
- Inability to eat enough food by mouth to stay healthy

How does having G-Tube affect the student?
In many cases the student will resume normal activities with the exception of eating. Students with G-tubes often have other types of disabilities. Parents/guardians of students with cognitive and/or physical disabilities should make sure that the G-tube is secure and out of the reach of students' hands to prevent accidental or unintentional removal.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Contact the parents/guardian if the G-tube comes out. Place gauze over the opening for added protection. This is not a life-threatening situation; however, the G-tube needs to be replaced within a few hours or the opening in the stomach will start to close.
- Take extra care with students who are in wheelchairs to ensure that the occupant restraint belts are not pressing on the G-tube.

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride' — Heat Intolerance

What is Heat Intolerance?
Heat intolerance is an extreme sensitivity to heat. Heat intolerance often produces a feeling of being overheated and can produce heavy sweating.

How does having Heat Intolerance affect the student?
The student is unable to tolerate a rise in temperature. The student may also experience fainting, vomiting, dizziness, palpitations, and/or rapid pulse. The student should be encouraged to drink lots of fluids throughout the day.

Special Considerations forthe Bus Ride: Heat Intoleranc

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Keep the bus temperature at a comfortable level. Students may need to be transported on a bus with air conditioning and good ventilation per student's IEP/504 Plan.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride'— Seizures

What is a Seizure?
A seizure is a sudden change in how the brain works.

How do Seizures affect the student?
Seizures vary greatly ranging from the student staring off into space for a brief moment to the student becoming completely unresponsive with jerky movements.

Following a mild seizure (lapse of consciousness for a brief period), the student may not realize that anything has happened. The student may have a glassy stare and appear dazed.

For more involved seizures (lapse of consciousness for more than two minutes) the student may experience uncontrolled jerky movements of his/her entire body. Following the seizure, the student may appear sleepy, disoriented, and unresponsive.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Seizures

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Repeat directions if the student has had a mild seizure since the student will have a lapse in consciousness and will not recall what was said and will not respond to the adult during the seizure.

For Students who Experience Seizures:

- Do not restrain the student.
- Remove harmful objects from the immediate area.
- Note the length of the episode.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance if the student has difficulty breathing, has one seizure after another or if the seizure exceeds five minutes.

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride' — Shunt

What is a Shunt?
A shunt is a surgically inserted tube located on one side of the student's head to drain excess fluid from the brain to other parts of the body. The tube goes from the affected area of the brain to outside of the skull (under the skin) and travels behind the ear and down the neck and usually drains in the abdominal cavity.

How does a having a Shunt affect the student?
For most students, the shunt will be working properly and will not affect the student. Students with shunts that are not working properly may complain of a headache or may experience vomiting and/or excessive drowsiness.

Special Considerations forthe Bus Ride: Shunts

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Do Not place the shoulder belt across the student's neck if the student is in a wheelchair. It could put pressure on the shunt.
- Notify school staff and parents/guardians if the student receives a blow or injury to the head since this may cause the shunt to work improperly.
- Notify appropriate school staff and parents/ guardians if the student experiences headaches, vomiting, and/or excessive drowsiness.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

Medical Conditions and 'The Bus Ride' — Tracheostomy

What is a Tracheostomy?

A tracheostomy is a surgically created opening in the neck leading into the trachea (windpipe) for breathing. A tube is usually placed through this opening (tracheostomy tube also called trach tube) to provide an airway and to allow removal of secretions from the lungs.

How does a having a Tracheostomy affect the student?

The student may have difficulty talking or may have a special valve/cap to enable speaking. Many students require suctioning of mucus and secretions by an adult attendant. The suctioning is usually done with a portable suctioning machine.

Students who are not able to breath on their own need mechanical ventilation. The ventilator (frequently called respirator) connects to the trach tube to mechanically assist with breathing. These students are usually in wheelchairs and have an adult attendant (often a medical professional). The ventilator should be securely fastened to the wheelchair.

Special Considerations for the Bus Ride: Tracheostomy

- Obtain information on the student's medical condition and health care plan from school staff.
- Encourage students to sit towards the front of the bus away from exhaust fumes. Some students may need to be transported on a bus with air conditioning and good ventilation per student's IEP/504 Plan.
- Do Not place the shoulder belt across the student's neck if the student is in a wheelchair. It could put pressure on the trach when the student turns his/her head.
- Do not use car seats with tray shields for students who need a car seat since the shield could injure the students' necks resulting in difficulty with breathing. Instead use a car seat with a 5-point harness.
- Ensure that medical equipment is secured to the student's wheelchair or secured on the bus seat with approved straps.
- Pull over to the side of the road when safe to do so, whenever the adult attendant suctions the student.

Call 911 for emergency medical assistance immediately if the student has difficulty breathing or a change in level of consciousness.

CHAPTER 5

Behavior Management and Discipline

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"The most damaging phrase in the language is: 'It's always been done that way.'"

-Rear Admiral Grace Hopper

5.1 Behavior Management

Children who have been identified as students with disabilities exhibit many of the same behaviors that other students exhibit on the school bus or in other settings. Because of their disabilities, the behaviors of these students may be more disruptive, last longer, and seem inappropriate for the situation. Many students with disabilities have poor skills in processing situations and communicating their needs and concerns. There are some procedures that can be put in to place on a school bus which will help students have the structure they need to be able to ride safely to and from school. The suggestions in this section will be helpful for all exceptional children, no matter what the disability.

Children with exceptional education needs who require specialized transportation must be provided transportation in spite of their conduct. However, transportation may not necessarily be on a regular bus or a specially adapted bus. The IEP Team must be reconvened for children whose repeated misbehavior endangers themselves or others to determine alternative means.

Before the first time the student or students ride the bus:

1. The school should inform the bus driver about any students who are riding the bus who have special behavioral interventions or plans. The bus driver should be using equivalent interventions. Since bus rides are often very unstructured, the behavioral interventions that are used for the students in unstructured settings in the school should be adapted for the bus setting. It is very important that school personnel inform the bus driver of the student's behavioral needs that may require specific interventions or management. (Appendix 5A – Sample Notification of Behavior Plan.)
2. The bus driver should assign seats to the students on the bus. The students who are most likely to be picked on by other students should be in safe locations. The students who are most likely to create problems should be where the bus driver or a monitor can deal with them quickly at the very beginning of a problem.
3. The bus driver should make rules for the bus ride and have them clearly posted where all students can see them.
4. Before the students ride the bus, or on the first day they ride, the students should be taught the bus rules and how to behave on the bus. This should be a true lesson with explanation, modeling, role playing, and practice by the students. The school staff should help the bus drivers teach students how to ride on the bus since the bus drivers are not trained teachers.

During the bus ride:

1. The bus driver should reinforce positive behavior on the bus frequently and consistently. Positive recognition and reinforcement should be four times as often as reprimands and consequences. The school staff should help the bus drivers figure out how they can reinforce the students. (Appendix 5B – IDEA & Bus Driver Training)
2. When students do not follow the rules, they should be corrected immediately. The bus driver needs to use a calm, non-judgmental tone of voice. A good way to correct the students is to ask the students if they know what the rule is or to refer to the specific rule. If the students say they know the rule, ask them if the think they can do it. Usually a student will say yes and follow the rule. If the students say they don't know the rule, tell them the rule and ask

Student Aspirations

- To become somebody worthy.
- To be sure of self and direction.
- To belong to something or to be part of something exciting and structured.
- To make a contribution to society.
- To know where he or she fits in.
- To be competent and successful in some arena.
- To be independent.
- To be asked to select options and alternatives.
- To have his or her opinions and choices valued.
- To find someone who loves him or her, or whom he or she can love.
- To have all of the above yesterday.

Dr. Lorraine Monroe

if they can do it. If students are corrected politely and calmly, they will usually respond appropriately.

3. It may be necessary to give some students choices rather than instructions. The school staff should inform the bus driver about those students and help the bus driver learn the language of choice and how to use it.
4. The bus driver should not get in power struggles with the students.

Setting Expectations

- Few and Clear - Positive and descriptive
- Understandable Vocabulary - Encourage Student Input
- Posted, if appropriate - Verbally Rehearsed
- Consistently Practiced

Behavioral Feedback

- Consistent - Non judgemental
- Instructional - Regular
- Can be based on IEP behavioral guides

Difficult Situations

- Remain calm - Don't overreact.
- Listen openly - Don't ignore.
- Monitor your body language - Don't take things personally.
- Encourage talking - Don't get into a power struggle.
- Show understanding - Do set limits.
- Reassure the student - Do enforce limits.
- Help save face.

5.2 Prevention Techniques

Effective preventative measures may be taken by drivers to improve the safety of students and to better ensure safe bus operation. Be advised of the 80/15/5 rule, which is "Any one technique works great with 80% of kids, somewhat with 15% of pupils, and not at all with 5% of your students." Order, limits, fairness, firmness and kindness are the qualities of a positive and effective behavior management. Nonetheless, effective behavior management does not just happen. As indicated by Haim Ginnott (1978), "Discipline is a series of little victories, not something that occurs overnight." Listed below are some best practices prevention techniques:

10 Basic Techniques of Behavior Management

1. Always treat youngsters with respect and preserve their dignity.
2. Always do what is in the students' best interests.
3. Seek solutions, not blame.
4. Model tolerant, patient, dignified, and respectful behavior.
5. Use the least intrusive intervention possible.
6. Connect with your students and build strong personal rapports with each student.
7. Instill hope for success in each student (if not, there is little reason for the student to behave on your bus).
8. Never do anything disrespectful, illegal, immoral, ineffective, bad for health/safety, or what you would not want done to you.
9. Never give up on a student. Keep believing in his/her ability to change for the better.
10. Catch the student being good as often as possible. (Appendix 5C – Good Bus Behavior Award.)

These prevention techniques may be used with some general practices, which include:

- Review and model positive behavior with actions, mannerisms, and words.
- Communicate developmental appropriate expectations by clear and simple rules.
- Give attention and positive feedback to each child individually.
- Specify and emphasize desired behaviors instead of undesired behaviors.
- Be consistent with all the children in enforcing all the rules.
- Use encouraging words to the children so they will want to continue to behave appropriately.
- Use warm and friendly language and tone, verbal and nonverbal.
- Greet the children on the bus and make them feel welcomed.

Driver Expectations/Attitude

Do:

- Show and give students examples of expected and unexpected behaviors.
- Review driver expectations often.
- Be critical of the behavior (not the student).
- Interact with students relatively the same way each day, even if it's a bad day.

Don't:

- Embarrass or yell at students.
- Have favorite students on the bus.
- Personalize comments or actions of the students.
- Warn a student without being able to follow through.

BEST PRACTICE

Always post the rules and review them regularly with the students on the bus.

Bus Rules (Using Assertive Discipline)

Assertive Discipline is a method of behavior management that is being used in many school districts throughout the nation. It was developed by Lee Canter, a child behavior management expert, after studying discipline practiced in the schools. Assertive discipline is designed to help manage student behavior, effectively and positively, which is beneficial to students. Using this method, depending on the individualized needs and disabling conditions of the students on the bus, here are some practical tips:

BEST PRAC T ICE

Model positive behavior with actions and words.

Always post the rules and review them regularly with the students.

1. Stand off roadway while awaiting bus. Be on time at designated bus stop.
2. Stay in your assigned seat, facing forward, at all times while the bus is moving.
3. Keep your arms and head inside windows at all times.
4. Wait for school bus driver's signal before crossing road. Walk 10-12 feet in front of the bus before crossing the street.
5. Please remain quiet.
6. Good bus conduct is expected - classroom conduct.
7. Absolute silence is required at all railroad crossings.
8. Obey the school bus driver and bus rules.
9. No eating, drinking, smoking, or profanity allowed.
10. Keep personal objects, hands, and feet to yourself.

BEST PRAC T ICE

POSITIVE REINFORCE-MENT includes smiles, friendly gestures, and positive comments

5.3 Intervention Strategies

Below are a few effective intervention strategies for handling school bus behavior problems depending on the individualized needs and disabling conditions of the students.

1. **Appoint Peer School Bus Helpers** (Carnes, 1996). Older students can practice valuable service skills and provide practical assistance to school bus drivers by serving as peer helpers to younger students. In this peer helper role, these students can perform polite interactions with fellow students by helping on the bus as needed (e.g., reminding a fellow student that he/she forgot a bookbag), mediating a modest student disagreement, and assisting the bus driver during bus drills or as needed. The school should provide regular feedback to peer helpers about their job performance.
2. **Assign Seating for Misbehaving Students** (Hopkins, 2003). When students misbehave, the bus driver can assign them to a 'time-out' seat near the driver for several days where they can be kept under close supervision. Inform all students that sitting where they choose on the bus is a privilege. Therefore, if a student continues to misbehave despite reminders or warnings, the student is moved to the front seat near the bus driver. The student is informed that he or she will remain in this assigned seat until the student shows appropriate behavior for a prescribed number of days.
3. **Assign Seating for the Entire Bus** (Gettinger, 1988; Martens & Kelly, 1993). Assigning seats for all students can not only help the bus driver to learn student names, but it can set a tone of behavioral control, and turn student seating into a familiar routine. In addition, this approach can be useful in emergencies. So, create a seating chart for the bus at the start of the year. Write the student's teacher or homeroom beside each student's name on the chart. This can make it easier to communicate with the school about student behavioral issues.
4. **Invite school authority figures for bus visits** (Gaustad, 1992). When different staff who maintain effective discipline in school make periodic surprise visits to the bus, they can also positively influence the bus environment. The school principal, assistant principal, teachers, and school resource (law enforcement) officers are often good choices to make brief guest appearances on the bus as it stops at the school to load or unload passengers. Visiting school personnel should remind students of appropriate bus behaviors, praise them if their general bus conduct has been good, and convey the message that the bus driver possesses the same authority and should be obeyed as readily as any other school staff.
5. **Connect bus behavior to the overall school reward system** (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Students' behaviors on the bus can improve if they believe that they can earn or lose school incentives as a result of their bus conduct. The district can set up a classroom or school-wide system in which students are recognized and rewarded for good behavior (e.g., earning points toward prizes or coupons to be redeemed at the school store) and receive negative consequences (e.g., deduction of prize points, loss of privileges) for misbehavior. Then explain to students how bus behaviors are tied into this system. For example, your school may decide that a bus disciplinary referral carries the same negative weight as a teacher office referral while a good behavior report from the bus driver is regarded as equivalent to a teacher praise note.
6. **Align Interventions to Severity of Bus Misbehavior** (Hopkins, 2003; Mayer & Ybarra, 2003). Interventions to address school bus misbehavior can be administered more consistently and fairly when those interventions are systematically aligned to the seriousness of that misbehavior.
7. **Promote a Positive Bus Environment** (Bear 1990; Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 2002; Mayer & Ybarra, 2003). School bus drivers who have developed rapports with students normally experience better school bus behaviors than drivers who primarily emphasize reprimands and punishments. In general, the bus driver should make an effort to maintain a ratio of at least 3 positive interactions for every reprimand or other disciplinary consequence. These positive interactions can include greeting each student by name as he/she enters the bus, giving a student a non-verbal signal such as a thumbs-up sign, and praising a student's bus behavior in front of a waiting parent as the student disembarks.
8. **Pull over to deal with 'time owed' for misbehavior** (Sprick, Borgmeier & Nolet, 2002). If student behaviors on the bus become unsafe, the driver should pull over and wait until those behaviors become under control. At the beginning of the school year, the school should inform parents and

students that bus drivers are required to pull over whenever the student behavior presents a safety risk. Determine a minimum amount of time that the bus will remain pulled over. Therefore when, in the driver's judgment, the behaviors on the bus have become unsafe, the driver might deliver one warning. If the behaviors do not improve significantly, the driver then pulls over and waits quietly for the minimum 'time-out' period. If school bus behaviors become under control by the end of the wait-time, the bus driver resumes the route. If those behaviors do not get under control, the driver continues to wait until he or she determines that it is safe to return to the road. Bus drivers should report to school administration if they are forced to use the pull-over technique often, because this is a probable sign that the driver might need outside assistance in managing student behaviors.

9. **Separate older and younger students to minimize bullying** (Olweus, 1993). Seating older students apart from younger students can reduce the likelihood that bullying will happen on the school bus. It is not rare for older students to pick on younger students on the school bus. In fact, they do this in the school building. You can, however, bring this situation under control by separating the riders by grade, requiring that younger students sit in seats reserved at the front and older students sit in the back of the vehicle.
10. **Sign a Bus Behavior Contract** (Hopkins, 2003; Kazdin, 2001). Requiring that all students sign a bus behavior contract is a useful strategy to teach and review positive bus behaviors while instilling a sense of student responsibility. This bus behavior contract should list no more than 4-6 rules. Rules should be stated in simple language and describe the positive behavior that students are expected to display. The contract should also state that being transported by bus is a student privilege, not a right, and that students who violate the rules may be prevented from riding the bus for a period of time. Require that students review the contract with their parents and that both students and parents sign to indicate their understanding of the bus rules and willingness to abide by them. (Appendix 5D – Sample Behavioral Contract)
11. **Teach appropriate bus behaviors** (Bear, 1990). Bus riders are most likely to engage in appropriate bus behaviors if they have been explicitly taught those behaviors. At the start of every year, students should have each bus behavior rule explained and demonstrated. Students may not know appropriate bus behavior. Some students may imitate appropriate behavior by sitting with peers on the bus who exhibit good behavior. Other students may need direct instructions and IEP objectives for appropriate bus behavior. The success of intervention techniques is based on individual needs and various situations. Interventions maybe verbal (quiet, but firm assertive response), standard (moving a student to another seat), problem-solving (redirection of negative behavior back to positive behavior), and positive (praising a student for appropriate behavior). Drivers should communicate with school personnel for assistance with individual student behavior.

5.4 Positive Behavior Support

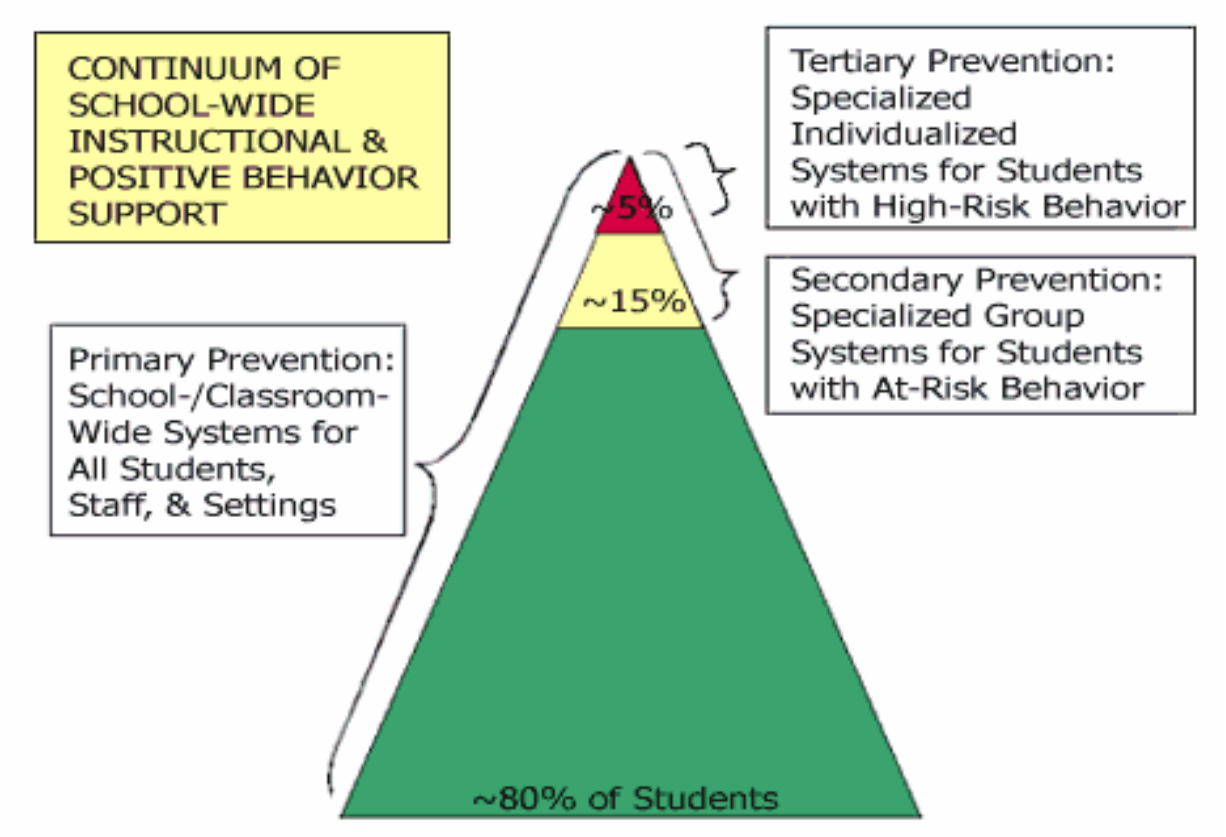
Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a proactive approach to changing problem behavior to desired behavior through the integration of human behavior, functional intervention, and systems support to achieve positive social and learning student outcomes.

Foundations and Features of Positive Behavioral Support

Behavioral Science	Practical Interventions	Lifestyle Outcomes	Systems Perspective
• Human behavior is affected by behavioral, bio-behavioral, social, and physical environmental factors. • Much of human behavior is associated with unintentional learning opportunities. • Human behavior is learned and can be changed.	• Functional behavioral assessments are used to develop behavior support plans. • Interventions emphasize environmental redesign, curriculum redesign, & removing rewards that inadvertently maintain problem behavior. • Teaching is a central behavior change tool. • Research-validated practices are emphasized. • Intervention decisions are data-based.	• Behavior change must be socially significant, comprehensive, durable, & relevant. • The goal of PBS is enhancement of living and learning options. • PBS procedures are socially and culturally appropriate. Applications occur in least restrictive natural settings. • The fit between procedures and values of students, families, educators must be contextually appropriate. • Non-aversive interventions (no pain, tissue damage, or humiliation) are used.	• The quality & durability of supports are related directly to the level of support provided by the host environment. • The implementation of practices and decisions are policy-driven. • Emphasis is placed on prevention & the sustained use of effective practices. • A team-based approach to problem solving is used. • Active administrative involvement is emphasized. • Multi-systems (district, school-wide, nonclass- room, classroom, individual student, family, community are considered. • A continuum of behavior supports is emphasized.

OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.

The PBS approach recognizes that behavior serves to meet a legitimate need of the student and the form of student behavior is the problem. The team process focuses on understanding the problem behavior and identifying the context (environmental condition) in which the behavior occurs. Understanding the need of the behavior (i.e. get things, escape demands, attention) enables school personnel to intervene at the level of need and reduce the need for the problem behavior by teaching acceptable replacement behavior that serves the same function. The intervention levels of PBS are illustrated below.



NCDPI, Exceptional Children Division

At the individual level, intervention strategies are developed based on assessment and data review from a functional behavior assessment (FBA) and other data sources. The FBA identifies the problem behavior and strategies to prevent the behavior. As a result of the FBA, a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) is developed, implemented, and evaluated. The BIP involves defining the problem behavior and replacement behavior; changing the triggers and environmental conditions to reduce occurrence of the problem behavior; and reinforcing consequences for display of appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

Intervention strategies for small groups of students are tailored to reflect the individual needs of the students and may be implemented in classrooms and other school settings. School-wide intervention strategies are for all students, staff, and settings (classroom and nonclassroom). A school matrix of the rules and expectations is developed and taught to the students. Practice opportunities and positive feedback on exhibited behaviors are consistently given to students.

Matrix *(Positive Behavior Support for Bus Drivers – Laura A. Riffel)*

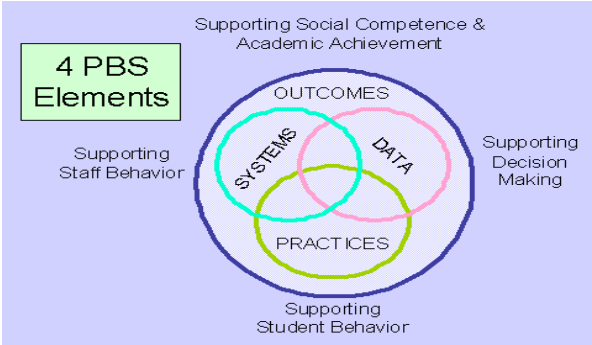
Behavioral Expectations	Classroom	Bus Loading & Unloading	Bus in Motion
Be Respectful of Self	Get plenty of sleep the night before.	Stay where the bus driver can see you. Stay on the sidewalk until it is safe to load. Stay in your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop.	Keep body parts inside the bus. Keep two cheeks on the seat. Keep feet out of aisle. Watch for your stop.
Be Respectful of Others	Raise hand to speak.	Stand at arm's length behind the person in front of you. Load the bus by holding on to the handrail so you don't trip on others.	Talk softly so others may hear directions from bus driver. Keep all belongings tucked in the seat with you.
Be Respectful of Surroundings	Pick up litter on the floor.	Keep bus stop clear of litter. Keep your belongings near you when waiting for the bus to load or unload.	Keep all belongings inside your backpack. Keep feet on floor. Keep hands in lap.

Positive Good Note *(Positive Behavior Support for Bus Drivers – Laura A. Riffel)*

Caught Being Good on Bus # _____ ____Respecting Self ____Respecting Others ____Respecting Property Name: _____	Caught Being Good on Bus # _____ ____Respecting Self ____Respecting Others ____Respecting Property Name: _____

Systems Approach to School-wide PBS

A systems approach to PBS is an interactive process that focuses on academic and behavioral student outcomes; evidence-based interventions and strategies; data collection for monitoring and decision-making; and support systems for implementation practices.



OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

School-wide PBS Systems

Beach Center on Families and Disability

- **Define expectations and be careful not to overwhelm students with too many expectations**. Usually, a good plan has about five or six expectations (e.g., be safe, be respectful, follow directions of school adults). Also outline behavior that does not fit within school-wide expectations.
- **Teach students right from the start of the year about the program and continue that instruction throughout the year.**
- **Provide instruction in self-control and social skill strategies for all students.**
- **Set up a reward system that uses creative and individualized rewards.** (One school, for instance. gives students points for good behavior. Those points allow students the privilege of being a "self manager" who can do special tasks. Another reward system gives students chance tickets for following the rules. Each month, students attend a Super Student Assembly and have the opportunity to review prize drawings.)
- **Give immediate feedback on wrong behavior and create limits that make challenging behavior unproductive for students.** The program doesn't do away with consequences; it just emphasizes them less than positive behavior. To provide feedback, one school requires that students problem solve after a school infraction. The student has to write what happened, the response, rules violated, the effect on others and self, explain the consequences, and suggest how to prevent reoccurrence.
- **Recognize that about 5% of students have chronic challenging behavior.** If not in place already, These students should have a team devise a positive behavioral support plan that includes a functional assessment and is monitored for effectiveness.
- **Restructure problem settings.** (e.g., 200 students on a playground with one adult; unsupervised bathrooms; a mass of students leaving through the lunch room door at the same time). Restructuring can be done through shift scheduling, faculty monitoring, and physical changes (e.g., lighting, fencing), and other strategies.
- **Involve all school employees.** Bus drivers, cafeteria staff, maintenance, and other staff all should receive training in effective behavioral techniques and the school-wide plan.
- **Monitor improvement.** Attendance, office discipline referrals, suspensions/expulsions, detentions, drop out, grades, standardized test scores, school vandalism acts, contacts with juvenile authorities, and student opinion.

Examples of PBS Instructional Bus Skills *(Pietrini Elementary School, Franklin Park, IL)*

	Bus Skills 1 Using soft voices/keeping aisles clear/using suitable words/ no food or drink	***Bus Skills 2*** Attaching seat belt/staying in seat/sitting face forward/ following what the bus driver says
School-Wide Expectation:	Be Respectful	Be Safe, Be Ready
Purpose of the lesson? Why it is important:	To uphold a respectful environment while riding the bus.	To teach students the behaviors that will help to keep them safe on the bus. To prepare students to listen and be ready to learn information about bus procedures.
Teaching Examples:	Ryan was upset after school about something another boy had said to him during recess that day. He got on the bus, sat down, and says that the same boy was sitting three rows ahead of him. He wanted to yell out at him and tell him the things he was thinking but he stopped and remembered that he was supposed to use a soft voice and suitable language on the bus. He decided to cool down and wait until tomorrow and then talk to him calmly. Juanita was climbing onto the bus with her backpack, her instrument and a large piece of poster-board. Once she got onto the bus and sat down she put her instrument on the floor in the aisle next to her. A boy walked by and tripped over her instrument. Juanita felt very bad, apologized, and moved her instrument onto her lap. She had forgotten that the bus aisles need to be clear. Joseph got up late this morning and didn't have any time to eat breakfast. He did have a snack in his lunch and took it out to eat on the bus so he wouldn't be hungry later. He was about to eat it when he stopped and remembered that there was no food or drink allowed on the bus. He put his snack away and decided to ask his teacher if he could have it when he got to school.	Brittany had a difficult afternoon at school. She had to sit in one class all afternoon and couldn't move around much. Now she had to sit on the bus for a long ride home. She sat down on her knees and was looking around the bus when she stopped and remembered that she had to put her seat belt on and stay in her seat while on the bus. She would have to wait until she got home to move around more freely. During the bus ride home Joshua was trying to make plans with Henry who was sitting behind him. He stayed in his seat belt but kept turning around to talk. The bus driver spotted him in the rear view mirror. When she stopped the bus to let students out she reminded Joshua to face forward. He said he was sorry and faced forward for the rest of his ride. Joshua showed respect toward the bus driver by following her directions for the ride home. On the bus ride to school Samantha and Rick were arguing. Samantha elbowed Rick in what she thought was a playful way but he reacted by shoving her. She began to quietly cry. When she got to her classroom her teacher asked her what was wrong. She told her teacher that she should have kept her hands and feet to herself on the bus. Later she found that Rick had received an office referral for his behavior.

	Bus Skills 1	***Bus Skills 2***
Kid Activities/Role Plays:	Have students demonstrate what soft voices sound like. Ask students to share situations that have taken place on the bus where loud voices or unsuitable words (without using the words) were used. Have students volunteer to role-play the situations using soft voices and suitable words.	Invite two or three bus drivers to your classroom. Have students on their buses show them around the room and tell them about what they are learning. Treats might also be nice. It is important for students to know that their bus drivers are authority figures who should be listened to and respected. Discuss ideas for things that students can do while on their bus ride (cross word puzzles, talk, travel word games, etc).
Follow-up/Reinforcement Activities:	Meet students at the bus and ask the bus driver if they were being respectful during the bus ride to school. Celebrate the Pride that students receive on the bus. Review appropriate bus behavior before students leave for home in the afternoon.	Meet students at the bus and ask the bus driver if they were following the safety rules. Celebrate the Pride Oak Leaves that students receive from the bus driver. Review bus safety behavior before students leave for home in the afternoon.

5.5 School Discipline

In general, there are three categories of disciplinary actions for students with disabilities who violate a code of student conduct. School personnel have the authority to:

1. Remove a student from his/her current placement to an appropriate interim educational setting/ another setting or suspend the student for 10 consecutive school days over the course of a school year, or less, to the same extent that it would apply such a discipline measure to a student without a disability;

2. Make additional removals of a student from his/her current placement to an appropriate interim educational setting/another setting or suspend the student for 10 consecutive school days over the course of a school year, or less, to the same extent that it would apply such a discipline measure to a student without a disability, for separate incidents of misconduct as long as the removals do not constitute a change of placement under the requirement of a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Therefore, as required by FAPE, on the cumulative 11th day of removal or suspension during the school year and any subsequent days of removal or suspension, school personnel must continue to provide educational services to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward the IEP goals; and

   Change of Placement

   Change of placement occurs if:

   - the removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days or
   - the student has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because the:
     - series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;
     - student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and
     - additional factors of length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

   School personnel determine on a case-by-case basis whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement. On the date the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change in placement, the local education agency must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice. The determination is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

   As part of change-of-placement decision making, school personnel may consider any unique circumstances including a student's disciplinary history, ability to understand consequences, expression or remorse, and supports prior to the violation of a code of student conduct.

   Manifestation Determination

   A manifestation determination must be conducted within 10 school days of a decision to change a student's placement because of a violation of a code of student conduct to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability.

   For disciplinary changes in placement that would exceed 10 consecutive school days, if the student conduct that violated the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability, school personnel may apply relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities except that educational service provisions apply. If the determination is that the student conduct is caused by the disability, the local education agency must meet requirements regarding

a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan and the student returns to the placement he/she was removed, unless the local education agency and parents agree to a change of placement.

3. Remove a student under special circumstances to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability if the student:
   - Carries a weapon to or possess a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state education agency/local education agency;
   - Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state education agency/ local education agency; or
   - Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state education agency/local education agency.

   Other provisions of discipline procedures are applicable such as conducting a manifestation determination, notifying parents, and determining the extent of services that must be provided to the student.

   (Refer to NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, Discipline Procedures, for definition of weapon, illegal drug, controlled substance, and serious bodily injury.)

   (Senate Report No. 108-185, at 43 (2003) & 34 CFR 500.530-536: Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act Of 2003.)

IEP Team

The IEP Team is responsible for addressing student behaviors that interfere with his/her learning or the learning of other students. Bus behavior that impedes student learning should be proactively addressed by the IEP Team. A comparison should be made between the student's bus behavior and classroom behavior, and the considerations of applicable behavioral supports, interventions, and strategies. (Appendix 5E– I.D.E.A. Conceptual Underpinnings: Shifting Our Understanding of Behavior and Appendix 5F – Designing Behavior Interventions to Address the Needs of Students with Disabilities or Characteristics) If the IEP Team determines the behavior is a manifestation of a student's disability, a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) will be conducted to understand the function of the behavior, conditions associated with the occurrence of the behavior, and development of an effective behavioral intervention plan (BIP).

The BIP focuses on behavior support, predictors, and teaching. The key concept is to understand a student's behavior rather than manage a student's behavior with consequences. It addresses the instruction needed for a replacement behavior or acceptable behavior that serves the same purpose as the undesired behavior and environmental changes needed to remove the need for the undesired behavior. Additionally, the BIP includes reinforcement specifications to maintain the new behavior, reactionary strategies for school staff of reoccurring problem behavior, and communication with all staff involved for appropriate implementation.

Overview Of Functional Behavioral Assessment And Behavioral Support Planning

Step	Tools/Procedures	Outcome
1. Collect information regarding conditions under which problem behavior is & is not observed & more appropriate behavior is required	Archival review, analysis of routines, interviews, direct observation	Descriptions of possible setting events, triggering antecedents, problem behavior response classes, maintaining consequences
2. Develop testable (manipulable) hypotheses	Team analysis of information from Step 1	Testable hypotheses
3. Collect direct observation information	Direct observations	Verified summary statements
4. Design behavior support plans	Team development	Specification of (a) desired and acceptable alternative behavior, (b) antecedent strategies and manipulations, (c) consequence strategies and manipulations, (d) strategies for teaching desired and acceptable alternative behavior, & (e) setting event/ establishing operation strategies and manipulations
1. Develop implementation scripts	Team development	Scripts that specify how, when, where, etc. behavior support plan to be implemented & by whom
2. Collect information on effectiveness & efficiency of behavior support plan & redesign based on evaluation information	Team development	Data on student progress & plan implementation, & redesign/ updated plan

OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, U.S. Department of Education

Related Service Transportation

It is appropriate for transportation personnel to attend an IEP meeting when:

- Addressing behavioral issues that impact transportation,
- Determining transportation as a related service, and
- Considering transportation accommodations, modifications, and/or supports.
  Examples: student requires on-going behavioral assistance (i.e. behavior plan), trained monitor/nurse (i.e. one-on-one), specialized equipment/vehicle (i.e. safety devices/ adapted bus), and special considerations (i.e. medically fragile/curb-to-curb transport)

The determination of transportation as a related service (required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education) includes the following considerations:

- Relationship of the student's disability and need for transportation,
- Age of the student, and
- Distance of travel for the student.

In determining whether to include transportation in a student's IEP, and whether the child's need to receive transportation as a related service, it would be appropriate to have at the IEP meeting a person with expertise in that area. In making this determination, the IEP Team must consider how the child's disability affects the child's need for transportation, including determining whether the child's disability prevents the child from using the same transportation provided to nondisabled children or from getting to school in the same manner as nondisabled children.
(Refer to 34 CFR Part 300, Appendix A, Question 33, 1999 regulations)

Bus Suspension

The regular bus discipline referral processes for the school are followed for exceptional children unless the school or district has something else in place. If it is necessary to suspend a student with disabilities from the school bus and transportation is considered a related service in the IEP, this suspension counts as a school day suspension (10-day rule) for that student if the school does not provide alternative transportation for the student or the parents or other guardians do not bring the student. If the IEP does not include transportation, the bus suspension is not treated as a school day suspension and the parents are obligated to provide transportation. Educational services must be provided to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward the IEP goals if the student incurs more than ten school day suspensions in the school year. It should be determined whether a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan are appropriate to address the bus behavior. (Appendix 5G — Sample Bus Suspension Form**.)**

Appendix 5A — Sample Notification of Behavior Plan

NOTIFICATION OF BEHAVIOR PLAN

Student Name _____
Teacher(s) or Implementers _____
Class/Subject/Service Location or Area _____
Date the attached Behavior Plan was developed _____
This student's Behavior Plan is a component of:

- ☐ **An IEP** ☐ **A 504 Plan**
- ☐ A school's team pre-referral intervention plan
- ☐ Other _____

Date of the above plan: _____

This Behavior Plan is a:

☐ Behavior Support Plan for Behavior Interfering with Learning of the Student or his/her peers

☐ Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan for Serious Behavior (history of assault, self-injury, serious property damage, of other pervasive maladaptive behavior)

If for any reason this Behavior Plan cannot be fully implemented, or proves unsuccessful, please immediately contact the case manager _____ available (time/dates) _____phone/location _____ for assistance on next steps.

DO NOT DISCONTINUE PROVIDING THE FULL SPECIFIED PLAN COMPONENTS OR INTERVENTIONS WITHOUT SPECIFIC TEAM AUTHORIZATION. (An IEP or 504 plan is a legally binding document. The attached PBSP component to address necessary behavioral strategies and supports is a component of this plan.) Staff distributing this Behavior Support Plan: _____

This document is necessary to complete the behavior support planning process. Please sign and return to: _____ Deadline:_____

✂

tear off

I understand that _____ has a behavior plan. I have received a copy, and explanation of content. I understand that I am required to refer to and follow this plan. _____ has reviewed **my specific role** in following the student's behavior plan and I understand that further support and assistance on how to implement and follow this student's behavior plan is available to me to assure I am implementing the full plan in my setting as specified. I understand that a new behavior plan team meeting with my participation can/will occur at any point necessary to help assure the student's behavioral success if for any reason the currently specified behavior plan proves unsuccessful. I will contact _____, available:_____. **My signature below indicates I have carefully read this page and am fully aware of all of the above provisions.**

Signature: _____
Title: _____
Date: _____

Appendix 5B — IDEA & Bus Driver Training

IDEA & Bus Driver Training

Transportation is a related service under the IDEA. With the new (reauthorized) IDEA, we will likely need to start writing behavior intervention plans for students when there are problems on the bus. We need to train our bus drivers to deal with situations.

Strategies and Tips

1. Strategies

- ***Do not yell or scream at students***. "If I have to tell you one more time to stop fooling around, I'm stopping the bus and throwing all of you out!" Getting angry and making threats like that show the students that you've lost control. Plus, they know you won't throw them off the bus, so why should they listen at all.
- ***Don't plead or beg.*** "For the third time, won't you all sit down?" Who's the boss here? You have the right and responsibility to expect the students to behave and that must be reflected in your words and attitude.
- ***Don't use the word try.*** "Can't you just try to keep your hands to yourself?" You don't want your passengers to try anything, you want them to do it. So say so: "Sarah, pick up your books and walk quietly off the bus."
- ***Start your sentences with a directive.*** Tell students what to do, not what they shouldn't do. "Joe, stop jumping up and down."
- ***Use verbal praise to encourage and reinforce continued good behavior.*** Use your communication skills for encouraging positive behavior as well as disciplining. "Thanks, Lisa. I really appreciate that you... (fill in the blank)." "Josh, I'm really proud of the way you... helped the kindergartners get on the bus. "Good for you, Kevin, you... rode all the way home without my having to tell you to sit down.

2. Tips for Dealing With Aggressive Parents:

Do:

- Listen.
- Write down what the parents say.
- When they slow down, ask them what else is bothering them.
- Ask them to clarify any complaints that are too general.
- Show them the list and ask if it's complete.
- Ask them for suggestions for solving any of the problems they've listed.
- Write down the suggestions.
- As they speak louder, you speak softer.

Don't:

- Argue.
- Defend or become defensive.
- Promise things you can't produce.
- Own problems that belong to others.
- Raise your voice.
- Belittle or minimize the problem.

Strategies and Tips *(con't)*

3. Phrases to Buy Time with Angry Parents:

You have a busload of students and an irate parent comes at you. What to do? The following phrases allow you a minute or so to collect your thoughts and plan for the best approach in dealing with the angry parent.

- "Wait just a second while I get some paper and pen to write down all of your concerns."
- "I need to finish my route now. Is there a time when I can call you so we can talk more about this?"
- "I need to hear your concerns, but I can't discuss this in front of the kids. Is there a time we can talk more about this?"

Positive Reinforcement Ideas

- Allow students to choose whom they want to sit with as a reward.
- Let them know when they do a good job.
- Praise them.
- Use eye and voice contact upon entering bus.
- Stress safety when dealing with playful behavior.
- Be consistent.
- Institute games.
- Use stickers.
- Compliment students on something every day.
- Give older students responsibility.
- Play verbal games.
- Show respect.
- Greet each student as they get on the bus in morning and say goodbye as they get off.
- Report good behavior to principal/assistant principal.
- Offer a surprise at the end of a set period of time for best behavior.
- Reward good behavior with being first on the bus when loading at school.
- Inform parents of good behavior by note, phone or in person.
- Smile.
- Use students' names.
- Pass out unusual books and toys to well behaving students while they are riding on the bus.
- Ask if they have had a good day.
- Introduce yourself and have them repeat your name.
- Get to know students' personalities and match them with others with similar personalities for seating.
- Use hand stamps or stars recognizing good behavior for parents to see.
- Allow students to be helpers (e.g., count students as they unload at school).
- Give a pat on the back for doing a good job.
- Hand out Popsicles at the end of the year.

Source: These ideas were generated by bus drivers at a training on managing behavior.

Diana Browning Wright, from information contained in an article in Special Educator, LRP, 1998 about a bus training program in Leander, Texas. Training was developed by N. Tarvin & B. LaCaze, "Transportation Training: ABC's of Behavior Management", Leander Independent School District.

Appendix 5C — Good Bus Behavior Award

Good Bus Behavior Award

is presented to

John Doe

Thank you for respecting the rules on the bus.

Signed By:_____ Date:_____

Appendix 5D — Sample Behavior Contract

EXAMPLE OF A CONTRACT THAT MAY BE USED BY THE TEACHER.

Student: _____

Teacher: _____

Bus Driver
/Assistant: _____

Bus Number: _____

Beginning Date: _____

Ending Date: _____

Contracted Behavior

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Penalties

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Student: _____ Date: _____

Bus Driver/Assistant: _____

Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 5E — IDEA Conceptual Underpinnings: Shifting Our Understanding of Behavior

I.D.E.A. Conceptual Underpinnings: Shifting Our Understanding of Behavior

Diana Browning Wright

CURRENT THINKING	PAST PRACTICE	THE DIFFERENCE
Students may require ***"Behavior Support"***	Students may require ***"Behavior Management"***	***"Behavior Support"*** implies addressing Environment, Teaching Strategies, Teaching New Behaviors, and Using Positive Reinforcement Strategies;
		"Behavior Management" implies focus on consequences, whether positive or negative.
Behavior Support Plans should focus on understanding "why" the behavior occurred (i.e., the "function" or "communicative intent") then focus on teaching/ eliciting an alternative behavior that meets the student's needs in alternative, more acceptable ways.	***Behavior Management Plans*** focused on specifying the consequences of misbehavior, and to some extent, the consequences of acceptable behavior.	***Past practice*** rarely attempted to understand the reasons a maladaptive behavior occurred;
		Current practice, by understanding the behavior and teaching alternatives or changing environmental conditions, plans to seek to permanently change the way a student seeks to get a need met.
Antecedents (the immediate and immediate past "triggers" or "predictors" for the behavior) are critical in changing behavior ***Focus:*** What we can actively do (e.g., teach, structure the environment) to change the behavior?	***Consequences*** were attempted to be made so compelling that the student would stop a behavior (i.e., either so strongly aversive that the student didn't want to choose the maladaptive behavior or so strongly positive that the student avoided the problem behavior to get the reinforcer) ***Focus:*** What the student must do to avoid or to get something we provide.	***Consequence-based Plans:*** For many students, neither a strong enough punishment, nor a strong enough reinforcer can be found to change the behavior;
		Antecedent-based Plans: Can result in changing environmental conditions (e.g., time, space, materials, interactions), and student skills so that lasting change is possible.
Philosophy: Positive behavior needs to be taught, i.e.,: modeled, shaped, cued in a conductive environment.	***Philosophy:*** Problem behavior needs to be controlled or eliminated. Positive behaviors are to be expected regardless of environment.	***Controlling Behavior:*** Becoming increasing more difficult in today's classrooms;
		Teaching Behavior: Has potential for lasting change.

Diana Browning Wright, ***Behavior/Discipline Trainings***, 2002 idconcu02

Appendix 5F — Designing Behavior Interventions to Address the Needs of Students with Disabilities or Characteristics

Designing Behavior Interventions to Address the Needs of Students with Disabilities or Characteristics

Diana Browning Wright

Consider these Factors[1]*:*

- How the current environment supports the problem behavior, does not yet support alternative behavior(s)
- Purpose and function of problem behavior for the student
- Reason problem behavior continues
- Is there an alternative behavior to replace the problem behavior, meeting the same function; can the student do this yet?
- Are there skill deficits? Methods of teaching what is missing?
- Strategies and curricular components for teaching any new behaviors?
- Strategies for maintaining new behavior?
- Environmental changes necessary to remove students' need to use this behavior?

AD/HD

Behavior Support for Individuals with AD/HD

- often need strategies to maintain attention to task, inhibit impulsive responding, organize time, space, and materials
- often need environmental structuring to aid poor goal setting and flexible problem solving
- often missing necessary social skills, need instruction
- often punished by peers, need adult structuring to elicit on-going, appropriate peer reinforcement
- often need frequent reinforcement for rule following
- often need active, hands-on learning opportunities with tasks structured into small units to aid sense of accomplishment

AD/HD Potential Behaviors Impeding Learning to Consider in Support Planning

- Impulsivity
  - not raising hand
  - rushing through work
  - responding inappropriately to adult correction ·
- Distractibility/low "focused attending" skills
  - difficulty staying on task
  - low work completion rates
  - planning deficits
  - disturbing others

[1] Although all behavior support must be individualized, experience has shown that certain features are especially important to consider when specific characteristics or disabilities are present

Diana Browning Wright, ***Behavior/Discipline Behaviors***, 2002 *designbehinterv*

- Poor modulation of arousal system
  - falls asleep
  - struggles to maintain focus
- Poor strategy formation to complete complex tasks
  - poor ability to break up tasks in chunks
  - poor sequencing of actions to meet goal
  - poor selection of behavior alternatives/low flexibility
- Hyperactivity
  - difficulty staying in seat
  - bounces from task to task
  - body movements disturb others
- Feedback deficits
  - failure to take corrective actions/based on input from peers and adults
  - active resistance to rules/changing rules to fit personal desires rather than to enhance group cohesion
- Low frustration tolerance
- Difficulty with delaying gratification
- Low understanding of elapsed time

TOURETTE SYNDROME

Behavior Support for Individuals with Tourette Syndrome, Obsessive/Compulsive Disorders

- often need accommodations similar to AD/HD above
- often need opportunity for "time away" (student initiated) when in a disruptive, repetitive cycle
- often need output accommodations for frequently occurring written language difficulties (oral/projects, etc.)
- often need desensitization techniques to overcome fears, interventions for anxiety control and obsessive compulsive thinking and behavior
- often responds to "shared controls" and negotiations to obtain preferred activities in exchange for completing non-preferred activities.

Tourette Syndrome Potential Behaviors Impeding Learning

- All of AD/HD behaviors potentially present
- Exhibits cycles of repetitive, disruptive behaviors
  - sounds, words, body actions
- Written language task refusals/"Developmental Output Failure"
- Difficulty with "divided attention"/shifting attention
  - can't stop task to get initial or further teacher direction
  - can't attend to two things simultaneously
- Cycles of irrational fears
- Cycles of obsessive or compulsive behaviors
  - perseverates on topic/theme
  - Resistance to non-preferred tasks

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INDIVIDUALS SOCIALIZED TO GROUPS WHO VALUE AGGRESSION

Can include students with or without eligibility as emotionally disturbed

Behavior Support for Individuals Socialized to Groups Who Value Aggression

- often respond well to mentoring, unconditional positive regard
- need to achieve acclaim through alternative methods; alliances with teacher & successful, positive model peers (if available and highly regarded) to protect from humiliation and to offer an alternative world view and hope for the future
- need to be educated by authoritative teachers (not authoritarian, laissez faire or democratic)
- need "time away" options when frustration tolerance is low
- often need highly structured environments with contingent access to reinforcement for exhibiting social skills which are specifically taught

Potential Behaviors Impeding Learning for Individuals Socialized to Groups Who Value Aggression

- Dresses and acts like idealized group leader(s)
- Uses belligerent language or swearing in low-stress situations to communicate lack of commitment to school tasks/school personnel
- Fails to believe a teacher "likes me ok," assumes teacher lack of commitment
- Failure to complete assignments or strive for success
- Overreacts to peers
- Strives to achieve social dominance or higher rungs in social ladder via "acting tough" to all
- Breaks rules to achieve peer group status
  truancy, property destruction, aggression
- Breaks social mores to achieve status: unprovoked "meanness" toward younger, smaller, less dominant peers
- Fear of humiliation
- Low frustration tolerance/low coping skills

AUTISM

Behavior Support for Individuals with Autism

- need a functional communication system appropriate to developmental level (consider use of a picture exchange for desired objects and activities if non-verbal and developmentally 2 years or older)
- often need task (pacing), time (schedule instruction) space, interaction structuring
- often need adults to structure environments to modulate sensory arousal systems and alter conditions depending on the arousal level of the child at a specific time
- often need physical activity interspersed with other activity
- often requires "functional" curriculum, functional application of learned academic material
- often need help understanding social world
  - social story instruction
  - social script instruction
- often need "time away", access to preferred activity interspersed throughout the day
- often need direct one-on-one instruction for a new skill, then carefully structured follow-through throughout activities of the day to assist with generalization
- often learns rules through visual prompts (icons, words) better than through verbal instruction · often copies inappropriate behavior readily; needs access to good models

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Potential Behaviors Impeding Learning in Individuals with Autism

- Difficulty shifting attention/shifting tasks
- Low understanding of elapsed time
- Resistance to non-preferred tasks
- Poor modulation of sensory input
  - under or over-responds to sight/smell/movement/sounds
- Communicates via behavior--uses no or few words functionally to express needs and words to negotiate
- Restricted range of interests/restricted behavior repertoire
- Upset over changes in environment
  - scheduling changes
  - the way other people act/speak
  - materials
  - changes of routines for performing familiar tasks
- Overlaps with Tourette's Syndrome:
  - fears, cycles, resistance

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Behavior Support for Individuals with Learning Disabilities

- often need protection from humiliation
- often need self-advocacy training
- often need supportive, rich, frequent reinforcement for real accomplishments
- often need instruction on what is/is NOT impeding academic progress (e.g., You are not "stupid.")
- often need extensive curriculum accommodations to facilitate "success"
- often respond well to mentoring, unconditional positive regard
- sometimes need social skill instruction

Potential Behaviors Impeding Learning in Individuals with Learning Disabilities

- "Global Deficits" belief system
- Low understanding of specific disability
- Low skills in explaining disability to others
- Low self-advocacy skills
  - resists asking for needed accommodations
- Gives up easily, fails to anticipate success
- Fails to organize materials and time
- Fear of humiliation
- Low time management skills

Diana Browning Wright, ***Behavior/Discipline Behaviors***, 2002 *designbehinterv*

LOW SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Behavior Support for Individuals with "Low Social Competence" (LD/ADHD/ED, etc)

- often benefit from specific social skills instruction to address the exact missing skill
- often benefit from peer "coaches" of high status who mentor the student through difficulties in work groups in class, in structured sports at recess
- often benefit from classroom meeting model in which difficulties are addresses in a manner that allows peer support to be evident
- often benefit from teacher helping peers understand the student and provide support through 'circle of friends', 'pit crews' who mentor the student
- often benefit from structured classrooms with specific posted rules on how to share materials
- often benefit from therapeutic debriefing using strategies such as "My Inappropriate Behavior"
- often benefit from techniques such as "Social Stories" (explaining others' perspectives) and "Social Scripting" (what to say or do in specific situations)

Potential Behaviors Impeding Learning in Individuals with "Low Social Competence" (LD/ADHD/ED, etc)

- Uses inappropriate social interaction initiations
- Isolates self · Fear of failure and/or peer feedback
- Withdraws from interactions
- Difficulty sharing materials
- Approaches socially distant groups for interaction resulting in rejection
- Fails to make validating comments to others or to take actions that support viewpoints of others
- Fails to negotiate for group consensus
- Failure to understand another's perspective

Diana Browning Wright, ***Behavior/Discipline Behaviors***, 2002 *designbehinterv*

Appendix 5G — Sample Bus Suspension Form

Attachment III

BUS SUSPENSION

For a student with an IEP

Student: _____ Date: _____
Behavior resulting in suspension: _____
Previous history of bus suspensions: _____
Length of bus suspension: Number of days _____
Beginning date _____ Ending date _____
Personnel completing this form: _____
Other personnel to be informed of this bus suspension (e.g., IEP team, student's case manager, district special education director, school counselor, other): _____
_____

(Select appropriate box)

❒ Bus service is a "related service" as designated on the student's IEP.

(Select appropriate circle)

- O Parent/other to deliver student to and from school for length of bus suspension at district expense
- O District to provide alternative transportation (taxi or other) at district expense for the length of bus suspension. Method: _____
- O No district transportation will be provided. (This suspension is therefore a removal of a designated IEP service and will be counted as a suspension. *Reminder: Suspensions are subject to a cumulative 10 days in a school year for any student with an IEP without the provision of F.A.P.E. components.*)

❒ Bus service is not designated as a related service on the student's IEP. Student's use of regular district transportation is not special education related.

(Select appropriate circle)

- O Parent will transport at parent expense. This suspension does not result in a failure to attend school and does not count as a suspension subject to a cumulative 10-day suspension limit in a school year. *(Note: Suspensions past 10 days require provision of services during the suspension and can not constitute a de facto change in placement.)*
- O This bus suspension will result in an inability of the student to attend school. Therefore, this bus suspension will count as a "suspension" subject to a 10-day cumulative limit in a school year without provision of alternative transportation so student may receive F.A.P.E. at school. *(Alternatively, if student is not transported and is unable to attend school, provision of services during the suspension to make progress in general curriculum and toward meeting IEP goals and objectives must be given after 10 cumulative days. Suspensions after 10 days cannot constitute a de facto change in placement.)*

(Select appropriate box)

❒ The behavior resulting in this suspension is a recurring behavior and will require IEP team development of a behavior support plan for bus riding. IEP team will convene to develop this plan.

❒ The behavior resulting in this suspension has not yet become a recurring behavior and does not yet require IEP team development of a behavior support plan for bus riding.

Diana Browning Wright, ***Behavior/Discipline Trainings***, 2002. Permission granted to reprint in this manual.

SAMPLE

CHAPTER 6

Routing and Scheduling

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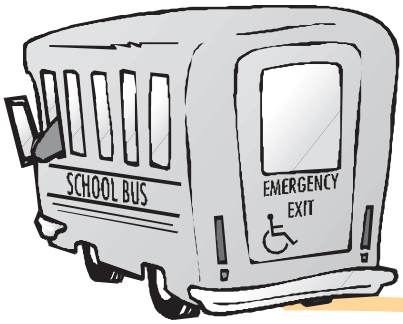
"Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

-Theodore Roosevelt

6.1 Routing and Scheduling



Scheduling transportation for a student with special needs can be very complex. Flexibility within the system is a must. Changes occur daily in special needs transportation. Unlike regular scheduling, students with special needs may not attend the school closest to their home, so his/her bus ride could be longer than other students in their area. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) does not specify a time limitation for a student's bus ride. However, travel time should be comparable with that of non-disabled students and must meet the transportation needs written in the student's IEP. A shortened school day to accommodate transportation schedules is not permissible.

As mandated by the State of North Carolina, all school district transportation departments are required to use computer-assisted routing and scheduling software to route school buses. In 1992, the Transportation Information Management System (TIMS) was introduced as a tool to help districts safely and efficiently route school buses. Many of the LEA's transportation departments in North Carolina have used TIMS to support Exceptional Children's Department's function to develop a plan which best suits transporting the special needs child.

Every aspect of the transportation operation can be quickly and easily managed with TIMS. Special needs students can be included with rest of the student population or pulled into a separate database that allows for easier tracking and support. Some off the benefits include:

- Graphical and tabular views of a child's geographic location on a map.
- Schools and programs associated with the each child.
- Graphical representation of stops along a bus route.
- Ability to create bus run directions with student information including special needs attributes: such as whether a child needs a wheelchair lift, monitor, vest, etc..
- Customizable reporting on all aspects of the student's stop, route, school and needs.

Many of the software tools in TIMS are designed to improve efficiency of the bus routes. Even though it is difficult to achieve high level of route efficiency transporting students with special needs, these tools are useful for streamlining the working relationship between the Exceptional Children and the Transportation departments.

The transportation department may need to make special accommodations or modifications to a bus in order to adequately meet the requirements of special needs students during their trip to and from school. Therefore, it is to the student's advantage that the transportation department be notified as to the needs required so drivers can receive training, etc. if necessary.

Some issues to be resolved in the IEP process which relate to routing and scheduling are as follows:

- Does the student need any special accommodations or modifications?
- Can the accommodations or modifications be met by the transportation service provided to nondisabled peers?
- What level of supervision is required (i.e. Transportation Safety Assistant, Nurse)?

It is recommended that Transportation Departments develop guidelines in conjunction with their LEA's Exceptional Children Department. An open communication between Transportation, the Exceptional Children Department, the IEP team, and parents will enable each district to provide safe, appropriate, cost effective transportation for the special needs student.

6.2 Steps in Scheduling

Scheduling a student must be done on an individual basis. What works for one child may not work for another. The scheduler must access all available information about the student and find the best transportation plan for that child. The most efficient and economical route that effectively meets the needs of the student should be selected.

1. **Receive the Student Profile to identify needs of student.**
   Requesting transportation begins with a properly completed student profile. The student profile which includes a summary of the student's abilities and needs should be completed by the IEP/504 Team. (Refer to Appendix 6A) It is very important that complete and accurate information is provided. All information must be handled confidentially in accordance with the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA). Once a request has been received, the Transportation Department will arrange to transport the student in accordance with the request in a timely manner. When routing or schedule changes are requested, the student profile must be updated prior to changing transportation arrangements. Issues affecting route/schedule changes may include the following:

   - Is the change of address temporary or permanent?
   - How much advance notice is needed to implement change?
   - Does the new address meet all busing criteria?
   - Will there be a change in program or school placement?
   - Does it involve a new or different route, or time changes?
   - Will the student be absent for the a.m. run, p.m. run or for the whole day? (Make sure parents know who to call, and by what time.)

When updating the student profile, only the student name along with other information that has changed needs to be completed. Depending on the nature of the changes requested, the time needed by the Transportation Department to accommodate the changes will vary.

2. **Choose the appropriate mode of transportation and accommodation to meet the needs of the student**.
   Students with disabilities should receive school bus transportation with their nondisabled peers. However, there are situations in which school bus transportation is impractical because of distance, road conditions, placement of student, or medical condition of the student. In these cases, alternative means of transporting the student may be considered. Options must be discussed with parents and ideally agreed upon by all parties concerned. Some alternative transportation options are (others may be considered) as follows:

   - **Local transit authority** (The use of non-conforming vans is discouraged.) NOTE: The school district is responsible for any related costs and potentially liable for decisions made about such services.

   - **Contracted services (such as a taxi or parent)**
     The school district is responsible for any related costs and potentially liable for decisions made about such services. They should obtain proof that whoever transports the child is properly licensed and carries adequate insurance based on requirements of the NCDMV and the School district.

3. **Ensure that equipment specified in the IEP is available.**
   Identifying specialized equipment used by a student will help determine the vehicle assignment. (Refer to Chapter 7 - Specialized Equipment: Descriptions and Procedures)
4. **Review and train the staff on the bus to meet the needs of the student**.
   (Refer to Chapter 3 - Training for Transporters)

5. Assign the student to a route.

Three possible options for routing include placing the student on an existing route, altering an existing route, or developing a new route. Routes should be evaluated including the accommodation of special equipment, ridership of students, and length of ride.
Considerations should also be given to student's needing curb-to-curb pick-up/drop-off off location.

Due to scheduling or time constraints, LEAs need to establish transfer points for some special needs routes. With careful planning this process can be accomplished smoothly and safely. Things to consider include the following:

- Choosing a safe location
- Allowing sufficient time to complete the transfer
- Ensuring radio contact between vehicles

6. Establish the pick-up and drop-off times.

Based on local policy, the Transportation Department should communicate the scheduled pick up and drop off times for students assigned to transportation. Each student should be ready to board the bus prior to the designated stop time. Parents are responsible for providing transportation to school on the days when the student misses the bus.

Parents are responsible for appropriate supervision of the student at the designated pick-up/drop-off location. LEAs should develop local procedures that may include the following for students who need appropriate supervision in the event no one is available to receive a student at the designated drop off location.

- Designate a length of wait time at the stop.
- Utilize communication devices (radios, cell phones, etc.)
- Consider an alternate drop-off location.
- Finish route and return to designated drop off location.
- Return to assigned school.
- Notify law enforcement agency or social services.
- Document occurrences.

The length of the instructional day cannot be compromised unless otherwise specified in the IEP. Additionally, the IEP may require a specified length of ride for health considerations.

BEST PRACTICE

Parents are responsible for appropriate supervision of the student at the designated pick-up/drop-off location.

7. Contact parents.

Local procedures should be developed to inform parents of appropriate pick up and drop off times and general transportation guidelines/information.

6.3 Field Trips and Activity Trips

Due to transportation needs, students with disabilities cannot be excluded from participating in field trips/activity trips. Careful planning and coordinating will promote a safe trip. Some points to consider are the following:

- Providing the necessary IEP information for each student
- Requesting appropriate field trip bus
- Assigning a properly trained driver
- Assigning a properly equipped bus
- Conducting a pre-trip inspection
- Having the same emergency information available that is on the daily route bus
- Including non-disabled students on the bus with disabled students

Appendix 6A — Student Profile - Transportation Considerations

STUDENT PROFILE - TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Transportation and Exceptional Children staff will use the following information to develop a transportation plan.

Student Name _____ **ID #** _____
Parent/Guardian Name _____ **Phone** _____
Address _____ **Assigned School** _____
_____ **Bus Number AM** _____ **PM** _____
Pick Up Address _____ _____
For Preschool Students:
Drop Off Address _____ **Anticipated Date of Enrollment** _____
_____ **Days of Week** (circle) **M T W Th F**

School Contact/Case Manager and Email Address _____

Student Information

Age _____ **Weight** _____ **Height**_____ **Exceptional Children Code** _____ **504 Plan**: **Y N**
Medical Diagnosis _____ **Additional Medical Conditions** (check all that apply)

☐ Allergies _____ ☐ Heat Intolerance ☐ Seizures
☐ Shunt ☐ Spinal Rod ☐ Respiratory Difficulties
☐ Other _____

Equipment that Must be Transported and Secured (check all that apply)

☐ Wheelchair ☐ Crutches ☐ Oxygen Tank
☐ Wheelchair Tray ☐ Walker ☐ Communication Device
☐ Other _____

Communication Abilities (check one)

☐ Age Appropriate ☐ Non Verbal ☐ Other _____

List any Special Behavior Strategies to be Implemented During Transport

_____

Transportation Summary (complete with information obtained from page 2)

Mode of Transportation: *(check one):*

☐ Bus ☐ Lift Bus/Vehicle ☐ Parent Contract
☐ Other _____

Pick Up / Drop Off Location: *(check one):*

☐ Bus Stop ☐ Address Stop

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS)*: (check one):*

☐ None ☐ Integrated Bus Seat or STAR Restraint
☐ Car Seat ☐ Safety Vest (circle size: XS S M Lg)

Note: *If Vehicle Contract (van or auto) is necessary due to routing, then students under 8 years or under 80 lbs will be transported in a weight-appropriate car seat or booster seat that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.*

Loading on/off Bus Steps: (*check one):*

☐ Independent ☐ Supervision ☐ Assistance Needed

Principal/Assistant Principal (Signature) _____ **Date:** _____

Student's Name _____ **Date Form Completed** _____

Method of Transportation *Complete the following section. Check only **one**.*

☐ Student is able to sit on the bus seat without modifications.

☐ Student remains seated in his/her wheelchair with appropriate securement/restraint systems.

☐ Student is unable to remain seated on the bus seat during transport due to a disability and will need a **C**hild **S**afety **R**estraint **S**ystem. **If checked, indicate the appropriate CSRS and size (see table below) on page 1 under Transportation Summary**

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) for School Buses typically used in North Carolina (Products from other manufacturers may be used.)	Student's Weight in lbs
Integrated Child Restraint Bus Seat ➢ Child restraint is part of the bus seat and has a 5 point harness system ➢ Available on some buses manufactured after 2000	CE White 20–60 SafeGuard 22-85
STAR RESTRAINT – (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-65 lbs
STAR RESTRAINT – **Plus** (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-90 lbs
E-Z On Safety Vest (Adjustable safety vest that zips up the back) ➢ Vest must be put on student prior to student getting on the bus (i.e., vest *put on student at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon)* ➢ Vest attaches to a seat mount that is secured to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS ➢ ***Indicated for students who are over 90 lbs or who INAPPROPRIATELY unbuckle front buckles in car seats or the harnesses on other CSRS***	20 -160 lbs Size based on child's waist **Size: Waist:** XS 19-23" S 25-30" M 32-37" LG 37-42"
Car Seats (RARELY used on buses) ➢ Only select this option if child requires a rear-facing position or if student requires more support to remain seated than is provided by CSRS listed above. ➢ Car seat internal harness must be adjusted to the student ➢ Car seat must be installed on reinforced bus seats	Up to 65 lbs per manufacturer's instructions

Method of Assisting Student on/off the School Bus *Check only **one**.*

☐ Student is able to ascend/descend bus step(s) independently.

☐ Adult assistance is needed for student to ascend/descend bus steps.
Describe method of assist: _____
(*Note: parent/guardian can assist student up/ down the bus step(s) at the home; school personnel can assist student at the school. Transportation staff typically assists student inside the vehicle*).

☐ Student needs to be carried on bus steps (option **only** for **preschool students** who weigh less than 40 lbs).

☐ Student is unable to safely ascend/descend the bus step(s) with assistance; therefore, student must use the lift while seated in a wheelchair. Once on the bus, student may be moved to a seat (student may need a child restraint while sitting on bus seat).

☐ Student uses a manual/power wheelchair and requires a transport vehicle with a lift

****

IEP TEAM or 504 Case Manager Must provide page 1 of this form to the Transportation Department.

The need for a Child Safety Restraint System on the bus must be documented in the 504 Plan or IEP

This form should be reviewed annually or as needed to reassess the transportation needs for this student.

Appendix 6B — Transportation Department Checklist

Transportation Department Checklist

Checklist for Students with Special Needs Transportation

Student Name: _____

_____ IEP Meeting Conducted on: _____ Transportation Attended: Yes / No

_____ Student Profile – Special Needs Transportation completed:

- Date Request Completed: _____ Completed by: _____ Phone: _____
- Date Received by Transportation: _____ Received by: _____

_____ Transportation request reviewed to determine appropriate transportation

_____ Student assigned mode of transportation

School Bus_____ Specially Equipped Bus_____ Parent Contract_____ Employee Contract _____

Private Contract (Third Party) – Describe: _____

For Contracted services: _____ Validate drivers license
_____ Collect appropriate insurance documents
_____ Check DMV driver records

_____ Pick up and drop off locations established

_____ Driver contacted and provided with the following:

_____ Student Profile
_____ Special Equipment: _____
_____ Training (if necessary)

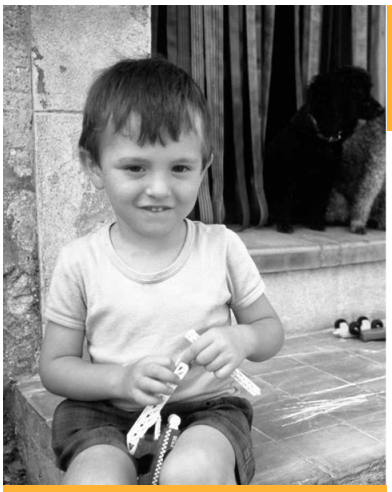
_____ Transportation notifies appropriate party(s)

Specify: _____

Date: _____

_____ Completed checklist filed with Student Profile in Transportation file (Recommend Notebook)

CHAPTER 7



Specialized Equipment: Descriptions and Procedures

"Many hands make light work."

-Leroy W. Jones

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Specialized Equipment: Descriptions and Procedures

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7.1 Vehicles

Each day thousands of North Carolina public school students are transported to and from school on school buses and other vehicles as discussed below.

School Bus
According to North Carolina Law, G.S. 20-40. 1 (27d) 4, a school bus is a vehicle whose primary purpose is to transport school students over an established route to and from school for the regularly scheduled school day, that is equipped with alternately flashing red lights on the front and rear and a mechanical stop signal, and that bears the words "School Bus "on the front and rear in letters at least eight inches in height. The term includes a public, private, or parochial vehicle that meets this description.
(Refer to Appendix A - School Bus Types)

According to state public school law, "The State Board of Education shall from time to time adopt such rules and regulations with reference to the construction, equipment, color and maintenance of school buses ...No school bus shall be operated for the transportation of pupils unless such bus is constructed and maintained as prescribed in such regulations..." Each year, the Transportation Services Section, NC Department of Public Instruction, issues purchasing specifications that outline the specific equipment to be included on school buses purchased for operation by the public schools in North Carolina.

Activity Bus
An activity bus built to the same basic construction standard as a school bus is defined as a bus owned, leased, or contracted by a school district and regularly used to transport students on field trips, athletic trips, or other curricular or extracurricular activities, but not used for to-and-from school transportation. It must meet all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSSs) for school buses.

Contracted Service Vehicle

- Due to the unique needs of a particular student, the Local Education Agency (LEA) may contract with private transportation providers. When an LEA contracts with a private provider, it is recommended that the following items be required:
- Inspection of the contract vehicle
- Proof of insurance
- Proof of current NC driver 's license for appropriate size vehicle
- Provision of drivers specifically trained in proper procedures for transport of the students they serve
- Provision of specialized equipment that meets FMVSSs, if needed (i.e., securement straps, child
- safety restraint systems, etc.)

Non-Conforming Bus
A non-conforming bus is any vehicle designed to carry more than ten passengers that is used to transport children to or from school or school related activities which does not meet the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) specific to school buses. Note that a 12-15 passenger van falls into this category.

Non-Conforming Van
A non-conforming van is a vehicle smaller than a bus, designed to carry seven to ten passengers and used to transport students, that does not meet FMVSS for school buses.

Specially Equipped Bus
A specially equipped school bus is any school bus that is designed, equipped, or modified to accommodate students with special needs. The vehicle should be equipped depending upon the specific needs of the students it transports. Buses so equipped are not to be considered a separate class of school bus, but simply a regular school bus that is equipped for special accommodations.

BEST PRAC T ICE

Transportation Departments and Exceptional Children Departments must work as a team to provide safe transportation for students with special needs.

7.2 Vehicle Equipment

The features discussed in this section are among those that should be considered when determining how to equip a bus to meet the special needs of the students it transports.

Air Conditioning
Some disabilities/medical conditions make it difficult for students to dissipate heat. They can easily become overheated. Air conditioning may be justified depending upon the health/medical needs of a student. This need should be documented by a physician and documented in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan. All 2000 year model, lift-equipped public school buses and all school buses manufactured in 2002 and beyond are equipped with air conditioning.

Aisles
All school buses equipped with a power lift shall provide a minimum 30" aisle leading from any wheelchair/mobility aid position to at least one emergency exit and the lift area. This aisle may not be obstructed; therefore, a wheelchair securement position should not be located directly in front of the power lift door location or in front of the rear emergency exit.
NOTE: NC Public School buses from 2002 forward are required to meet this specification.

Aisles wider than the typical 12" may be indicated for buses transporting preschool age students in car seats/child safety seats. It is easier for car seats/child safety seats to be carried through wider aisles. To obtain wider aisles, the bus is configured with seats of different widths, such as 39" seats on one side and 30" seats on the other. Buses could be ordered with these seating combinations in the first few rows (the rows recommended for securement of child safety restraint systems to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants).

Communication System
All school buses that are used to transport individuals with disabilities should be equipped with a two-way communication system. This system is useful when there is a routing or scheduling problem and is vital in the event of an accident, bus breakdown, or a medical emergency.

Emergency Equipment

Belt Cutters
Belt cutters are devices with protected blades designed to quickly cut restraint belts. Each bus set up to accommodate wheelchair/mobility aids or other assistive devices which utilize belts, should contain at least one belt cutter properly secured in a location within the reach of the driver while belted into his/her seat. The driver may need to first cut his/her seat belt in order to be released from the driver's seat. It is a good idea to have another belt cutter for use by the transportation safety assistant**.** Belt cutters are used to cut securement belts to release a car seat/safety vest or straps to release a student from his/her wheelchair. On occasion it might be quicker to release buckles if this is possible.

The decision to cut or release buckles should be determined when the drivers and transportation safety assistants practice evacuation drills. Of course, belts should never be cut unless it is a true emergency situation. Drivers and transportation safety assistants should practice using belt cutters on old belts prior to an actual emergency. The belt cutter should be held at a 45-degree angle to the belt and the user must pull downward through the webbing. After use the belt cutter should be replaced since it would not be as sharp as it would need to be for quick, effective cuts.

Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit

Each bus shall have a removable and moisture-proof body fluid clean-up kit accessible to the driver. It shall be properly identified as a body fluid clean-up kit. Contents of the body fluid clean-up kit shall be in compliance with state standards. The 2007 NC school bus specifications require the following contents:

- 1 - 2 oz. package T. I. L. S. C. powder: sanitizes-deodorizes-encapsulates
- 1 - odor reducing mask
- 1 - pair non-latex gloves (large)
- 2 - antiseptic wipes
- 2 - paper crepe towels
- 1 - scraper
- 1 - plastic disposal bag with scoop and tie

Body fluid clean-up kit is to include a breakable tamper seal and be secured in the "Safety Equipment Storage Box".

Emergency Exits

Emergency exits include the front door, the rear door, push-out windows, and roof hatch if available. If at all possible, the preferred emergency exit is the front door. If the rear exit is used, there are two methods of exiting. If able to walk, adults and students must be taught to sit on the floor of bus, facing outwards with knees bent over edge of bus. They should then push with their hands and slide forward, feet to the ground. If the student must be dragged or carried to the rear exit, typically two people will be needed to remove the student, one inside the bus and one outside.

Evacuation Blankets

Each lift-equipped bus should be equipped with an evacuation blanket to be used in the case of an emergency evacuation. North Carolina lift-equipped buses manufactured after 2001 are equipped with an evacuation blanket. When children are too heavy to carry or have uncontrollable movements that make it difficult to safely carry them, a blanket should be used for evacuation. The blanket can be used to drag a student, head first, to an emergency exit. Drivers and transportation safety assistants should be fully trained in the correct usage of an evacuation blanket as well as a proper drag method.

Fire Extinguisher

Since 2007 buses should (or shall) be equipped with at least one UL-approved pressurized, dry chemical fire extinguisher. The fire extinguisher is to be secured in the "Safety Equipment Storage Box" and readily accessible to the driver and passengers.

First Aid Kit

The bus shall have a removable, moisture-proof and dust-proof first aid kit in an accessible place in the driver 's compartment. It shall be identified as a first aid kit. Contents of first aid kit shall be in compliance with state standards. The 2007 NC school bus specifications require the following contents:

- 4-inch bandage compresses, 2 packages.
- 2-inch bandage compresses, 2 packages.
- 1-inch adhesive compresses (16 per package), 2 packages.
- 40-inch triangular bandage with two safety pins, 2 packages.
- Non-latex exam gloves, 2 pair (1 medium and 1 large)

First aid kit is to include a breakable tamper seal and be secured in the "Safety Equipment Storage Box."

Handrails

North Carolina public school buses manufactured in 1998 and beyond are equipped with handrails on both sides of the entrance door (Page 24 of 2007 NC School Bus Specification Manual). Many special needs students who are able to walk have significant difficulty negotiating bus steps and may need a bus with two handrails. (Refer to Handout on page 7-34.)

Power Lift
A power lift is a mechanized platform designed to provide access to a vehicle for an occupied mobility aid/ wheelchair. Any vehicle used to transport students in wheelchairs should be equipped with a lift that meets all federal standards. National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures (2005) state that the power lift must be designed to have a weight capacity of at least 800 pounds. A power lift is equipped to be manually operated in the event of a power failure.

Bus drivers/transportation safety assistants on lift buses should be well trained in safe lift operation and proper procedures for loading/unloading students using wheelchairs. (Refer to Handout on page 7-34.)

Reinforced Seats
Seat frames may be equipped with attachments or devices to which belts, restraining vests, or other devices may be attached. Attachment framework or anchorage devices, if installed, shall conform to FMVSS 210, Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages. The seats are typically called reinforced seats. They may also be called “210 seats” or “lap-belt-ready seats.”

Lap-belt ready seat (note diagonal support and other supporting structure in seat)

Retrofits
School districts are not required to retrofit buses. However, if buses are to be used to transport preschool age children, districts should retrofit their current buses to meet new seating guidelines in accordance with the following recommendations:

- School districts must ensure that no existing FMVSS (e.g., 222 regarding school bus seat anchorage, padding, spacing, etc.) is rendered inoperative when performing any modifications, changes, or additions to buses.
- School district personnel must adhere to all applicable manufacturer and federal guidelines for the
- components being installed.
- Existing school bus seats should only be equipped with lap belts for child restraint securement if they were originally designed as FMVSS compliant “lap-belt-ready” seats.
- When a new “lap-belt-ready” school bus seat, with a lap belt, is retrofitted into a bus, instructions obtained from the school bus manufacturer on proper seat installation must be followed. To provide proper securement of a Child Restraint on the bus seat, instructions from the car seat manufacturer regarding restraint system installation must be followed.
- When a school bus is retrofitted, the bus owner should ensure that seats equipped to accommodate Child Restraints meet FMVSS maximum seat spacing requirements for the particular body application. (Refer to Appendix D.)

Wheelchair Securement Devices and Safety Restraints
The requirements for securement devices and safety restraints are as follows:

(1) Each wheelchair or other type of mobility device location shall have devices that secure wheelchairs or other types of mobility devices in a forward-facing position at a minimum of five anchorage overage points. For electric wheelchairs, six should be in place. Securement devices shall be installed and used as designated by the manufacturer.

(2) Three-point safety restraints for lap and upper torso shall be provided for wheelchair and other types of mobility device occupants.

(3) Securement devices and safety restraints shall be designed and installed in compliance with FMVSS No. 222.

7.3 Occupant Protection

Small School Buses
On small school buses (10,000 lbs. or less) lap or lap/shoulder belts are required at all designated seating positions. Children being transported in these buses are covered under the North Carolina Child Passenger Safety (NC CPS) law and operators must comply with it.

To comply with NC CPS law, children transported on a small bus must be transported as follows:

1. Children less than 40 pounds must be in a child restraint appropriate for their weight.
2. Children who weigh 40 pounds or more must be restrained by the lap belt if that is the only means of restraint available.

LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) is required for two seating positions on small buses manufactured after September 2002. With a LATCH system, the lower anchors replace the use of seat belts for securing a child restraint. In a school bus, a child restraint can be properly secured without the upper anchorage (the tether strap).

NOTE: Most safety belts on small buses are lap-belt-only belts. Since belt-positioning booster seats must be secured with a lap/shoulder belt, they cannot be secured on small buses with lap belts only.

Large School Buses
On large school buses (over 10,000 lbs.) occupant protection is provided by the size and structure of the bus and by compartmentalization, not safety belts. Compartmentalization is the term for the protective envelope created by the strong, closely spaced seats and energy-absorbing high seat backs designed to protect occupants in the event of a crash. Compartmentalization is required in school buses under FMVSS 222 and provides a higher level of safety to children over 40 pounds without diagnosed medical complexities or fragility.

In order for students to be protected by this safety feature, they must be large enough to take advantage of the design of compartmentalization and they must remain in their seats or “in the compartment”. Preschoolers are too small for the design of the compartmentalized bus seats and students with special needs may have physical or behavioral/emotional deficits that make remaining seated during transport difficult or impossible. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends that preschool age children be transported in a child safety restraint system suitable for the child’s weight and age that meets applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS 213 & 225).
(Refer to Appendix 6C)

If it is determined that a student cannot maintain a seated position on the bus during transport or if a child requires a rear-facing position, then a child safety restraint system must be utilized.

7.4 Child Safety Restraint Systems

A Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) is a crash tested device or system that is specially designed to provide infant/child crash protection and complies with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 213. Standards specified by FMVSS 213 include how well the restraint limits the movement of the child in a crash; how well the restraint holds up in a crash; labeling and instructions; flammability; and buckle release pressure.

When a child under 8 years of age and under 80 pounds is transported in an automobile, North Carolina law mandates that the child be transported in a child safety restraint system that meets FMVSS 213. Large school buses not required to have seat belts are exempt from this law. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), preschool age children are best transported in a Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) even on large school buses.

Child Safety Restraint Systems for Use on School Buses

Integrated Lap-Shoulder Belts

Bus seats with integrated lap-shoulder belts are offered by manufacturers such as C.E. White and SafeGuard. The use of integrated lap-shoulder belts maintains compartmentalization by keeping students on the bus seat during transport. One benefit of using these seats is that they provide belted seating for one, two or three students; therefore, not decreasing capacity.

Integrated lap-shoulder belts are used in the same manner as the seat belts in family vehicles. A height adjuster on the shoulder belt allows for proper positioning of the shoulder belt across the student's chest.

C.E. White's Student Safety Seat – 60 lbs. to adult

SafeGuard's FlexSeat - 40 lb. to adult; when using three-seat configuration, the maximum weight for the center child is 70 lbs.

Integrated Child Restraints

An integrated child restraint is one that is actually built into the bus seat. This restraint has a 5 point harness system. A portion of the back of the bench seat is flipped down to function as a seat used for child restraint. After use the seat may then be flipped up, integrating into the bench seat back for use by passengers not requiring a child restraint. (Refer to Handout on 7-37.)

C.E. White Integrated Child Seats are used for students between 20-80 pounds.

C.E. White and SafeGuard manufacture integrated child restraints for NC buses.

SafeGuard Integrated Child Restraints are used for students between 22-85 pounds and up to 49" tall.

Add-On Seats

An add-on seat is a 5 point restraint system that is added to a school bus seat and secured by a means of color-coded straps that wrap around the back and seat of the bus seat. An add-on seat can be attached to a non-reinforced bus seat.

Students using add-on seats should be positioned on seats toward the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the student. They should not be positioned on seats adjacent to emergency exits. If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using an add-on seat, the student using the restraint should be placed next to the window.

When using an add-on seat, the bus seat behind it must be empty or be occupied by another student who is using a child safety restraint system.

Add-on seats available at this time include the following: SafeGuard's STAR Restraint, STAR Special Needs Restraint and BESI's Pro-Tech.

STAR Restraint (Student Transportation Add on Restraint)

The STAR restraint comes in 2 sizes. The smaller size is for students weighing 25-65 pounds and up to 47" tall. The plus size is for students weighing 25-90 pounds and up to 47" tall. These restraints can be taken off the bus, or folded and kept in pouches that can be mounted under the seats.

STAR Restraint

A STAR Chest Strap can be used with a STAR and STAR Plus restraints to provide more trunk support for students with special needs. After the student has been properly restrained in the STAR, the orange chest strap is placed under the shoulder straps and around the student's chest. It should be placed as close to the student's arm pit level as possible and adjusted to fit snugly.

If using 3 STAR restraints on a 39" bus seat, it is recommended that a connector strap (available through SafeGuard) be placed on the top of the bus seat to prevent the straps from slipping off the seat. Only 2 STAR Plus restraints will fit on a 39" bus seat. (Refer to Handout on page 7-38.)

STAR Special Needs Restraint

The STAR Special Needs restraint offers more external support for seated positioning than would be needed by many students with special health care needs. It is used for students weighing 25-105 lbs. with torso heights up to 20" tall (torso heights = seating position base to shoulder).

Pro-Tech

The Pro-Tech restraint comes in 2 sizes. The Pro-Tech II is for students weighing 20-65 lbs, up to a 22.5" waist and up to 47" tall. The Pro-Tech III is for students weighing 20-90 lbs., up to a 30.5" waist and up to 51" tall.

Pro-Tech

Safety Vests

E-Z-On

Safety vests are child safety restraint devices that enable students to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. Most safety vests are designed for children and adults who weigh between 20 and 164 pounds. The vest must fit the occupant snugly with the actual size of the vest determined by the passenger's waist size. Continued monitoring of the fit of the safety vest is essential. Improper fit of vests or improper securement of vests on the bus seat may result in an injury to the student. Crotch straps must be used with students under 65 lbs. Crotch straps may also be considered for students who tend to slip out of the vest. Vests that zip in the back discourage removal by the student. Safety vests should be put on the student per manufacturer's instructions prior to boarding the bus, i.e., at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon.

Safety vests can be installed on a non-reinforced bus seat using a portable seat mount or cam wrap sold by the vest manufacturer.

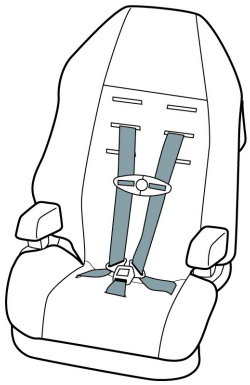
Students using safety vests should be positioned on seats toward the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the student. They should not be positioned on seats adjacent to emergency exits. If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using a safety vest, the student using the restraint should be placed next to the window.

The seat behind a student using a safety vest must be empty or be occupied by another student who is also using a child safety restraint system.

Safety vest manufacturers at this time include the following: E-Z-On, BESI, and Q-Straint. Manufacturers typically suggest replacing safety vests after 5 years. Be sure to follow specific manufacturer's instructions for replacement as well as maintenance of the safety vests.

(Refer to Handout on page 7-39.)

Car Seats


Courtesy of Children's Hospital of Philiadelphia

Child Safety Restraint Systems that are commonly referred to as car seats are available in a variety of different types.

- Rear-facing Only - "infant" car seats
- Convertible - converts from rear-facing to forward-facing
- Forward Facing Only with Harness
- Forward-Facing with Harness/Booster Combination - can be used with a harness up to a certain weight (per manufacturer); then converts to a belt-positioning booster
- Booster Seats - raise the child up for the proper fit of a lap and shoulder seat belt
    - High back booster
    - Backless booster
- Special Needs Seat

Most school buses are not equipped to accommodate car seats. In order for a school bus to accommodate car seats it must have the following:

- Reinforced bus seats (those that meet FMVSS 210)
- Seat belts which meet FMVSS 209 that are properly placed and attached to the bus seat frame
- Adequate room between bus seats – maximum seat spacing allowed under FMVSS 222 which is 24"
- Adequate aisle width – greater than the standard aisle width of 12"

Car seats should be considered as a last resort when a child safety restraint system is required due to limited space on most school buses, lack of availability of bus seats that meet FMVSS 210 designed for the installation of car seats and seat belts that meet FMVSS 209. Car seats should only be used on school buses if the child must be transported in a rear-facing position or if the child requires more support to remain seated than is provided by other types of CSRS that can be used on a school bus.

Car seats must be selected and used in a rear or a forward-facing position dependent upon the age, weight, height and physical development of the child (follow manufacturer's instructions).

A rear-facing position is generally the safest and children should ride rear facing as long as possible. A rear-facing car seat should be used until a child reaches the highest weight or height according to manufacturer's instructions. At a minimum, use a rear-facing car seat until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.

A forward-facing car seat should be used when a child has reached the highest allowed rear-facing weight of the car seat. Forward facing should not be considered until a child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.

When a child using a car seat on the bus exceeds the weight limit set by the manufacturer, the use of the car seat must be discontinued. If the student continues to require support to remain in a seated position on the bus seat, an alternative method of restraint must be determined.

Car seats should be installed on reinforced seats at the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants. Car seats should not be installed on seats in front of emergency exits.

Bus seats that are 39 inches wide (from bus wall to aisle) will accommodate two car seats. Seats that are less than 39 inches wide will accommodate one car seat.

If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using a car seat, the student in the car seat should be placed next to the window.

(Refer to Handout on page 7-40.)

Special Needs Seats

Special needs seats are manufactured for children with special positioning needs that cannot be accommodated in a typical car seat. Special needs seats are available from Durable Medical Equipment suppliers and would best be ordered with input from a school physical therapist. Many seats are larger and will require special tethering. If tethering is required, the seat to which it is tethered must be unoccupied. (Consult the manufacturer for clarification on the proper use of tethers.) Due to limited seat spacing, it may be impossible to utilize a special needs seat on school buses. Follow manufacturer's instructions for seat installation and proper restraint of the child in the seat.

Snug Seat Traveller Plus

The Juvenile Products Manufacturer Association suggests replacing car seats after 6 years. However, expiration dates vary by manufacturer; therefore, follow manufacturer's recommendations regarding the proper time to replace car seats. The proper procedure for disposal is to cut the restraining straps off the car seat; destroy the car seat; and throw it in a trash receptacle.

Additional Recommendations For Child Safety Restaint Systems

Provision of Child Safety Restraint Systems

The school system should provide child safety restraint systems for use on the school bus or on other contract vehicles. By providing CSRSs, the system can be assured that they meet FMVSS 213 and have not been involved in an a crash.

Exceptional Children Department and Transportation Department representatives should check with manufacturers of buses and child restraint products annually to remain knowledgeable of current CSRSs for school buses.

Documentation

Every CSRS should be registered with the manufacturer so the school system will be notified if there is a safety recall. Be sure to keep a copy of manufacturer's instructions on file.

Cleaning & Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the school system to ensure that all parts of the CSRS are present and in good working condition. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and maintenance of the CSRS. Padding must be replaced if it is torn or soiled. Harness straps must be replaced if they are frayed or heavily soiled. (Padding and harness straps must be purchased from the CSRS manufacturer and instructions for replacement must be followed.)

Replacement Following Crash

NHTSA recommends that a CSRS be replaced if it has been involved in a moderate or severe crash.

CSRSs do not have to be automatically replaced following a minor crash. Minor crashes are those that meet ALL of the following criteria:

- The school bus could be driven away from the crash site.
- The occupant space inside the school bus near the CSRS was undamaged.
- There were no injuries to any children in CSRS or serious injury to any other school bus occupant.
- There is no visible damage to the CSRS.

Child Safety Restraint Systems Not For Use On Large School Buses

Booster Seats

Booster seats are designed to elevate children who weigh between 40 and 80 pounds so they can safely utilize the protection offered by lap and shoulder belts. Booster seats cannot be used on school buses with traditional bus seats that do not have lap and shoulder belts.

Backless Booster

High Back Booster

Courtesy of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Lap Belts

The use of a lap belt only as a child safety restraint on large school buses is NOT recommended.

An analysis of crash test data by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) concluded that lap belts appear to have little, if any, benefit in reducing serious and fatal injuries in severe frontal crashes. Also, NHTSA states that the use of lap only seat belt by children on large school buses could increase the incidence of serious neck injuries and possibly abdominal injuries among young passengers in severe frontal crashes.

7.5 Wheelchair Securement & Restraint Systems

The term securement or phrase securement system is used when referring to the device(s) that anchors the wheelchair/mobility aid to the vehicle.

- A securement system is the means of anchoring a mobile seating device to a vehicle in accordance with FMVSS No. 222, including all necessary buckles, anchors, webbing/straps and other fasteners.
- The securement system shall be located and installed such that when an occupied wheelchair/ mobility aid is secured, it does not block access to the lift door.

(Refer to Handout on page 7-41.)

The term restraint or phrase occupant restraint system is used when referring to the devices used to restrain the occupant of a wheelchair/mobility aid while being transported in a vehicle.

There are two types of occupant restraint systems as follows:

BEST PRACTICE

An unoccupied wheelchair must also be secured by a four-point tie down system during transport.

- Parallel systems - the floor anchorage for the lap belt is independent of the rear tie down assembly, i.e., the lap belt is directly anchored to the floor.
- Integrated systems - the lap belt attaches directly to and is dependent upon the rear tie down assembly.

A lap belt is a Type 1 belt assembly meeting the requirements of FMVSS 209, intended to limit movement of the pelvis.

A lap/shoulder belt is a Type 2 belt assembly meeting the requirements of FMVSS 210, intended to limit movement of the pelvis and trunk.

(Refer to Handout on page 7-42.)

The entire securement system used to secure the wheelchair and the occupant is also known as WTORS - Wheelchair Tie Down Occupant Restraint System.

- In 1994, FMVSS 222 was amended to include wheelchair securement and occupant restraint systems. This standard states the following:
- All wheelchairs must be forward facing.
- All wheelchairs must be secured by wheelchair securement devices (wheelchair tie down straps) at two locations in the front and two in the rear.
- Each wheelchair location must be equipped with a lap belt and shoulder belt mounted with anchorage to the side and floor of the bus.
- Securement straps must be permanently and legibly marked or labeled with year of manufacture, model, and name or trademark of manufacturer or distributor.

Drivers and transportation safety assistants on lift buses should be fully trained on the proper use of both wheelchair securement and occupant restraint systems.

Integrated System

7.6 Students' Equipment

Students with special needs may have a variety of medical and physical conditions that require the use of adaptive equipment or special supplies. This equipment/supplies may need to be transported on the school bus. All equipment must be secured inside the bus with straps made to withstand the pulling force of 5 times the weight of the object. Crash tested straps, such as lap belts or wheelchair tie downs, may be used for securement. Bungee cords may not be used to secure equipment.

Transporting technology devices and/or equipment belonging to a student **may not**:

- Diminish the safety of the interior of the bus
- Create additional risks to students who are boarding or exiting the bus or are in or near the school bus loading zone
- Require undue additional activity and/or responsibility for the driver

Assistive Technology & Augmentative Communication Devices

The term assistive technology (AT) device means any item or piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized that is used to maintain or improve functional capabilities. Assistive technology devices such as laptops, word processors, etc., must be secured with appropriate straps as previously discussed to prevent them from becoming flying projectiles in the event of a sudden stop or collision.

Aug Com Device by Prentke Romich

Augmentative and alternative communication devices (often referred to as aug com or AAC devices) are electronically operated or non-electronically operated equipment that students use to support their communication or spoken language. Since augmentative communication mounting devices are not part of the structural frame of the wheelchair, the devices should be removed and secured to prevent injury to students and/or damage to the devices. If needed, an alternate means of communication should be developed with input from a speech/language pathologist and/or the classroom teacher. If the device must remain on the wheelchair, it should be attached with stronger mechanisms or tethers to prevent it from breaking loose in a crash.

Assistive Walking Devices

Students who have difficulty with balance while walking may need to use canes, crutches, or walkers to enable them to walk safely. Most often these devices will be handed to an adult inside the bus while an adult on the ground assists the student up the steps and to the seat. During transport, these devices must be secured with appropriate straps as previously discussed. Upon reaching the students' destinations, their assistive walking devices should be placed outside the bus. After students are assisted down the steps, their device will be available for them to begin walking.

Medical Support Equipment

Qualified personnel must make decisions related to providing safe transportation for students who are medically fragile. Transportation personnel should be included in the process of making the final decisions for the bus ride.

Medically fragile students may need to be transported with equipment such as suction machines and/or ventilators. The decision regarding the need for a nurse on board the bus should be made by the IEP/504 team and documented in the IEP/504 Plan.

All portable medical equipment must be properly secured below the windows with straps made to withstand the pulling force of 5 times the weight of the object. Transportation personnel should have detailed medical information on the student and detailed information concerning the proper operation and handling of the equipment. Drivers and transportation safety assistants should be fully trained in proper securement and handling of the equipment.

Oxygen

- When oxygen is transported, the canisters should be no larger than 22 cubic feet for liquid oxygen and 38 feet for compressed gas.
- Keep liquid oxygen tanks upright at all times.
- Tanks must have valves and regulators that are protected against breakage.
- Tanks must be secured inside the bus with appropriate mounting system or to wheelchair only if there is an oxygen rack bolted to the wheelchair itself.
- Tanks and valves must be secured in a location to avoid exposure to intense heat, flames, sparks, or friction.

A more detailed discussion of the issues associated with transporting oxygen on school buses can be found in a comprehensive manual from the state of Maryland, entitled "Maryland State Guidelines: Management of the Needs of the Oxygen Dependent Student." It can be referenced from the www.ncbussafety.org web page:

www.NCBUSSAFETY.org/download/MarylandOxygenGuidelines5-02.pdf

Medications

Students may need to take medications during the school day and parents may sometimes send the medicine to school with their child. Each school district should have written policies regarding procedures for transporting the medication. These policies should include a statement that students are not permitted to transport the medication themselves.

Wheelchair Trays

Wheelchair trays are made of solid materials designed to provide arm support to a student using a wheelchair. The tray is positioned in front of the student, typically attached to the wheelchair armrests. The tray must be removed from a wheelchair prior to transport as it could cause severe abdominal injuries in the event of a sudden stop or crash. Trays must be secured inside the bus with appropriate straps. While some parents and/or students may be reluctant to have the tray removed, they must be reminded that safety is the first consideration in transportation. If a student needs some means of arm support during the bus ride, contact the school physical therapist for suggestions of alternatives for support.

7.7 Wheeled Mobility Devices

Whenever possible, students should be transported on vehicle seats. However, many students are unable to be safely transferred to a seat and must be transported in their crash tested stroller or in their wheelchair. School physical therapists should be consulted when deciding whether a transfer to the bus seat is safe and/or reasonable. It should ultimately be an IEP/504 team decision and documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

Sunrise Medical P Trek

Scooters

A scooter is a three-wheeled power mobility device with a steering handle that is positioned in front of the user. Students cannot be transported while seated on scooters due to potential injuries as a result of frontal placement of the steering handle and lack of stability provided by the scooter. They must be transferred to a bus seat. Unoccupied scooters can be transported only if appropriate securement points are located on its base.

Strollers

Strollers are wheeled mobility bases that come in a variety of styles, from umbrella strollers to crash tested strollers that may safely be used during transport. Students must only be transported in strollers that have been crash tested. If a stroller has been crash tested, four securement sites will be located on the frame. Manufacturers of frequently used crash-tested strollers are Snug Seat, Convaid, and Sunrise Medical.

Convaid Cruiser

If a student has a stroller that has not been crash tested, he/she may use it for loading/unloading the bus if the wheels can be locked. Once inside the bus, the student must be removed from the stroller and transported on a bus seat using a child safety restraint system if needed. During transport the stroller must be secured with wheelchair tie down straps.

Wheelchairs

Manual and power wheelchairs come in a vast variety of styles. Wheelchairs also have a variety of seating components including seats, backs, straps, and pads that enable a student to maintain an appropriate seated posture. Positioning straps should be fastened to provide postural support and protection.

It has been the norm that wheelchair manufacturers state that their product was not recommended to be used for transport in a vehicle. Prior to May 2000, there were no adopted standards establishing wheelchair design and performance requirements that allowed the manufacturer to state that the wheelchair could be safely used for seating during transport.

ANSI/RESNA WC19 (Wheelchairs Used as Seats in Motor Vehicles) is a standard that verifies WC19 wheelchairs have met rigorous crash testing criteria and can be considered to offer suitable and safe seating for passengers in vehicles. WC19 is a voluntary standard and not mandated by state or federal law. Wheelchairs that meet this standard may be called WC19 wheelchairs, wheelchairs with a transit option, or a transit wheelchair.

WC 19 - Sunrise Zippie

WC19 wheelchairs have four easily accessible securement points on which to attach the wheelchair tie down straps. A vehicle occupant restraint system (lap and shoulder belt) must still be used to protect students transported in WC19 wheelchairs.

Crash tested (WC19) wheelchairs manufactured after May 2002 may offer the option of a crash tested lap

belt that is anchored to the wheelchair frame. Labeling on the lap belt will indicate that it complies with ANSI/RESNA WC 19. If the wheelchair is equipped with a crash tested lap belt, then the shoulder belt will attach to the bus wall, continue diagonally across the student's upper chest and hook to the lap belt at the student's pelvis on the side opposite the bus wall.
Wheelchairs manufactured prior to May 2000 are not WC19 compliant meaning they have not been crash tested. Not all wheelchairs manufactured after May 2000 will be WC19 compliant. At the present time there are not enough styles of successfully crash tested wheelchairs to meet the specific needs of all wheelchair users. This means we will continue to see many wheelchairs that do not have easily accessible securement points.

Securement Points on Wheelchairs that are not WC19 compliant
When transporting wheelchairs that are not WC19 compliant, proper securement points on the wheelchair frame must be determined. Transportation personnel and school physical therapists working as a team should determine these points. It is recommended that the securement points be marked so someone not familiar with the wheelchair will know where to attach the tie down straps. One effective method of marking these points is through the use of colored cable ties.

Securement points must be on the frame of the wheelchair. Sites that one finds the easiest to access may not be the appropriate securement point. Tie down straps cannot be attached to removable parts of the wheelchair such as the footrests, wheels, armrests, etc. Securement cannot be on the wheelchair crossbar since this could cause the wheelchair to collapse. Securement points are ideally located at welded sites of the frame, just below the seat. More important than the height of the securement points is the strength of the securement points and the frame members to which they are attached. Thus, if stronger securement points can be found on the lower portions of the frame than on the upper frame or seat, the lower securement points may be preferable. "WC19 Update & Answer to Frequently Asked Questions," Larry Schneider, Ph.D.

If appropriate securement points cannot be found on the wheelchair frame, crash tested webbing loops/straps can be hooked around the frame and used as the securement point on which to attach the tie down straps. The crash tested webbing loops/straps can be purchased through the manufacturers of the wheelchair securement systems.

Wheelchairs with Tilt/Recline Mechanism
Students should be transported in a position as close to upright as possible. It is recommended that if tilted/reclined, the angle of tilt/recline should be no greater than 30 degrees.

If for medical reasons a recline angle of more than 30 degrees is required, the shoulder belt must remain as close to the student's shoulder and chest as possible. Moving the anchor point of the shoulder belt rearward along the vehicle side wall should improve its placement.

On a tilt-n-space wheelchair that is not WC19 compliant, the four securement sites should be either all on the seat frame or all on the base to prevent an unstable teeter-tottering effect in the event of a sudden stop or collision.

Drivers/ transportation safety assistants should check with their transportation supervisor before denying transportation to a student

Web Resource: www.rercwts.pitt.edu
Extensive FAQs and a downloadable brochure, *Ride Safe*, offer detailed information related to wheelchair securement, the use of occupant restraints, and WC 19 wheelchairs.

Wheelchair Integrity
Wheelchairs should meet certain criteria to be determined safe for transport. A wheelchair displaying any of the following characteristics would not be considered safe for transport:

- Tires that are loose or not functioning properly - the chair will be difficult to move or may move unpredictably
- Tires that are deflated or have insufficient tread – wheel locks will not secure the wheelchair
- Wheel locks do not work properly - chair may roll on power lift or in bus
- Wheelchair seat belt is broken or missing - student risks falling out of the wheelchair on the lift or inside the bus
- Wheelchair insert (back support mechanism on certain chairs) is loose/unattached to the wheelchair - student not fully restrained and may lunge forward at a sudden stop
- Power wheelchair is malfunctioning in any way - could move unpredictably and cause harm to occupant or others
- Extra equipment, such as a respirator or oxygen tank, is not secured properly - may not function correctly or may fall off wheelchair (pressurized tanks could explode)

Other considerations related to wheelchair integrity

- Wheelchair should be equipped with a headrest for head/neck support during transport. If a headrest is used only during transportation, consider a flip-down or removable headrest.
- Wheelchair should be equipped with footrests whenever possible to prevent injury to the student's foot or leg due to lack of support/protection.
- Wheelchair should be equipped with anti-tippers that are left in the down position during transport.
- Wheelchair frame should be stable, without excess movement.
- Wheelchair batteries should be securely fastened to the wheelchair frame. Do not transport wheelchair with lead acid batteries.

School districts should have a policy to address what will be done when a wheelchair is determined not safe for transport. Parents should be immediately informed that their child's wheelchair is not safe for transport and ask them to have it repaired as soon as possible. If parents are unable or unwilling to have the wheelchair repaired quickly, an alternative could be that the school provides a suitable wheelchair for transport until the repairs can be made. It may be helpful to contact the school physical therapist who may be able to assist with obtaining an appropriate alternative wheelchair.
(Refer to Handout on page 7-43.)

Additional Transportation Concerns Related to Wheelchair Users

- When using any sort of "neck ring" or forehead strap for head control, be sure that it is not bolted to the wheelchair. During transport, head/neck support must be independent from the wheelchair.
- Rigid positioning components such as subasis bars, rigid shoulder retractors, knee blocks, etc. should not be used during transport. These rigid supports could injure the child in the case of a crash. If they became jammed, it could be impossible to unhook them in order to release the child for an evacuation. If a wheelchair is equipped with a subasis bar, then it is recommended that a four point pelvic positioning strap also be attached to the wheelchair for use during transport.
- If a student using a power wheelchair has a joystick mounted in a midline position, it should be moved away from the front of the student during transport and secured.
- Students using low back wheelchairs (sport chairs) should transfer to the bus seat for transport. The low back will not provide needed support. The empty wheelchair must also be secured.
- Wheelchair trays must be removed from the wheelchair and secured inside the vehicle.

Contact your school physical therapist for training in the proper use of wheelchair positioning components during transport.
(Refer to Appendix 7E page 7-29)

Sunrise 'sport wheelchair'

Making a decision regarding the proper method of transportation for students is the responsibility of their IEP/504 team. The information in this section would be beneficial in facilitating a discussion related to how a student will load/unload the school bus and whether a Child Safety Restraint System will be needed for safe transport.

7.8 Making Decisions Regarding Students Use fo Equipment

Student Loading/Unloading

Students with special needs will often be able to load/unload the school bus using the steps in the same manner as non-disabled students. If a student is ambulatory (able to walk) but has difficulties with balance, decreased muscle strength or diminished stamina, he/she may require assistance to negotiate the bus steps. Consultation with a school physical therapist would be beneficial to determine the feasibility of an ambulatory student utilizing the bus steps with or without adult assistance.

If the method of loading/unloading is not apparent, review the options below to facilitate the decision making process. The student's IEP/504 team should consider the first option and continue down the hierarchy to determine the most appropriate method.

- Student is able to ascend/descend bus steps independently.
- Adult assistance is needed for student to ascend/descend bus steps.
- Student needs to be carried up/down the bus steps (option ONLY for preschool students who are less than 40 pounds).
- Student is unable to safely ascend/descend the bus steps with assistance; therefore, student must use the lift while seated in a wheelchair.
- Student uses a manual/power wheelchair and requires a bus with a power lift.

If a student has a deteriorating medical condition, ongoing monitoring of the student's ability to safely negotiate bus steps is necessary. This will ensure that the student is loading/unloading the bus in the most appropriate manner.

(See Handout on page 7-33.)
(See Handout on page 7-34.)

Use Of A Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS)

Pre-school children should be transported in a Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) on the school bus as recommended by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
(See Appendix 6C - "Guidelines for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses", NHTSA publication February, 1999)

School-age students who are unable to remain seated on a bus seat due to their physical, behavioral, or emotional disability may require a CSRS.

The decision to use a child safety restraint system is an IEP/504 team decision and must be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan. The type of CSRS selected is based on several factors – including the student's disability, weight, height and age. The IEP/504 team should consider the equipment required to promote the safest ride for the student while still considering the least restrictive means of safety restraint.

If the need for a CSRS is not apparent, review the options below to facilitate the decision making process. The student's IEP/504 team, in collaboration with the bus driver, should consider each option to find the most appropriate method for transport.

- Student is able to sit on the bus seat without modifications.
- Student is able to sit on the bus seat with behavior management strategies implemented.
- Student remains seated in his/her manual or power wheelchair with appropriate securement systems.
- Student is unable to remain seated on the bus seat during transport due to a disability and will need a **C**hild **S**afety **R**estraint **S**ystem.

Refer to chart on page 7-21 to help you determine most appropriate child safety restraint system.

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) for School Buses typically used in North Carolina (Products from other manufacturers may be used.)	Student's Weight in lbs
Integrated Child Restraint Bus Seat ➢ Child restraint is part of the bus seat and has a 5 point harness system ➢ Available on some buses manufactured after 2000	CE White 20–60 SafeGuard 22-85
STAR RESTRAINT – (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-65 lbs
STAR RESTRAINT – **Plus** (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-90 lbs
E-Z On Safety Vest (Adjustable safety vest that zips up the back) ➢ Vest must be put on student prior to student getting on the bus (i.e., vest *put on student at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon)* ➢ Vest attaches to a seat mount that is secured to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS ➢ ***Indicated for students who are over 90 lbs or who INAPPROPRIATELY unbuckle front buckles in car seats or the harnesses on other CSRS***	20 -160 lbs Size based on child's waist **Size: Waist:** XS 19-23" S 25-30" M 32-37" LG 37-42"
Car Seats (RARELY used on buses) ➢ Only select this option if child requires a rear-facing position or if student requires more support to remain seated than is provided by CSRS listed above. ➢ Car seat internal harness must be adjusted to the student ➢ Car seat must be installed on reinforced bus seats	Up to 65 lbs per manufacturer's instructions

Manufacturers referenced below are examples of products available. Other products may be used.

(Refer to Handout on page 7-35 – Student Profile - Transportation Considerations
This handout, completed at a student's IEP meeting, would be provided to the Transportation Department to notify them of a student's transportation needs.)

If it is determined that the use of a child restraint is no longer indicated, then it should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

Appendix 7A — School Bus Types

A **Type "A" school bus** is a van conversion or bus constructed utilizing a cutaway front-section vehicle with a left side driver's door. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. This definition includes two classifications: Type A1, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) less than or equal to 10,000 pounds; and Type A2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.

A **Type "B" school bus** is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. This definition includes two classifications: Type B1, with a GVWR less than or equal to 10,000 pounds; and Type B2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.

A **Type "C" school bus** is constructed utilizing a chassis with a hood and front fender assembly. The entrance door is behind the front wheels.

A **Type "D" school bus** is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is ahead of the front wheels.

Appendix 7B — North Carolina School Bus Seat Spacing Information

The concept of compartmentalization of school bus passengers plays a key role in providing protection on school buses. One of the main factors in the success of this design is the proper spacing of passenger seats.

Through Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) testing of school bus passenger seats, the bus body manufacturers have determined the proper spacing of passenger seats to provide the best level of passenger crash protection which meets the requirements of FMVSS 222. Therefore, whenever a new bus is received or an existing bus has seats removed or reinstalled, school district maintenance staff should check for proper seat spacing before returning the bus to service to transport students.

Attached is a chart listing the seat spacing (in inches) of manufacturer's bus body by type. North Carolina School Bus Specifications specify the minimum spacing that may be allowed, and FMVSS 222 specifies the maximum spacing that may be allowed, providing a range that must be adhered to. The two measurement methods are at two different locations to assist in determining the proper seat spacing; they are knee-room or center-to-center spacing. The dimensions listed in the attached chart are North Carolina minimum and Federal maximum measurement specifications. The seat can be positioned anywhere within these minimum and maximum specifications. A line drawing is provided to describe in detail where each reference point is to be measured; either the knee-room or center-to-center method can be used.

If you need any further assistance or information, please call the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/Transportation Services at (919) 807-3570.

NOTE: FMVSS does specify the minimum and the maximum spacing required for seating. These dimensions will vary depending on the seat manufacturer. The Child Safety Restraint Systems are set at a maximum spacing to allow clearance for the child carrier. It is best if reinstalling seats that have been removed that the original floorplan be referenced for correct placement.

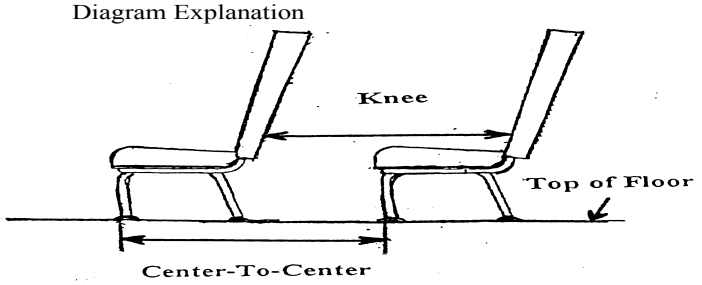
TYPE A, B, C, and D (78 passenger or less) SCHOOL BUSES

	Knee Room Method		Center-To-Center Seat Leg Method	
Bus Body Company	North Carolina Min. Knee Spacing	Federal Max. Knee Spacing	North Carolina Center to Center Min.	Federal Center to Center Max.
Thomas	24.25 inches	28.5 inches	25.5 inches	29.75 inches

TYPE A, B, C and D (Rows with Child Safety Restraint Systems) SCHOOL BUSES

	Knee Room Method		Center-To-Center Seat Leg Method	
Bus Body Company	North Carolina Min. Knee Spacing	Federal Max. Knee Spacing	North Carolina Center to Center Min.	Federal Center to Center Max.
Thomas	28.5 inches	28.5 inches	35.2 inches	35.2 inches

Diagram Explanation



Appendix 7C — Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Introduction

School age children transported in school buses are safer than children transported in motor vehicles of any other type. Large school buses provide protection because of their size and weight. Further, they must meet minimum Federal motor vehicle safety standards (FMVSSs) mandating compartmentalized seating, improved emergency exits, stronger roof structures and fuel systems, and better bus body joint strength.

As more preschool age children are transported to school programs, often in school buses, the public is increasingly asking the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) about how to safely transport them. To help answer these questions, NHTSA conducted crash testing of preschool age size dummies in school bus seats. The test results showed that preschool age children in school buses are safest when transported in child safety restraint systems (CSRSs) that meets FMVSS 213, Child Restraint Systems, and are correctly attached to the seats.

Based on its research, NHTSA recommends preschool age children transported in school buses always be transported in properly secured CSRSs. In partial response to questions from school (and child care) transportation offices, this Guideline seeks to assist school and other transportation managers in developing and implementing policies and procedures for the transportation of preschool age children in school buses. Note: The proper installation of CSRSs necessitates that a school bus seat have safety belts or other means of securing the CSRS to the seat. NHTSA recommends that lap belts or anchorages designed to meet FMVSS 225, Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems, be voluntarily installed to secure CSRSs in large school buses.

Recommendations for the Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses

When preschool age children are transported in a school bus, NHTSA recommends these guidelines be followed:

1. Each child should be transported in a Child Safety Restraint (suitable for the child's weight and age) that meets applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSSs).
2. Each child should be properly secured in the Child Safety Restraint System.
3. The Child Safety Restraint System should be properly secured to the school bus seat, using anchorages that meet FMVSSs.

Child Safety Restraint System Defined

A Child Safety Restraint System is any device (except a passenger system lap seat belt or lap/shoulder seat belt), designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat, or position a child who weighs less than 50 pounds.

Child safety Restraint Systems Guideline

1. Child Safety Restraint Systems Specifications

   The provider of the CSRS should ensure

   - Each preschool age child to be transported has a CSRS appropriate for the child's weight, height, and age.
   - Each CSRS meets all applicable FMVSSs (look for the manufacturer's certification on the label attached to the system).
   - Each CSRS has been registered with the CSRS's manufacturer to facilitate any recalls the manufacturer might conduct.
   - If the CSRS is the subject of a recall, any necessary repairs or modifications have been made to the manufacturer's specifications.
   - Each CSRS is maintained as recommended by its manufacturer, including disposal of any CSRS that has been involved in a crash.

2. Proper Securement

The transportation provider should ensure:

• The CSRS is used and secured correctly in the school bus.
• Each child is secured in CSRSs according to manufacturer's instructions.
• All CSRS attachment hardware and anchorage systems meet FMVSS 210, Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages or FMVSS 225, Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems.
• School bus seats designated for CSRSs meet FMVSS 225, or include lap belts that meet FMVSS 209, Seat Belt Assemblies, and anchors that meet FMVSS 210 (designed to secure adult passengers or CSRS).
• Personnel responsible for securing CSRSs onto school bus seats and children into CSRSs are properly trained and all personnel involved with CSRSs are provided up-to-date information and training.
• When transported in the school bus, preschool age children are supervised according to their developmental and functioning level.

3. School Bus Seats Designated for Child Safety Restraint Systems

The transportation provider should ensure:

• School-bus seats designated for CSRSs are located starting at the front of the vehicle to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the CSRS occupants.
• CSRS anchorages on school bus seats should meet all applicable FMVSSs.
• When ordering new school buses, the maximum spacing specified under FMVSS No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, (within 24 inches from the seating reference point) is recommended for seats designated for CSRSs to provide adequate space for the CSRSs.
• The combined width of the CSRS and/or other passengers on a single seat does not exceed the width of the seat.
• If other students share seats with the CSRSs, the CSRS are placed in window seating position.

4. Retrofitting School Buses

The transportation provider should ensure:

• Existing school bus seats should only be retrofitted with lap belts or child restraint anchorages as instructed by the school bus manufacturer.
• When a school bus is retrofitted with a seat to allow for proper securement of a CSRS, instructions obtained from the school bus or seat manufacturer on how to install the seat and restraint systems should be followed.
• When a school bus is retrofitted, the bus owner should ensure that seat spacing is sufficient for the CSRS to be used.

5. Evacuation

The transportation provider should ensure:

• The establishment of a written plan on evacuating preschool age children and other passengers in CSRSs in the event of an emergency. This written plan should be provided to drivers, monitors, and emergency response personnel. The plan should explicitly state how children (both in and out of the CSRS) be evacuated from the school bus.
• Evacuation drills are practiced on a scheduled basis, at least as often as that required for the school system's school-aged children.
• All personnel involved in transporting children are trained in evacuation and emergency procedures, including those in the written school bus evacuation plan.
• All school buses carrying children in CSRSs carry safety belt cutters that are accessible only to the driver and any monitors.
• CSRSs are not placed in school bus seats adjacent to emergency exits.
• Local emergency response teams are provided copies of the written school bus evacuation plan, including evacuation of preschool age children. Emergency response personnel should be invited to participate in evacuation drills.

6. Other Recommendations

The school transportation provider should establish a policy on whether they or the child's guardian must supply a child safety restraint system to be used on a school bus. School bus purchases should be based on the needs of a projected student population, taking into consideration projected ages, sizes, and other characteristics of the students, including any special needs, and whether preschool age children or medically fragile students will be transported.

Specified procedures should be established for loading and unloading children in CSRSs. Procedure should be established for the periodic maintenance, cleaning, and inspection for damage of CSRSs. Procedures should be established to train personnel involved in direct service delivery of infants, toddlers, and preschool children on the physical day-to-day handling of these young children and means to handle potential exposure to contagious and communicable diseases.

When school bus procedures are established, it should be noted that some children in CSRSs may have special needs, including medical fragility, that must be addressed on a child-by-child basis.

Appendix 7D — Summary of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards Related to Crashworthiness

Summary of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards 208, 209, 210, 213, 222, 225 & 302 From Standards related to Crashworthiness

Standard No. 208 - Occupant Crash Protection
This standard originally specified the type of occupant restraints (i.e., seat belts) required. It was amended to specify performance requirements for anthropomorphic test dummies seated in the front outboard seats of passenger cars and of certain multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses, including the active and passive restraint systems identified below. The purpose of the standard is to reduce the number of fatalities and the number and severity of injuries to occupants involved in frontal crashes.

Standard No. 209 - Seat Belt Assemblies - Passenger Cars, Multipurpose Passenger Vehicles, Trucks, and Buses (Effective 3-1-67)
This standard specifies requirements for seat belt assemblies. The requirements apply to straps, webbing, or similar material, as well as to all necessary buckles and other fasteners and all hardware designed for installing the assembly in a motor vehicle, and to the installation, usage, and maintenance instructions for the assembly.

> **Standard No. 209 includes this statement:**
> Each seat belt assembly shall be permanently and legibly marked or labeled with year of manufacture, model, and name or trademark of manufacturer or distributor, or of importer if manufactured outside the US.

Standard No. 210 - Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages - Passenger Cars (Effective 1-1-68), Multipurpose Passenger Vehicles, Trucks, and Buses (Effective 7-1-71)
This standard establishes requirements for seat belt assembly anchorages to ensure proper location for effective occupant restraint and to reduce the likelihood of failure. The requirements apply to any component, other than the webbing or straps, involved in transferring seat belt loads to the vehicle structure.

The terms “210 seat” or a “lap-belt-ready seat” apply to a reinforced bus seat.

Standard No. 213 - Child Restraint Systems - Passenger Cars, Multipurpose Passenger Vehicles, Trucks and Buses, and Child Restraint Systems for use in Motor Vehicles and Aircraft (Effective 4-1-71, amended 1-1-81)
This standard specifies requirements for child restraint systems used in motor vehicles and aircraft. Its purpose is to reduce the number of children killed or injured in motor vehicle crashes and in aircraft.

Standard No. 222 - School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection (Effective 4-1-77)
This standard establishes occupant protection requirements for school bus passenger seating and restraining barriers. The purpose of this standard is to reduce the number of deaths and the severity of injuries that result from the impact of school bus occupants against structures within the vehicle during crashes and sudden driving maneuvers. This standard is frequently referred to as compartmentalization.

> **Standard No. 222, (as amended in 1994), includes the following statements:**
> The wheelchair securement anchorages at each wheelchair location shall be situated so that:
> a. A wheelchair can be secured in a forward-facing position.
> b. The wheelchair can be secured by wheelchair securement devices at two locations in the front and two locations in the rear.
>
> Each wheelchair location shall have:
> a. Not less that one anchorage for the upper end of the upper torso restraint; and
> b. Not less than two floor anchorages for wheelchair occupant pelvic and upper torso restraint.

Standard No. 225 - Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems
This standard established requirements for child restraint anchorage systems to ensure their proper location and strength for the effective securing of child safety restraint systems. This standard is established to reduce the likelihood of anchorage systems' failures, and to increase the likelihood that child safety restraint systems are properly secured. In the future, vehicles will be equipped with child restraint anchorage systems that are standardized and independent of the vehicle seat belts. FMVSS-225 compliant systems are sometimes referred to as "UCRA" systems (Universal Child Restraint Anchorages). By September 1, 2002, UCRA systems will be required in two seating positions of Type A2 school buses and optimal for all Type A1, B, C, and D school buses.

Standard No. 302 - Flammability of Interior Materials
This standard specifies burn resistance requirements for materials used in the occupant compartments of motor vehicles, including the materials used for child safety seats. Its purpose is to reduce deaths and injuries to motor vehicle occupants caused by vehicle fires, especially those originating in the interior of the vehicle from sources such as matches or cigarettes.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Regulations; www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/import/FMVSS/

Appendix 7E — Frequently Asked Questions

Loading/unloading

Q. **Is it OK to let a student stand on the lift with a walker?**

A. No. A student that walks with a walker or crutches already has balance problems. It is not safe to have a student stand on a moving lift. No one should stand on a lift while it is being raised or lowered.

Q. ***Is it OK to let a student sit in a chair on the bus lift if he has a hard time going up/down the bus steps?***

A. No. A chair cannot be used on the lift. A student must be sitting in a locked wheelchair or stroller when using a lift. If the student requires a lot of assistance to go up/down the steps, contact the student's school physical therapist for suggestions.

Q. ***Is it OK to use a footstool when a student has a hard time with the large first step?***

A. Yes. A footstool can be used to bridge the gap between the ground and the first step. Be sure to tie down the stool inside the bus.

Q. ***If a student has difficulty going up/down the steps, is it OK to let him crawl?***

A. No. Students should load the bus in an age appropriate manner. They should walk up the steps with assistance from an adult. Some of our buses have three steps and some have four. With a four-step bus, the steps are not as high as a three-step bus, which may make it easier for the student to manage. If walking up the steps is too difficult, contact the student's physical therapist for suggestions.

Q. ***Can adults carry a school age student onto the bus and to the bus seat?***

A. No. School age students should not be carried except in the case of an emergency. It is dangerous for the student and for those carrying him/her. This may not be the case for certain students depending on their age, weight, and disability, or a preschool age child who may be too small to negotiate bus steps.

Q. ***Is it OK to drive power wheelchairs on and off the bus lift?***

A. Most often, with close supervision, it is OK to drive on and off the lift when it is on the ground. Power wheelchairs should not be driven off/on bus lift when it is in a raised position. The gears must be disengaged so the wheelchair can be manually pushed.

Q. ***If a student has a hard time moving the wheelchair backwards, is it OK to let him/her move it forward onto the bus lift?***

A. No. The student must face away from the bus while on the lift. The heaviest part of the wheelchair is at the back. The lift was designed to operate with the heaviest part of the load on the back of the lift.

Q. ***If a student is afraid to ride the bus lift, is it OK for an adult to ride with him?***

A. No. No one should ever ride the lift while standing. You can help students feel more secure by reminding them that you are holding their wheelchair frame while they are on the lift.

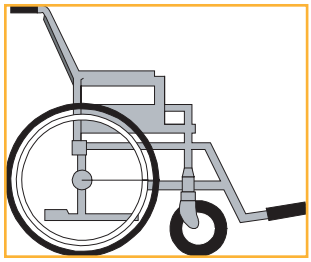
Q. ***What do you do if the student's wheelchair brakes and/or seat belt do not work properly?***

A. Notify the parents or school personnel as soon as possible so the brakes and/or seat belt can be repaired. It is very important for both brakes and seat belt to be working properly while the wheelchair is on the lift and while inside the bus.

Wheelchair Securement & Occupant Restraint Systems

Q. ***Is it OK to hook the tie down strap to the footrest? It seems like I can more quickly and easily get the strap on the footrest to hold the wheelchair.***

A. No. You must hook the tie down straps around a non-removable part of the wheelchair frame. Leg rests, armrests, and wheels come off the wheelchair easily. You must place the tie down strap at the site on the wheelchair frame that is marked with cable ties. If a wheelchair has a factory installed transit option attachment, you hook the strap to the transit option attachment that is welded to the wheelchair frame.



Q. ***Is it OK to leave the tray on a wheelchair during the bus ride if a parent requests it to support the child's arms?***

A. No. Trays must always be removed from the wheelchair and tied down inside the bus. A tray attached to a wheelchair can cause severe abdominal injuries if the bus had to stop very quickly or was involved in an crash. If the parent does not agree to have it removed, contact the student's physical therapist for other options such as a tray made out of foam.

Q. *Is it OK to leave a student's wheelchair tilted so she can sleep on the way home?*

A. Students should be transported in an upright position whenever possible. If the child cannot maintain a proper head position, the wheelchair may need to be tilted slightly - but not more than 30 degrees. When wheelchair backs are reclined or wheelchairs are tilted, the student can "submarine" or slide under the lap belt if the bus brakes are applied quickly. Contact the student's physical therapist for help.

If for medical reasons a recline angle of more than 30 degrees is required, the shoulder belt must remain as close to the student's shoulder and chest as possible. Moving the anchor point of the shoulder belt rearward along the vehicle side wall should improve its placement.

Q. *Is it OK to bring the lap belt over the wheels of the wheelchair to make it easier to hook around the student?*

A. No. The lap belt must be brought up inside the wheels and armrests of the wheelchair and make contact directly with the student. If you have trouble getting the belt inside the armrests, contact the student's physical therapist to see if modifications need to be made to the wheelchair seat or back.

Q. *Does the shoulder belt have to be used if the student complains that it hurts his neck?*

A. Yes. If the bus is equipped to have shoulder belts, then you must use it. If the shoulder belt is not positioned well, you may need to reposition the wheelchair on the floor tracks or reposition the attachment of the shoulder belt to the bus wall. There is also a strap available called a shoulder height adjuster. This strap provides more options for placement of the shoulder strap. You may need to ask your supervisor if it is possible to have this type shoulder strap on your bus for students who are very short.

Q. *Is it safe for a student to be transported in a wheelchair using a "subasis" pelvic bar?*

A. It is not considered a safe practice to use a subasis pelvic bar during transit. "Close fitting accessories such as subasis pelvic bars and knee blocks could reduce the effectiveness of a pelvic belt (lap belt) and cause unnecessary injury to the wheelchair occupant in a crash situation." *Basic Principles of Occupant Protection, J2249 Guideline – ver. June 9, 1999 .*

It would be advantageous to have a four point pelvic positioning strap added to the wheelchair for use during transport instead of the subasis bar.

Q. ***What should I do if I can't get the tie down straps out of the floor tracks to move them?***

A. Floor tracks need to be kept clean, free of dirt and trash. If cleaning around the floor track attachment doesn't allow the strap to be removed, you must notify your supervisor or contact a mechanic at the bus garage to get help in removing the strap. Then be sure to sweep the bus floor and tracks frequently.

Q. ***Who do I contact to get tie down sites marked on a student's new wheelchair?***

A. A team comprised of individuals with knowledge of wheelchair securement can mark the tie down sites on a wheelchair. This team would typically include a school physical therapist and transportation personnel.

Appendix 7F - Handouts

Procedures for School Bus Loading/Unloading of Students Using Walkers or Crutches

STUDENT MAY NOT STAND ON LIFT FOR BUS LOADING/UNLOADING

LOADING STUDENT USING WALKER OR CRUTCHES

1. Student walks to the bus in front of the steps.
2. Adult stands behind the student and assists him/her to balance while going up the bus steps.
    a. Student may need assistance to lift his/her foot up to the step above.
    b. Student using crutches may need to use one crutch in addition to the handrail to go up the steps.
3. Adult assists student as he/she walks to the bench seat.
    a. Adult puts student in a child safety restraint system if indicated on the student's IEP/504 Plan.
4. Adult secures walker or crutches in the bus with approved straps, either in a seat or on the floor at an empty wheelchair tie down site. Do not use bungee cords to secure equipment inside the bus.

UNLOADING STUDENT USING WALKER OR CRUTCHES

1. Walker or crutches are placed on the ground near bus steps.
2. Driver or transportation safety assistant assists the student from the bench seat to the bus steps.
3. Adult stands in front of the student and assists him/her to balance while going down the bus steps.
    a. Student may need assistance to lower his/her foot to the step below.
    b. Student using crutches may need to use one crutch in addition to the handrail to come down the steps.
4. Once the student has reached the ground, adult assists the student to maintain balance until he/she is balanced in the walker or crutches.

If the amount of assistance required for the student to go up or down the steps is excessive, contact the student's school physical therapist to determine an appropriate, alternative method.

Procedures for School Bus Loading/Unloading of Students Using Wheelchairs

LOADING STUDENT USING WHEELCHAIR

1. Bus driver sets parking brake and activates bus-warning lights.
    a. Stop arm and lights should remain out/on until the student is restrained on the bus.
2. Driver or transportation safety assistant locks the lift door in an open position.
3. Adult ensures student's seat belt is snugly fastened before placing the wheelchair on bus lift.
4. Adult positions the wheelchair on the bus lift with the student facing out.
    a. Ensures that the wheelchair is placed on the lift back far enough for the footrests to be behind the raised lip on the front of the lift platform.
    b. Disengages the gears on the motors of a power wheelchair to allow an adult to manually place the wheelchair on the lift if needed. Consult the student's physical therapist for instruction in disengaging gears on power wheelchairs.
5. Adult secures the wheelchair on the lift in the following manner:
    a. Manual wheelchair: Secure wheel locks.
    b. Power wheelchair:
        i. Turn off power at control box.
        ii. Secure wheel locks if available.
        iii. Re-engage the gears on the motors to set their internal locking mechanism if they were disengaged to place the power wheelchair on the lift. Consult the student's physical therapist for instruction in re-engaging gears on power wheelchairs.
6. Adult standing on the ground beside the lift grips the wheelchair frame and maintains grip while lift is being raised.
    a. Adult inside the bus should grasp the push handle as soon as he/she can safely reach it.
7. Adult releases wheel locks on manual wheelchair and, if available, on power wheelchair.
    a. Adult disengages gears on motors of power wheelchair and manually pulls the power wheelchair into bus.
8. Adult safely guides the wheelchair into the bus making sure there is adequate clearance above the student's head at the lift door.
9. Adult places the wheelchair in a forward facing position for securement.

UNLOADING STUDENT USING WHEELCHAIR

Follow steps 1-5 described above.

6. Adult in the bus grips a wheelchair push handle and maintains grip for as long as possible while the bus lift is lowered.
    a. Adult on the ground standing beside the lift grips the wheelchair frame and maintains grip while the lift is lowered.
7. Adult releases wheel locks and safely guides the wheelchair off the bus lift.
    b. Consult the student's physical therapist before allowing student to drive power wheelchair off a lowered bus lift.

Power wheelchairs should <u>not</u> be driven on/off the bus lift when it is in a <u>raised</u> position.

STUDENT PROFILE – TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Transportation and Exceptional Children staff will use the following information to develop a transportation plan.

Student Name _____ **ID #** _____
Parent/Guardian Name _____ **Phone** _____
Address _____ **Assigned School** _____
_____ **Bus Number AM** _____ **PM** _____
Pick Up Address _____ _____
For Preschool Students:
Drop Off Address _____ **Anticipated Date of Enrollment** _____
_____ **Days of Week** (circle) **M T W Th F**

School Contact/Case Manager and Email Address _____

Student Information

Age _____ **Weight** _____ **Height**_____ **Exceptional Children Code** _____ **504 Plan**: **Y N**
Medical Diagnosis _____ **Additional Medical Conditions** (check all that apply)

☐ Allergies _____ ☐ Heat Intolerance ☐ Seizures
☐ Shunt ☐ Spinal Rod ☐ Respiratory Difficulties
☐ Other _____

Equipment that Must be Transported and Secured (check all that apply)

☐ Wheelchair ☐ Crutches ☐ Oxygen Tank
☐ Wheelchair Tray ☐ Walker ☐ Communication Device
☐ Other _____

Communication Abilities (check one)

☐ Age Appropriate ☐ Non Verbal ☐ Other _____

List any Special Behavior Strategies to be Implemented During Transport

_____

Transportation Summary (complete with information obtained from page 2)

Mode of Transportation: *(check one):*

☐ Bus ☐ Lift Bus/Vehicle ☐ Parent Contract
☐ Other _____

Pick Up / Drop Off Location: *(check one):*

☐ Bus Stop ☐ Address Stop

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS)*: (check one):*

☐ None ☐ Integrated Bus Seat or STAR Restraint
☐ Car Seat ☐ Safety Vest (circle size: XS S M Lg)

Note: *If Vehicle Contract (van or auto) is necessary due to routing, then students under 8 years or under 80 lbs will be transported in a weight-appropriate car seat or booster seat that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.*

Loading on/off Bus Steps: (*check one):*

☐ Independent ☐ Supervision ☐ Assistance Needed

Principal/Assistant Principal (Signature) _____ **Date:** _____

Student's Name _____ **Date Form Completed** _____

Method of Transportation *Complete the following section. Check only **one**.*

☐ Student is able to sit on the bus seat without modifications.

☐ Student remains seated in his/her wheelchair with appropriate securement/restraint systems.

☐ Student is unable to remain seated on the bus seat during transport due to a disability and will need a **C**hild **S**afety **R**estraint **S**ystem. **If checked, indicate the appropriate CSRS and size (see table below) on page 1 under Transportation Summary**

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) for School Buses typically used in North Carolina (Products from other manufacturers may be used.)	Student's Weight in lbs
Integrated Child Restraint Bus Seat ➢ Child restraint is part of the bus seat and has a 5 point harness system ➢ Available on some buses manufactured after 2000	CE White 20–60 SafeGuard 22-85
STAR RESTRAINT – (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-65 lbs
STAR RESTRAINT – **Plus** (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-90 lbs
E-Z On Safety Vest (Adjustable safety vest that zips up the back) ➢ Vest must be put on student prior to student getting on the bus (i.e., vest *put on student at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon)* ➢ Vest attaches to a seat mount that is secured to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS ➢ ***Indicated for students who are over 90 lbs or who INAPPROPRIATELY unbuckle front buckles in car seats or the harnesses on other CSRS***	20 -160 lbs Size based on child's waist **Size: Waist:** XS 19-23" S 25-30" M 32-37" LG 37-42"
Car Seats (RARELY used on buses) ➢ Only select this option if child requires a rear-facing position or if student requires more support to remain seated than is provided by CSRS listed above. ➢ Car seat internal harness must be adjusted to the student ➢ Car seat must be installed on reinforced bus seats	Up to 65 lbs per manufacturer's instructions

Method of Assisting Student on/off the School Bus *Check only **one**.*

☐ Student is able to ascend/descend bus step(s) independently.

☐ Adult assistance is needed for student to ascend/descend bus steps.
Describe method of assist: _____
(*Note: parent/guardian can assist student up/ down the bus step(s) at the home; school personnel can assist student at the school. Transportation staff typically assists student inside the vehicle*).

☐ Student needs to be carried on bus steps (option **only** for **preschool students** who weigh less than 40 lbs).

☐ Student is unable to safely ascend/descend the bus step(s) with assistance; therefore, student must use the lift while seated in a wheelchair. Once on the bus, student may be moved to a seat (student may need a child restraint while sitting on bus seat).

☐ Student uses a manual/power wheelchair and requires a transport vehicle with a lift

****

IEP TEAM or 504 Case Manager Must provide page 1 of this form to the Transportation Department.

The need for a Child Safety Restraint System on the bus must be documented in the 504 Plan or IEP

This form should be reviewed annually or as needed to reassess the transportation needs for this student.

Procedures for Using Integrated Child Safety Restraint Systems on the Bus

CE White

SafeGuard

An integrated child restraint is a child safety restraint system built into the bus seat that enables preschool students and students with disabilities to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. An integrated child restraint has a 5-point harness system. The decision to use an integrated child restraint for school age children is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

CE White Integrated Child Restraint – children between 20-60 pounds (*per manufacturer)*
SafeGuard Integrated Child Restraint – children over 1 year of age, between 22- 85 pounds and whose height is less than 49 inches. The student's shoulder height must be lower than the shoulder belt slots and the student must be capable of sitting upright without assistance. (*per manufacturer)*

PREPARING THE SEAT

- Lower the seat cushion from the seat back.
- On a SafeGuard seat, fold the outer part under to create a cushion for the child to sit.
- Release the harness clip and metal latches from the buckle.
- Lengthen the shoulder straps by one of the following methods depending upon the type of seat:

CE White – Pull up on the tab at the upper right hand corner of the seat while pulling the shoulder straps outward.

SafeGuard – Press the adjustor button on the side of the seat base while pulling up on the shoulder straps. Repeat on the other side.

PUTTING THE STUDENT IN THE SEAT

- Position the student in the seat with hips as far back as possible.
- Place a shoulder strap over each of the student's shoulders.
- Fasten the two metal latches into the buckle to form a belt around the student's pelvis. Be sure to hear a click to ensure the buckle is secure.
- Tighten the shoulder straps to remove slack by one of the following methods depending upon the type of seat:

CE White – Pull up on the strap at the upper right hand corner of the seat.

SafeGuard – Pull up on the free end of the strap at each belt adjuster.

  - Straps should lie in a relatively straight line without sagging. They should not put pressure on the student's body.
- Fasten the harness clip and adjust it to the level of the student's armpits.
  - The Harness clip keeps the shoulder belts correctly positioned.
- Harness straps must lie flat and be adjusted so that excess webbing cannot be pinched both above the student's shoulders and below the harness clip.

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Procedures for Using STAR Restraints on the Bus

STAR RESTRAINTS - Student Transportation Add-On Restraint

A STAR restraint is an add-on seat with a 5 point harness system that enables preschool students and students with disabilities to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. The decision to use a STAR restraint for school age children is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

STAR restraints meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.

DETERMINING APPROPRIATE SIZE

STAR	Student's Weight 25-65 lbs	Student's Height 47 inches or less
STAR Plus	Student's Weight 25-90 lbs	Student's Height 47 inches or less

INSTALLING THE STAR RESTRAINT ON THE BUS SEAT

- Wrap the gray, tan, and black straps at the top of the STAR restraint around the bus seat back.
- Insert the gray and tan straps at rear of the STAR base into the opening between the bus seat and back.
- Connect the gray straps and connect the tan straps.
- Wrap the black strap at the front of the STAR base underneath the bus seat.
- Connect the black straps.
- Tighten the straps snugly and secure the free ends with the Velcro or plastic holders.

PUTTING THE STUDENT IN THE STAR RESTRAINT

An adult must always put the student in the STAR restraint.

- Release the harness clip and metal latches from the buckle prior to student sitting in the STAR restraint.
- Adjust the two comfort slides located at the top of the straps to student's shoulder height.
- Position the shoulder straps over student's shoulders. If additional length is needed, press the adjuster button on the side of the seat base while pulling on the strap (repeat on other side).
- Insert the two metal latches into the buckle.
- Tighten the harness straps snugly around the student by pulling up on the two straps located on the sides of the seat base at the same time.
- Fasten the harness clip and position it at armpit level.
- Some STAR restraints have additional chest straps that can be fastened under the shoulder straps once the student has been secured in the seat. Position the chest strap as close to the student's armpit level as possible and adjust it to fit snugly.

REMOVING THE STUDENT FROM THE STAR RESTRAINT

An adult must always remove the student from the STAR restraint.

- Release the harness clip.
- Loosen the shoulder straps by pressing the adjuster buttons located on each side while pulling on the straps.
- Push the button to release the metal latches.

The bus seat behind a student in a STAR restraint should be unoccupied or be occupied by a student using a child safety restraint system.

Technical Information from SafeGuard®

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Procedures for Using Safety Vests on the Bus

SAFETY VEST

A safety vest is a child safety restraint system that enables preschool students and students with disabilities to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. A safety vest is also useful for students who inappropriately unbuckle front buckles on other child restraints. The decision to use a safety vest for school age children is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

Safety Vests must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.

SIZING & ADJUSTMENT OF THE SAFETY VEST

Safety vests are designed for children and adults who weigh between 20-168 lbs.
Safety vest sizes are based on the individual's waist size.
The vests are adjustable with 3 zipper sizes to accommodate growth.

X- Small (19-23" waist)	Small (25-30" waist)	Medium (32-37"waist)	Large (37-42"waist)

Students should be wearing their safety vests prior to getting on the bus (i.e. apply vest at home in the morning and at school in the afternoon). The safety vest must be put on so that the zipper is located in the back with the hip strap low around the student's lap. The vest should be put on under winter coats. The shoulder straps are adjustable and may be lengthened or shortened to properly fit the student. The shoulder webbing must be 'back threaded' into the black webbing guides to prevent the webbing from slipping.
X-small, small, and medium safety vests have additional straps between the legs that are adjustable to help keep the safety vest properly positioned at the student's hips. Do not remove the webbing guides or the buckles on the vests.

The safety vest must be snug and applied correctly in order to provide a safe and secure bus ride.

INSTALLING THE SAFETY VEST SEAT MOUNT

- Install the safety vest seat mount by wrapping the mount securely around the bus seat back.
- Position the push button closure facing the seat back to prevent accidental release.
- Position the non-adjustable webbing snap hooks at the bottom of the seat.
- Position the adjustable webbing snap hooks at the top of the seat back.

SECURING THE SAFETY VEST & STUDENT ON THE BUS SEAT

- Position the student on the seat with his/her hips and shoulders touching the seat back.
- Attach the seat mount hip snap hooks to the D-Rings on the vest at student's hips.
- Adjust the webbing on the shoulder snap hooks on the seat mount to the height of the student, if needed.
- 'Back thread' the webbing in the black webbing guides to prevent the webbing from slipping.
- Attach the shoulder snap hooks to the metal slots on the vest at the student's shoulders.
- Check all hooks, webbing, and buckles to ensure they are secure and snug.

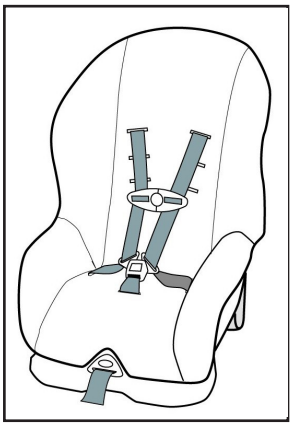
The bus seat behind a student utilizing a safety vest should be unoccupied or be occupied by a student using a child safety restraint system.

Technical Information from E-Z-ON Products, Inc. of Florida

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Procedures for Using Car Seats on the Bus

CAR SEATS ON THE BUS



Courtesy of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

A car seat is a child safety restraint system with a harness that is used on the school bus for children who require a rear-facing position or who require more support to remain seated than is provided by other types of child safety restraints. The decision to use a car seat for a school age student is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

PROVIDING THE PROPER CAR SEAT

- Car seats should be provided by the school system.
- Car seats must have a label stating that it meets FMVSS 213.
- Car seats must be appropriate for the height & weight of the child (see manufacturer's instructions).
- Rear-facing car seats - use until a child reaches the highest weight or height according to manufacturer's instructions. At a minimum, use a rear-facing car seat until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.
- Forward-facing car seats - use when the child has reached the highest allowed rear-facing weight of the child restraint. Forward facing should not be considered until a child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.

ADJUSTING THE CAR SEAT FOR THE CHILD

Harness straps may need to be adjusted for the child before the car seat is secured on the bus. Refer to manufacturer's instructions regarding which slots to use as well as removing and re-threading harness straps into the correct slots.

- Rear-facing - use the harness slots that are even with or below the level of the child's shoulders.
- Forward-facing - use the top set of harness slots unless lower slots that are even with or above the child's shoulders are allowed to be used forward-facing by the manufacturer.

SECURING THE CAR SEAT ON THE BUS

Car seats must be installed:

- On reinforced seats (those that meet FMVSS 210)
- With seat belts meeting FMVSS 209 and installed according to the bus manufacturer
- Before placing the child in the car seat
- So that the car seat does not move more than one inch when pushed side to side at the base

Car seats should be installed:

- By bus driver or other trained staff member
- With seat belt buckle positioned towards the bus aisle so it can be readily secured/released
- At the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of occupants
- Next to the window (not the aisle) if a student not in a child safety restraint system shares the seat

Car seats should never be installed next to an emergency exit.

If the non-adjustable part of the lap belt is too long after being buckled and tightened, then it may be twisted one to three times to shorten the belt (adding knots is not acceptable).

PUTTING THE CHILD IN THE CAR SEAT

- Put the child in the car seat.
- Position the harness over the child's shoulders and secure the buckle.
- Secure the harness retainer clip and tighten the harness straps.
- Position the harness retainer clip at armpit level.

The harness straps must lie flat and be adjusted so that excess webbing cannot be pinched at the child's shoulders.

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Procedures for Using Wheelchair Tie Down Straps

POSITIONING THE WHEELCHAIR ON THE BUS

- Position the wheelchair forward facing inside the bus.
- Manual wheelchair - secure the wheel locks.
- Power wheelchair - turn off the power at the joystick control box and re-engage gears on motors to activate internal locking mechanism.
  - Secure wheel locks if available.

ATTACHING THE FRONT TIE DOWN STRAPS

- Attach the floor track fittings of front tie down straps 3” to 8” outside the front wheels of the wheelchair.
  - Both front tie down straps must have the same type of buckle.
- Hook the tie down strap to the securement sites on the front of the wheelchair frame.
  - The securement sites on wheelchair frame should be marked with colored plastic cable ties for ease of identification.
- Secure and tighten each strap per manufacturer’s instructions.

ATTACHING THE REAR TIE DOWN STRAPS

- Attach the floor track fittings of rear tie down straps just inside the large, back wheels of the wheelchair.
  - Both rear tie down straps must have the same type of buckle.
- Hook the tie down strap to the securement sites on the rear of the wheelchair frame.
  - The securement sites on wheelchair frame should be marked with colored plastic cable ties for ease of identification.
- Secure and tighten each strap per manufacturer’s instructions.

CHECKING FOR PROPER SECUREMENT

After attaching all four tie down straps to the wheelchair:

- Release the wheel locks
- Perform a “shake” test - Grasp the wheelchair frame and physically shake it to test for movement.
- If necessary, further tighten tie down straps
- Re-apply the wheel locks

Always follow manufacturer’s recommendations regarding the use of wheelchair securement straps.

Procedures for Using Occupant Restraint System

After the wheelchair has been secured inside the bus, you must then provide effective restraint for the student in the wheelchair by attaching the lap belt and the shoulder belt.

Tell the student what you are going to do before attaching the lap and shoulder belt.

ATTACHING THE LAP BELT

- Place the ends of the lap belt around the student.
- Thread the lap belt between the gap of the wheelchair back and the seat.
    - The lap belt should never be placed over the wheelchair armrest.
- Position the lap belt around the student's pelvic zone near the hip.
    - The lap belt should never be positioned over the student's abdomen.
- Position the buckle on the side opposite to the side where the shoulder belt is attached to the bus wall.

Integrated lap belt (The lap belt is part of the wheelchair securement system.)

- Take the snap hook ends of the belt and attach it to the D rings on the rear securement straps.
- Adjust the lap belt by pulling on the free end to make the fit firm but comfortable.

Parallel or floor anchored lap belt (The wheelchair and passenger are secured independently of each other.)

- Attach directly into the floor track by inserting the track fitting ends into the rear track. Use a slot next to the rear securement strap on each side.
- Adjust the lap belt by pulling on the free end to make the fit firm but comfortable.

ATTACHING THE SHOULDER BELT

- Attach the shoulder belt to the wall in a slot slightly behind student and above the student's shoulder.
- Bring the triangular fitting of the shoulder belt over the student's shoulder, pass the collarbone and diagonally across the upper chest.
- Attach the triangular fitting of the shoulder belt to the stud on the lap belt latch plate.
- Pull on the loose end to achieve firm but comfortable tension.
- A "height adjuster" may be required to keep the shoulder belt away from the student's neck.

ATTACHING THE INTEGRATED LAP & SHOULDER BELT

- Grasp the buckle connector and pull webbing out of the retractor on the bus wall.
- Thread the snap hook of the longer buckle strap between the gap in the wheelchair back and seat and connect it to the D ring on the floor retractor closest to the bus wall.
- Thread the snap hook of the shorter buckle strap between the gap in the wheelchair back and seat and connect to the D ring on the other rear floor retractor.
- Adjust the shorter belt so that the push button buckle is at the student's pelvic zone near the hip opposite to the side where the shoulder belt is attached to the bus wall.
- Connect the buckle connector to the push button buckle.
- Adjust the webbing to fit low at the pelvic zone with the shoulder belt diagonally across the student's upper chest.
- Check to be sure that neither the lap belt nor the shoulder belt is twisted.

Technical Information from SURE-LOK Safe & Secure Training Video

NOTE: Crash tested (WC19) wheelchairs manufactured after May 2002 may offer the option of a crash tested lap belt that is anchored to the wheelchair frame. Labeling on the lap belt will indicate that it complies with ANSI/RESNA WC 19. If the wheelchair is equipped with a crash tested lap belt, then the shoulder belt will attach to the bus wall, continue diagonally across the student's upper chest and hook to the lap belt at the student's pelvis on the side opposite the bus wall.

Always follow manufacturer's recommendations regarding the use of occupant restraint systems.

Suggestions to Parents Regarding Their Child's Wheelchair

To facilitate safe transportation it is recommended that parents ensure that their child's wheelchair has the following:

- Wheel locks (brakes) that are in good, working condition
- Wheels that are stable and in proper alignment with the wheelchair
- Tires that are inflated properly and have good tread
- Seat belt that is "in working order" and securely attached to the wheelchair, crossing the student's pelvis, not abdomen
- Headrest OR an extended back, whenever practical
- Back that is securely fastened to the wheelchair frame
- Leg rests/footrests
- Anti-tippers
- Non-acid batteries on a power wheelchair (non-explosive and will not leak or spill)

Parents should be aware of the following:

- Wheelchair positioning straps, i.e., seat belts, chest/shoulder straps, foot straps, etc. must be fastened prior to loading the wheelchair on the bus lift.
- Seat belts cannot have Velcro fasteners.
- Wheelchair must be positioned on the bus lift so that your child faces out (his/her back is close to the bus).
- Wheel locks must be secured and/or power turned off while on the bus lift.
- Wheelchair with a tilt in space mechanism should have a locked position in which to maintain the wheelchair.
    - Your child needs to be transported as close to an upright position as possible.
- Lap tray should not be attached during transportation. The bus driver or transportation safety assistant will secure the tray on the bus.
    - If you feel your child needs some means of arm support during transport, please contact his/her school therapist for an assessment and recommendation.
- Your child cannot be transported while seated in a stroller unless it has been crash tested.
- Your child cannot be transported in a scooter. He/she must be able to transfer to a bus seat.

While you wait with your child at his/her bus stop or meet the bus when it brings your child home, you can assist us in teaching your child how to safely use bus transportation. You can stand beside the lift with your hand on your child's wheelchair while the lift is being raised/lowered.

PLEASE DO NOT RIDE THE LIFT WITH YOUR CHILD

This document of suggestions to parents is provided for informational purposes only. In providing these suggestions to parents the school system assumes absolutely no liability or responsibility for the contents thereof, including, but not limited to, provision, maintenance, or usage of the referenced equipment.

Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____

Parents should notify contact person if there have been any modifications or changes in student's equipment prior to it being transported.

CHAPTER 8

Emergency Evacuation

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" What the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve."

-Napolean Hill

The primary responsibility of the school bus driver is to safely transport students to and from school each day. To ensure safety for students, a bus driver and bus transportation safety assistant must know what to do if a crash or some other type of an emergency should occur.

Students with disabilities and preschoolers should follow the same emergency evacuation procedures and drills as non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible.

8.1 Evaucation Procedures

Belt Cutters

Belt cutters are devices with protected blades designed to quickly cut restraint belts. Each bus set up to accommodate wheelchair/mobility aids or other assistive devices which utilize belts, should contain at least one belt cutter properly secured in a location within the reach of the driver while belted into his/her seat. The driver may need to first cut his/her seat belt in order to be released from the driver's seat. It is a good idea to have another belt cutter for use by the transportation safety assistant**.** Belt cutters are used to cut securement belts to release a car seat/safety vest or straps to release a student from his/her wheelchair. On occasion it might be quicker to release buckles if this is possible.

The decision to cut or release buckles should be determined when the drivers and transportation safety assistants practice evacuation drills. Of course, belts should never be cut unless it is a true emergency situation. Drivers and transportation safety assistants should practice using belt cutters on old belts prior to an actual emergency. The belt cutter should be held at a 45-degree angle to the belt and the user must pull downward through the webbing. After use the belt cutter should be replaced since it would not be as sharp as it would need to be for quick, effective cuts.

Emergency Exits

Emergency exits include the front door, rear door, push-out windows, and roof hatch if available. If at all possible, the preferred emergency exit is the front door. If the rear exit is used, there are two methods of exiting. If able to walk, adults and students must be taught to sit on floor of bus, facing outward with knees bent over edge of bus. They should then push with their hands and slide forward with feet to the ground. If the student must be dragged or carried to the rear exit, typically two people (one inside the bus and one outside) will be needed to remove the student.

Evacuation Blankets

Each lift-equipped bus should be equipped with an evacuation blanket to be used in the case of an emergency evacuation. North Carolina lift-equipped buses manufactured after 2001 are equipped with an evacuation blanket. When children are too heavy to carry or have uncontrollable movements that make it difficult to safely carry them, a blanket should be used for evacuation. The blanket can be used to drag a student, head first, to an emergency exit. Drivers and transportation safety assistants should be fully trained in the correct usage of an evacuation blanket as well as a proper drag method.

First Aid Kit

The bus shall have a removable, moisture-proof and dust-proof first aid kit in an accessible place in the driver's compartment. It shall be identified as a first aid kit. Contents of first aid kit shall be in compliance with state standards. The 2007 NC school bus specifications require the following contents:

- 4-inch bandage compresses, 2 packages.
- 2-inch bandage compresses, 2 packages.
- 1-inch adhesive compresses (16 per package), 2 packages.
- 40-inch triangular bandage with two safety pins, 2 packages.
- Non-latex exam gloves, 2 pair (1 medium and 1 large)

The first aid kit is to include a breakable tamper seal and be secured in the "Safety Equipment Storage Box."

8.2 Evacuation Methods

School buses are typically evacuated using the front door, the rear door, or a combination of both. Choosing which door to use in an evacuation is dependent upon the presence and location of any danger to the students. The bus driver needs to know that the door to the emergency exit he/she plans to use can be opened and that it is safe to evacuate the bus from that exit. For instance, will they be exiting into traffic or on an embankment?

Using the Front Door as an Exit
For the students who are able to walk independently, the driver should have the students on the front right seat stand, walk to the front of the bus and use the handrail to descend the bus steps. The driver should then have the students on the front left seat follow. This procedure is continued for each row alternating from one side to the other until the bus is empty.

If students require assistance to walk, they should be assisted to the steps at the front of the bus and assisted down the steps.

If students are unable to walk, they must be lifted and carried or dragged to the front of the bus and down the steps.

The first student off the bus should lead the other students to a safe zone at least 100' from the bus.

(Refer to Appendix 7A – General Emergency Evacuation Procedures)

Using the Rear Door as an Exit
For students who are able to walk independently, the driver should have the students on the last row on the left to stand and walk to the rear of the bus. The driver should then have the students on the last row on the right follow. This procedure is continued for each row alternating from one side to the other until the bus is empty.

For students who are able to walk independently or with assistance, the "sit and slide' method can be used to exit the bus using the rear door.

- Student sits on floor of bus, facing outward with knees bent over the edge of bus,
- Student pushes with hands and slides forward with feet to the ground, and
- Someone outside the bus grasps each student by the arm as they slide forward with feet to the ground.

For students who are unable to walk, once they are lifted and carried or dragged to the rear of the bus, an adult inside the bus must lower the student to an adult waiting outside the bus.

The first student off the bus should lead the other students to a safe zone at least 100' from the bus.

(Refer to Appendix 7A – General Emergency Evacuation Procedures)

Using the Front and Rear Door Simultaneously
If using the front and rear door simultaneously, the driver should divide the bus in half. Students in the front half of the bus should use the front door and those in the rear should use the rear door.

The first students off the bus should lead the other students to a safe zone at least 100' from the bus.

(Refer to Appendix 7A – General Emergency Evacuation Procedures)

Lifting the Student

General Lifting Guidelines

- Tell the student what you are going to do before lifting him/her.
- Stand with your feet about a shoulder's width apart to maintain balance.
- Squat by bending your hips and knees.
- Get as close as possible to the student.
- Lift straight using your leg muscles without twisting at the waist.

If student has poor muscle control:

- Curl the student as much as possible to keep his/her arms and legs from flopping.
- Support the student's head and neck.

1 Person Lift

- Follow general lifting guidelines listed above.
- Stand beside the student.
- Squat by bending your hips and knees.
- Place one of your arms behind the student's shoulders with your hand under the student's arm on opposite side.
- Place your other arm under the student's knees.
- Return to standing from squat position using your leg muscles.
- Keep the student close to you while lifting.

2 Person Lift

Follow general lifting guidelines listed above.

- Taller person stands behind the student and other person stands in front of the student.
- Person in back reaches under the student's arms, around the student's chest and clasps his/her hands in order to lift the student.
- Person in front lifts the student's legs under the hips and thighs.
- Both people lift together on a count of 3.

Using a Blanket Drag – Using a blanket reduces stress on the student's body and the likelihood of injury. The blanket drag is a way to move heavier students or fragile students who might be hurt by lifting. If a blanket is not available, a coat could also be used.

- Follow the general lifting guidelines listed above.
- Fold the blanket in half and place on the floor next to the student.
- Place the student on the blanket with his/her head toward the exit.
- Wrap the blanket around the student to protect his/her arms and legs.
- Grasp the blanket on both sides of the student's head and drag the student to the exit.

Managing Students in Child Safety Restraint Systems

• Integrated Child Safety Restraint & • Add-On Seats such as a STAR restraint	Remove the student from the child safety restraint system in the quickest manner possible. • Release the buckle. Slide the retainer clip down and pull the straps over the student's head to remove the student. OR • Using a belt cutter, make 4 cuts to remove the student. Cut both straps above the shoulders and cut both straps on each side of the hips.
• Safety Vests	Leave the safety vest on the student. Remove the student from the seat in the quickest manner possible. • Use a belt cutter to cut the seat mount on the back of the bus seat below the buckle. (The seat mount will remain connected to the safety vest and can be used to guide the student to the safety zone.) OR • Release the 4 hooks on the seat mount if a belt cutter is not available.

• Car Seats	<u>Infants and Teen Parenting Programs</u>
	Infants should be left in their car seats for evacuation due to their size and need for support outside of the bus. Unhook the seat belt buckle or cut the webbing with a belt cutter to release the car seat.
	
	<u>Students in Forward-Facing Car Seat (20+ lbs)</u>
	The decision to evacuate students in or out of their car seats must be included in a written evacuation plan.
	Considerations:
	• Size of student
	• Size of car seat
	• Width of bus aisle
	• Ease of removal of car seat from bus seat
	  ○ Release the seat belt buckle
	  OR
	  ○ Cut the seat belt webbing
	• Ease of removal of student from car seat
	  ○ Release the buckle; slide harness clip down; pull straps over child's head
	  OR
	  ○ Cut both straps above the shoulders and cut both straps on each side of the hips.
	• Physical capabilities of the driver/transportation safety assistant
	• Time constraints for evacuation
	• Student's need for support outside the bus
	
	If decision is made to evacuate student in the car seat, the car seat may be carried or dragged to the emergency exit.

When planning for an emergency evacuation of preschoolers that are able to walk, the use of a "lead rope" may be indicated. The preschool students are told to hold to the rope as they are led by an adult to the safety zone. This enables the adult to keep the group together.

8.3 Student Specific Emergency Information

All children with special needs should have up-to-date emergency information available on the school bus. It is important that this information be filled out by knowledgeable persons, updated annually or sooner if needed, and kept in a convenient and safe location. All emergency information should be handled as confidential in accordance with Family Education Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements.

If a student is transported to a hospital, the emergency card should accompany him/her.
(Refer to Appendix 7B - Emergency Information Card)

8.4 Responsibilities of Bus Personnel During Emergency Evacuation

It is critical to have responsibilities defined for the bus driver and transportation safety assistant(s) prior to Evacuation Planning. It would be beneficial for transportation administration in each LEA to develop a specific list of responsibilities and ensure that bus personnel know what they are to do in the event of an emergency evacuation.

The following is an example of a list of established responsibilities:

Driver's Responsibilities

- Radio base with bus number, location & indicate reason for evacuation.
- Remain on the bus to maintain order and ensure that all students are off the bus.
- Throw the two-way radio (if possible), students' confidential emergency information cards and First Aid Kit out of bus so they can be retrieved for use as needed during the evacuation.
- Indicate location of safety zone at least 100' (3 bus lengths) away from the bus.
- Remove students from wheelchairs.
- Drag/carry students to chosen exit(s).
- Evacuate students in their wheelchairs with assistance from transportation safety assistant.

Transportation Safety Assistant's Responsibilities

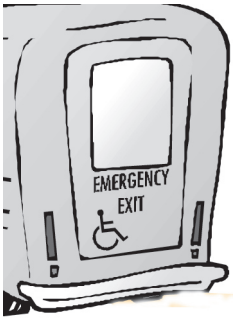
- Open chosen exit(s).
- Assist ambulatory students to the safety zone at least 100' (3 bus lengths) away from the bus.
- Take non-ambulatory students from driver at door exit and drag/carry them to the safety zone.
- Assist driver to evacuate students in their wheelchairs.

BEST PRACTICE

DO NOT HESITATE TO EVACUATE if you feel students are in danger.

8.5 Evacuation Planning

Training and planning are essential to an effective emergency evacuation. When planning for an evacuation, be sure to include input from emergency responders in your immediate area. It is crucial to have a written plan for emergency evacuations that takes into consideration the individual needs of students who use child safety restraint systems, wheelchairs, ventilation, and oxygen equipment or other special equipment.



There are several basic questions that need to be answered through administrative policy.

- Who calls the police and ambulance service?
- What are the specific responsibilities of the bus driver and transportation safety assistant?
- Who maintains the list of students on the bus, the transportation department or the school?
- Who maintains the list of emergency phone numbers to contact parents?
- Who notifies parents that their child was involved in a serious crash?
- Who documents the hospital name and address where each child is transported?
- What do you do when a crash occurs in the afternoon after school has dismissed and no one is at school to take your call?
- Who maintains a manifest or passenger list for after-hours operations (e.g., field trips)?

When to Evacuate

Evacuation should not be undertaken automatically after every crash or incident. For instance, after most “fender-bender” bus crashes, children will usually be safer inside the bus until emergency help arrives.

Reasons for an emergency evacuation:

- Fire or smoke on the bus
- Suspected fire (smelling something hot or noticing a strong fuel smell)
- Inoperable bus in danger of being hit by other vehicles (i.e., on a railroad track, on the edge of an embankment, under the brink of a hill, on a sharp curve, heavy fog conditions, etc.)
- Flooding conditions

Order in which to Evacuate Students from the Bus

Typically students who are able to walk (ambulatory students) are evacuated first unless behavior problems would create additional hazards. The next students to be evacuated are those who are nearest to the source of danger, followed by those next closest, etc.

(Refer to Appendix 7F – Bus Evacuation Plan.))

Designating Student Evacuation Helpers

- Select the most capable of your students as evacuation helpers.
  - The student designated may not always be the oldest student but should be the most reliable in terms of abilities and behaviors.
- Evacuation helpers can do such things as lead other students to the safety zone, keep students together in the safety zone if transportation safety assistant must return to the bus.
- Evacuation helpers do not return to the bus once they have evacuated it themselves.

Choosing a Safety Zone

Once students have been evacuated from the bus, they should be taken to a safety zone that is at least 100' (approximately 3 bus lengths) from the bus. An adult should remain with them to prevent them from leaving the safety zone. If all the personnel on the bus are involved in the evacuation, it could be possible to ask a responsible student or any available adult to remain with the students.

Bus drivers and transportation safety assistants must know the following:

- Specific responsibilities during an evacuation
- Location and procedure to open every exit on the bus with their eyes closed in the event that the bus is filled with smoke
- Location(s) and the procedure for use of a belt cutter(s)
- Location of first aid kit & evacuation blankets
- Location of students' Emergency Information Cards
- Names and assigned seating positions for every student on the bus
- General knowledge of students' cognitive ability that may affect their response in an emergency
- Method of communication for each student
- Which students could be helpers in the event of an evacuation and to what extent
- Which students can walk independently or with assistance during an evacuation
- Procedure for proper use of belt cutters
- Procedure for evacuating students that remain in their car seats
- Procedure for removing students from child safety restraint systems
- Which students can be safely removed from their wheelchairs during an evacuation
- Procedure for removing students from their wheelchair (consult school based physical therapist)
- Procedure for properly lifting, carrying, or dragging students
- Procedure for determining which emergency exit should be used
- Method for safe exit from a rear emergency door
- Procedure for determining a proper safety zone for students after evacuation

Writing a Specific Evacuation Plan

On a diagram of a bus:

- Write the students' names to indicate where they sit on the bus.
- Next to the students' names include the following if appropriate.
  - Student is in a safety vest (SV)
  - Student is in a child safety restraint system other than a safety vest (CR)
  - Student is hearing impaired (HI) or visually impaired (VI)
- Determine the best method of evacuation for each student with input from his/her school physical therapist, classroom teacher, and parent.
- Next to the student's name on the diagram indicate the method of evacuation.
  - Student (ambulatory) walks with or without assistance (A)
  - Student remains in his/her wheelchair for evacuation* (in w/c)
  - Student is removed from his/her wheelchair for evacuation (out w/c)
  - Student remains in his/her car seat for evacuation (in CR)
  - Student is removed from his/her car seat for evacuation (out CR)
  - Student is carried (carry) or dragged using blanket (drag)
  - More than one adult may be needed to carry or drag the student (+2)
- Indicate the order in which students will be evacuated.
  - Ambulatory students are usually evacuated first unless behavior problems would create additional hazards.
  - Students to be evacuated next are those nearest to source of danger, followed by those next closest, etc.
- Indicate the location of emergency equipment (first aid kit, belt cutter(s), evacuation blanket(s), etc.).
- Indicate the location of the students' Emergency Information Cards.

** Some students with serious deformities or medical conditions may be more easily evacuated in their wheelchairs. Don't be deceived by the size of these students - their deformities and/or stiffness from high muscle tone may make lifting them out of the wheelchair precarious. Some students may spasm when quickly taken out of their wheelchair, and this movement could throw the assisting adult off balance. With the help of the school physical therapist, the bus staff can determine which students should remain in their wheelchairs.*

(Refer to Appendix 7D - 7F.)

8.6 Emergency Evacuation Drills

Once an emergency evacuation plan is developed, evacuation procedures from that specific plan should be well known and rehearsed by drivers, transportation safety assistants, and substitute drivers.

NHTSA Highway Safety Program Guideline 17: Pupil Transportation Safety states that at least once during each school semester, each pupil transported should participate in supervised emergency evacuation drills. NC State Board Policy states that evacuation drills should be conducted within the first five days of school.

- Drills are usually conducted on the school property and are scheduled and supervised by the transportation department and the school administrator.
- Parents should be notified of the drills, as they may want to be at the school during the drill.
- Students may or may not actually participate in the drill. If students are medically fragile, they should not be required to leave the bus. However, it is important that each student have an understanding of what will occur during an actual evacuation.
- Students need to understand why they may have to evacuate a bus and how they would be evacuated. This is best done with the help of classroom teachers since they are more familiar with the students' learning styles.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Evacuation Drills

- Did the bus driver/transportation safety assistant(s) know the written evacuation plan?
- Was the written evacuation plan followed?
- Were the students evacuated in an acceptable amount of time? (under 2 minutes)
- Were the students evacuated to a safety zone 100' from the bus?
- Was the evacuation equipment used properly?
- Were the appropriate emergency exits used?
- Did the driver/transportation safety assistant(s) work together as a team?
- Was the evacuation conducted in an orderly manner?

Share the evaluation results of the evacuation drill with the team.

Alter the written emergency evacuation plan if necessary.

Stress that in an actual emergency evacuation if EMS Services arrive, then they assume the responsibility for all passengers' evacuation, treatment and transport.

When school transportation is being contracted, the contracting agencies should ensure that their drivers are trained in proper emergency evacuation for each individual student. The school system should monitor the contracting agencies to ensure the safety of the students.

Appendix 8A – General Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Listed below are recommended Emergency Evacuation Procedures:

Evacuation Drill Preparation

1. All school bus evacuation drills should be held under the direct supervision of the school principal or his/her designee. As a general practice, evacuation drills may best be carried out on the school grounds. Evacuation drills should not be conducted on hard surface areas or when buses arrive at the school in the morning. In addition, drills should never be conducted along public highways or at any place where hazardous conditions exist. It is very important that the passageway to the emergency exit of school buses be kept open at all times.
2. At schools where buses arrive with elementary students only, it is suggested that the principal assign members of the faculty to assist pupils unloading from the bus through the rear exit door due to the height of the bus floor from the surface on which the bus is parked.
3. When discussing school bus emergency evacuation drills with students, the importance of an orderly evacuation should be emphasized. Practice drills with students have shown it is possible to evacuate a bus load of 65 students by the rear door in about 48 seconds, and if both front and rear doors are used, in about 23 seconds. However, the main objective of an evacuation drill is to acquaint the bus rider with the use of the rear exit door of the school bus; rather than the time factor, thus a safe and orderly drill should be the objective.
4. School bus emergency evacuation drill *forms* should be provided to each school prior to the new school year. This form will be completed by the principal or his/her designee and returned to the Transportation Department.
5. Exceptional Education School Bus Drivers - Only ambulatory students are to be evacuated in the manner described in the manual. The procedure to be used to evacuate students should be discussed with administrators and therapists at the attending school during the evacuation drill.
6. Evacuation Procedures

   Front Door Evacuation

   1. Instruct students to evacuate the bus through the front door.
   2. Have helpers stand outside front door to assist the students getting off the bus.
   3. Stand between first occupied seats facing the front of the bus.
   4. Starting with the first row, right side, have the first student lead the other students off the bus and 100' away.
   5. Have students in the first row, left side follow the students from the first row, right side.
   6. Continue procedure for each row alternating from right seats to left seats until the bus is empty.
   7. Walk to front of bus, checking each seat, to be sure it is empty.
   8. Leave bus and have the helpers go with you to join other students.

   Rear Door Evacuation

   1. The principal or his/her designee should be stationed near the rear of the bus to supervise the rear door evacuation.
   2. Instruct students to evacuate the bus through the rear door.
   3. Walk to the last row of seats and face rear door.
   4. Have helpers open rear door, exit the bus, and stand outside door to assist the students getting off the bus. This is best accomplished by taking pupils by each arm.
   5. Starting with the last row on your left, have the first student lead the other students off the bus and 100' away.
   6. Have students in the last row on your right follow the students from the left side.
   7. Continue procedure for each row alternating from right seats to left seats until the bus is empty.
   8. Leave the bus by the front door and have helpers go with you to join other students.
   9. After the school bus driver has checked to see that all students have gotten off the bus, the supervising teacher or principal should close the rear door, checking to see that the latch is secured properly.

Front & Rear Door Evacuation

1. The principal or his/her designee should be stationed near the rear of the bus to supervise the rear door evacuation.
2. Instruct students to evacuate the bus through the front and rear doors.
3. Rows 1 through 5 should use the front door.
4. Rows 6 through 11 should use the rear door.
5. Walk to the back of the bus and face the rear door.
6. Have a helper exit the bus through the front door, and stand outside door to assist the students getting off the bus.
7. Have helpers open rear door, exit the bus, and stand outside door to assist the students getting off the bus.
8. Have students in the first row, right side, and last row, right side, exit the bus through their respective door and stand 100' away from the bus.
9. Continue procedure for each row alternating from right seats to left seats until the bus is empty.
10. Leave the bus by the front door and have helpers go with you to join other students.
11. After the school bus driver has checked to see that all students have gotten off the bus, the principal or his/her designee should close the rear door, checking to see that the latch is secured properly.
12. After the bus has been evacuated, the pupils (at the proper signal) are to re-enter the bus for their books and personal belongings. Students should remain inside the bus and the bus should proceed to the usual unloading area where pupils will unload by the service (entrance) door.
13. Drivers should make students aware of emergency roof exits and side windows to be utilized in case of an emergency. These exits are not used during an evacuation drill.

Appendix 8B – Emergency Information Card

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
Confidential Emergency Information

The following information must be provided on a yearly basis by parent/guardian for students requiring special transportation. Parent/guardian will be required to complete a new form when there is a change in the information provided.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Student Name:	Birth Date:
School:	Date:

PHOTOGRAPH

HERE

A. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Height:	Weight:	Hair Color:	Eye Color:	Visually Impaired YES NO	Hearing Impaired YES NO	Verbal: YES NO	Language Spoken:
Physical Disability: YES NO	If Yes, please describe the physical disability:						
Exceptionality (circle): AU ED DB HI ID Mild ID Mod ID Severe MU OI OH LD SI TB DD VI							
Special considerations which may affect transportation:							

B. FAMILY INFORMATION

Name: Parent Guardian	Address:	Daytime Phone(s):
Name of other adult authorized to act on your behalf:	Daytime Phone(s):	

C. EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION

Student's Doctor:	Phone:
Hospital Preference:	Phone:
Insurance Provider:	Medicaid: YES NO

D. MEDICAL HISTORY

Does the student have seizures? YES NO On seizure meds? YES NO	If yes, describe symptoms: If yes, list name, dosage, and frequency of medication:
Does student take other medication? YES NO Need to know for reasons of drug interactions.	If yes, list name, dosage, and frequency of medication:
Is student allergic to food, medication or latex? YES NO	If yes, what?
Does student have any of the following? Asthma Bleeding Disorder Brittle Bones Diabetes Heart Disease Respiratory Problems Other:	

E. CONSENT (Print name) I, _____ father, mother or legal guardian of _____ in the event of accident, injury or serious illness to him/her, do voluntarily hereby give consent to and authorize the school district to secure medical aid or transportation to a medical facility. I understand that neither the school district nor the individual responsible for obtaining medical aid will be responsible for expense incurred.

_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date Date

Appendix 8C - School Bus Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for Students with Disabilities

Transportation personnel in collaboration with exceptional children personnel will develop a written evacuation plan for each bus that transports students with special needs. Each bus should be equipped with the following:

- Medical information card for each student (Refer to Appendix 7C - Emergency Information Card)
- Written evacuation plan which includes a seating chart for students with recommended order and method of evacuation for each student
- Belt cutter(s) - one located in reach of driver from the driver's seat
- Fire blanket
- First Aid Kit
-

When Do You Evacuate?

Evacuate only when necessary; it may be safer to stay on the bus. Reasons for emergency evacuation include the following:

- Fire or smoke on bus
- Suspected fire (smell something hot or notice strong fuel smell)
- Inoperable bus in danger of being hit by other vehicles (i.e. on railroad track, on edge of embankment, under brink of hill, on sharp curve, heavy fog conditions)
- Flooding conditions

Don't hesitate to evacuate if you feel students are in danger.

What Do You Need to Know Before You Leave the Bus Lot?

- Location and procedure to open every exit on the bus with eyes closed in the event of a fire, the bus may be filled with smoke; therefore, bus personnel will need to count seat backs to use as a reference for the location of emergency window exits and hatches.
- Method for safe exit from a rear emergency door.
- Location(s) and procedure for use of belt cutter(s).
- Evacuation plan for front or rear emergency bus evacuation.
- Location of students' medical information cards and First Aid Kit.
- Names and the assigned seating position for every student on the route.
- Physical, mental, emotional, and medical needs of each student.

How Do You Evacuate the Bus?

- The bus driver is in charge; however, the driver and transportation safety assistant must work as a team.
- Set hazard lights to warn motorists and set parking brakes.
- Radio the base with bus number, location, and reason for evacuation.
- Throw two-way radio, student medical information cards, and First Aid Kit out of the bus so they can be retrieved for use as needed during the evacuation.
- Determine safest exit for evacuation.
- Select safety zone at least 100 feet from the bus.
- Let students know that they will be unloaded (speak in a calm voice to reassure and guide students).
- Remove students in the order and using the method specified in written evacuation plan.

Appendix 8D - Instructions for Completing Bus Evacuation Plan

The following are instructions for completing the Bus Evacuation Plan Form - Appendix 8E:

1. Complete information on top section:
   - If AM and PM routes are different, develop two separate plans.
   - Select the most capable of your students as evacuation helpers (this may not always be the oldest student but should be the most reliable in terms of abilities and behaviors). Evacuation helpers can do such things as lead other students to the safe zone, keep students together in safe zone if transportation safety assistant must return to the bus, etc. Evacuation helpers do not return to the bus once they have evacuated it themselves.

2. Indicate seating location of each student on both diagrams of the bus. Next to student's name include the following if appropriate:

   - **(SV)** student is in a safety vest
   - **(CR)** student is in another type of child restraint system other than a safety vest
   - **(HI)** student is hearing impaired
   - **(VI)** student is visually impaired (guide students who are visually impaired out of the bus)

3. Determine method of evacuation for each student. Next to student's name indicate the method of evacuation:
   - **(A)** student is ambulatory - walks with or without assistance
   - **(in w/c)** student is to remain in the wheelchair
   - **(out w/c)** student is removed from the wheelchair
   - **(in CR)** student is to be evacuated in his/her car seat
   - **(out CR)** student is to be removed from his/her car seat for evacuation
   - **(Drag)** or **(Carry)** if student needs physical assistance
   - **(+2)** if a two person lift or carry is required due to size or condition of the student

4. Determine order of evacuation. Place the corresponding number next to the student's name.
   - Generally evacuate ambulatory students first unless behavior problems would cause added hazards.
   - Order of evacuation begins with students nearest the source of danger.

For quick reference, these instructions should be printed on back of the form entitled "Special Needs Bus Evacuation Plan" to be used when completing the form

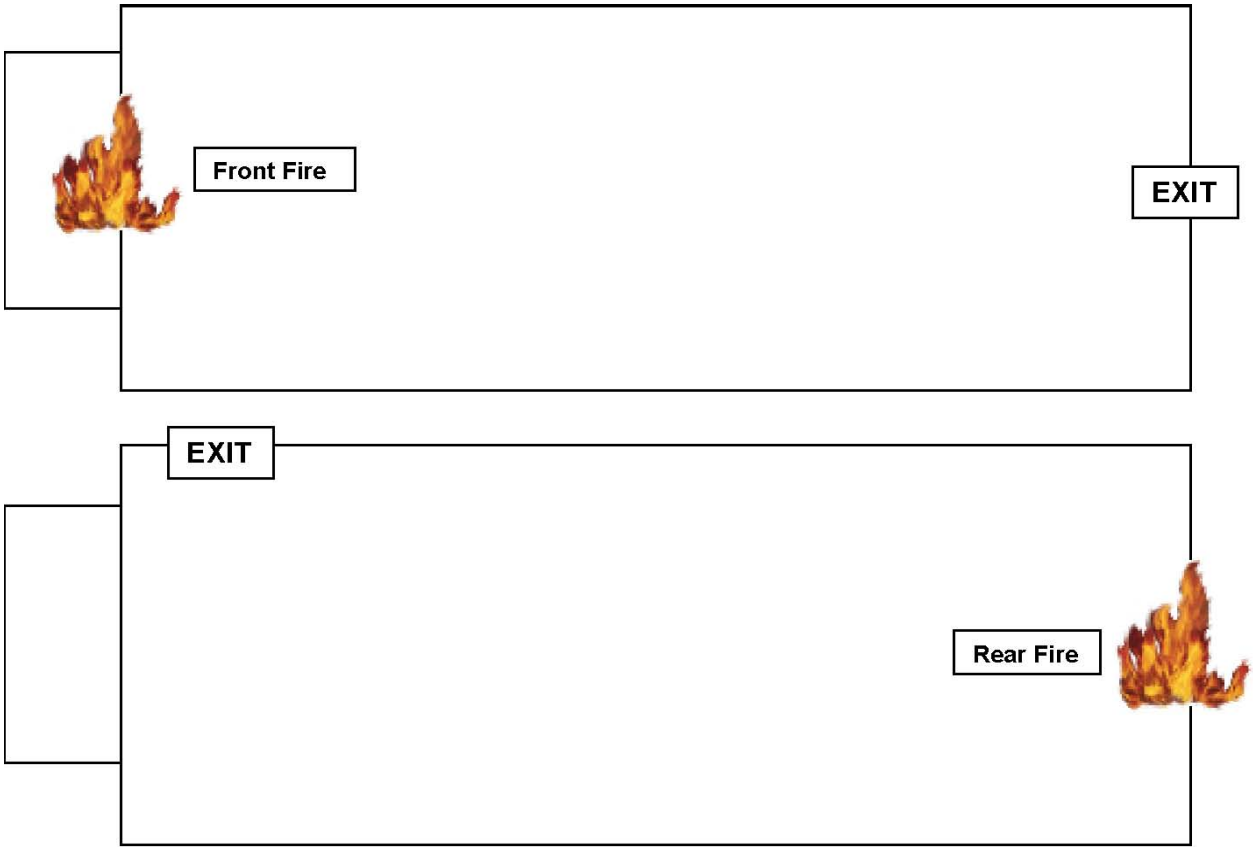
Appendix 8E - Bus Evacuation Plan Form

Special Needs Bus Evacuation Plan

Bus Number: _____ **AM PM** **Route** _____ **Date of plan:** _____
Circle one or both

Driver: _____ **Transportation Safety Assistant(s)** _____

Student Helpers (if any): _____



Driver's Responsibilities:	Transportation Safety Assistant's Responsibilities:
➢ Radio base with bus number, location & indicate reason for evacuation ➢ Throw radio microphone (if possible), students' confidential emergency information cards & First Aid Kit out of bus ➢ Indicate location of safety zone at least 100'(3 bus lengths) away from the bus ➢ Removes students from wheelchairs in order listed above if "out w/c" is indicated ➢ Drag/carry students indicated as "out w/c"to chosen exit ➢ Evacuate students in their wheelchairs indicated as "in w/c" with assistance from transportation safety assistant	➢ Open chosen exit ➢ Assist ambulatory students to safety zone at least 100' (3 bus lengths) away from bus ➢ Take students from driver at door exit and drag/carry them to safety zone ➢ Assist driver to evacuate students in their wheelchairs

A = ambulatory **CR** = CSRS **SV** = vest **out CR** = remove from car seat **in CR** = evacuate in car seat **out w/c** = evacuate out of wheelchair **in w/c** = evacuate in wheelchair **VI** = Visually Impaired **HI** = Hearing Impaired **+2** = two person lift

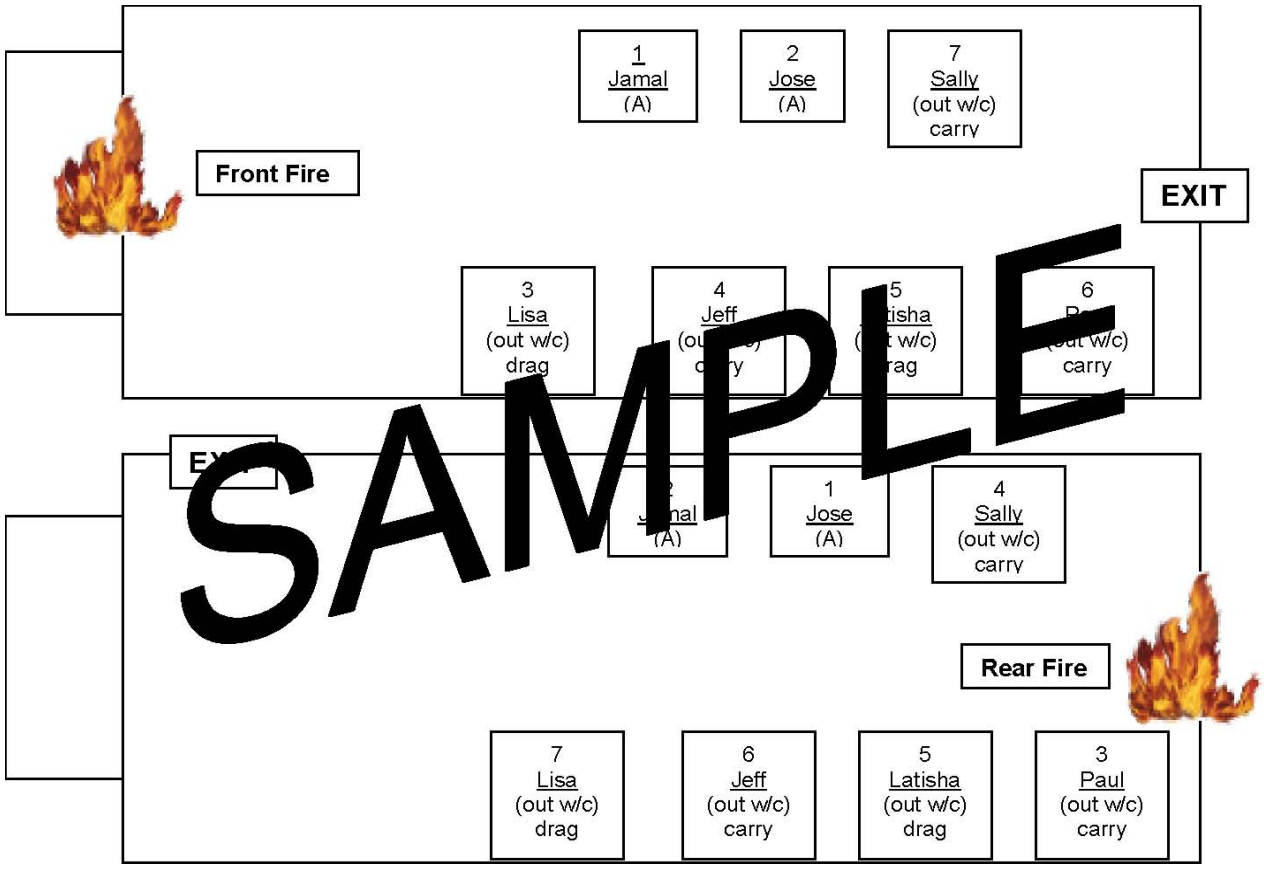
Appendix 8F - Bus Evacuation Plan Form (Example)

Special Needs Bus Evacuation Plan

Bus number: 1000 **AM** **PM** Circle one or both **Date of Plan:** 9/1/02

Driver: Janelle Patrick **Transportation Safety Assistant(s)** Jane Ray, Julio Ramlrez

Student Helpers (if any): _____



Driver's Responsibilities:	Transportation Safety Assistant's Responsibilities:
➢ Radio base with bus number, location & indicate reason for evacuation ➢ Throw radio microphone (if possible), students' confidential emergency information cards & First Aid Kit out of bus ➢ Indicate location of safety zone at least 100'(3 bus lengths) away from the bus ➢ Removes students from wheelchairs in order listed above if "out w/c" is indicated ➢ Drag/carry students indicated as "out w/c"to chosen exit ➢ Evacuate students in their wheelchairs indicated as "in w/c" with assistance from transportation safety assistant	➢ Open chosen exit ➢ Assist ambulatory students to safety zone at least 100' (3 bus lengths) away from bus ➢ Take students from driver at door exit and drag/carry them to safety zone ➢ Assist driver to evacuate students in their wheelchairs

A = ambulatory **CR** = CSRS **SV** = vest **out CR** = remove from car seat **in CR** = evacuate in car seat **out w/c** = evacuate out of wheelchair **in w/c** = evacuate in wheelchair **VI** = Visually Impaired **HI** = Hearing Impaired **+2** = two person lift

CHAPTER 9

Transporting Preschool Children

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"Oh, my friend, it's not what they take away from you that counts. It's what you do with what you have left."

-Hubert Humphrey

Transporting Preschool Children

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9.1 Transporting Preschool Age Children

Transporting Preschool Age Children: Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers and Preschoolers with Disabilities

Transporting the five and under population provides North Carolina with the most complex and diverse challenge that transporters will face. Various programs exist throughout the state that range from teenage pregnancy programs (mothers and infants) to preschool programs for students with disabilities and everything in between. This means that many Local Education Agencies (LEAs) will have the challenge of transporting infants, toddlers, preschool students, and preschool students with disabilities. To meet these challenges, it is imperative that transportation providers understand the diverse needs of the young ones they transport, the laws and guidelines governing transportation for children, and the equipment used for safe transportation.

The purpose of these North Carolina Guidelines for Transporting Preschool Age Children is to:

- Provide clarification of the laws and guidelines governing preschool children
- Provide information on the specific needs and abilities of preschool children-regardless of specific programs in which they are enrolled
- Convey best practice recommendations for transporting preschool children

Safety

In an effort to assure the safety of preschool age students on school buses, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted crash testing of preschool size dummies in school bus seats. The test results indicated that preschool age children are safest when transported in a child safety restraint system (CSRS) that is correctly attached to the school bus bench seat. Based on its research, in February 1999, NHTSA released the Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses (Refer to Appendix 9A). School districts in North Carolina should follow these NHTSA guidelines to the maximum extent practical.

Funding

North Carolina Public Schools receive state funding for the transportation of K-12 students for the regularly organized school day. This block grant is used to pay for the operation of school buses and contract transportation for these students. In addition, some LEAs may operate or house preschool education programs such as Preschool Exceptional Children Programs, More at Four Pre-Kindergartens, Title I Preschools, and Head Start Preschools. The programs that fund the education of these preschool students are responsible for funding their transportation, which may include required funded equipment modifications.

Transporting our preschool children will continue to be a challenge as we do our best to fit these young children on school buses that were initially intended for school-age students. The complexities will continue to increase with the ever-changing laws and with the uniqueness of each child transported.

When transporting preschool age children, school districts should follow the NHTSA Guidelines to the maximum extent practical.

9.2 Laws and Guidelines

The laws, regulations, and guidelines for transporting young children pose additional complexity to an already complex situation. Local guidelines, as well as federal guidelines (Appendix B), must be followed. Preschool children with disabilities are also eligible for services and assessments as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Refer to Chapter 1 - Laws, Policies, and Regulations). In addition to the laws and regulations, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has published numerous guidelines for transporting children.

The challenges arise because the laws and regulations vary depending on the type of vehicle used for transport (e.g. autos have different regulations than school buses).

North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law - Effective June 1, 2007

The North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law states that a child less than eight years of age and less than 80 pounds in weight shall be properly secured in a weight-appropriate child passenger restraint system. In vehicles equipped with an active passenger-side front air bag – if the vehicle has a rear seat, a child less than five years of age and less than 40 pounds in weight shall be properly secured in a rear seat, unless the child restraint system is designed for use with air bags. Children may be secured in a properly fitted seat belt at age 8 (regardless of weight) or at 80 pounds (regardless of age) whichever comes first. If no seating position equipped with a lap and shoulder belt to properly secure a belt positoning booster seat is available, a child which weighs at least 40 pounds may be restrained by a properly fitted lap belt only.

From the N.C. Child Passenger Safety Law- G.S. 20-137.1

Vehicles not required to have safety belts are exempt form the NC Child Passenger Safety Law (NC CPS Law). Large school buses (gross vehicle weight ratings over 10,000 pounds) are exempt from the NC CPS Law since federal standards do not require safety belts on large school buses other than for the driver. The larger buses do not have seat belts because they rely on strong, closely spaced, well-padded, energy absorbing seats and higher seat backs to 'compartmentalize' and protect passengers during a crash. Seat belts are required on small school buses (under 10,000 lbs.) and children being transported in these smaller buses are covered under the NC Child Passenger Safety Law. *(From buckleupnc.org - Summary of NC Child Passenger Safety Law and Common Questions; May 25, 2007)*

At this time, booster seats which accommodate children over 40 pounds cannot be used in a school bus since they require a shoulder and lap belt for securement. School buses typically do not have shoulder belts.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards

School buses, including the seats, lap belts, and child safety restraint systems, must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (Refer to Appendix 9B).

The regulations also vary depending on which program the child is enrolled in (e.g. Head Start Regulations are more specific than the regulations concerning transportation as a related service in IDEA).

Head Start Transportation Regulations - Code of Federal Regulations CFR 1310

Head Start regulations for transportation were published on January 18, 2001. This statute consists of provisions for establishing requirements for safety features, training, and safe operation of vehicles that are used to transport children participating in Head Start programs. See Appendix C for the specific regulations.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); Federal Register / Vol. 64, No. 48/ Friday, March 12, 1999/Rules and Regulations
34CFR Part 303 Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
This section encourages states to maintain and implement a statewide comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Early intervention services also include transportation and related costs of travel that are necessary to enable a child eligible under this part and the child's family to receive early intervention services. Therefore, districts may provide transportation services to infants and toddlers with disabilities as part of a local program or as part of an interagency program.

Appendix 9A, Question 33 of the Federal Register - Comments on Preschool aged children and transportation in the following question/answer:

> **'Must a Public agency include transportation in a child's IEP as a related service?'**
> As with other related services, a public agency must provide transportation as a related service it if is required to assist the disabled child to benefit from special education. This includes transporting a preschool-aged child to the site at which the public agency provides special education and related services to the child, if that site is different from the site at which the child receives other preschool or day care services.

Note: On December 3, 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 was enacted into law as Public Law 108-446. This statute, as passed by Congress and signed by the president, reauthorizes and makes significant changes to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Final regulations for IDEA 34CFR Part 303 Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities have not been issued as of May 2008.

In addition to the laws, regulations, and safety standards, the *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)* has published Guidelines for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses (Appendix A). Based on research, NHTSA recommends that preschool children need to be properly secured in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) when traveling in a school bus.

9.3 Special Considerations for the Bus Ride

Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and preschool children with disabilities are the most vulnerable passengers on school buses. Each child is unique and has specific likes, dislikes, and abilities. The rate that a child develops is specific to each child; however, many children will reach 'developmental levels' around the same age or within several months of each other. Children with disabilities may attain these developmental levels around the same time, later than their non-disabled peers, or not at all. A brief overview of typical developmental levels from birth to age five is listed in Appendix C. By understanding the various abilities of each child, transportation providers will be able to communicate, to assist, and to guide each child appropriately and safely during loading/unloading, transport, and evacuation.

Infants (birth to one year)

- A rear-facing car seat should be used until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs. Use a rear-facing car seat until the child reaches the highest weight or height according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Car seats should be installed on reinforced seats at the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants. Car seats should not be installed on seats in front of emergency exits.

- Infants may be calmer if the parent/guardian secures them in the car seat.
- The driver, or properly trained employee, is responsible in ensuring that the child safety restraint systems and children are secured properly.
- Do not let infants have small toys that could be a choking hazard since they will bring objects to their mouth.
- LEAs should secure insurance coverage for infants and toddlers if they are not pupils or students enrolled in a program. Refer to Chapter 1 - Laws, Policies, and Legislation: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction School Support Division, Transportation Services: Insurance and Tort Claims.

Toddlers (one to two years)

- A forward-facing car seat should be used when the child has reached the highest allowed rear-facing weight of the car seat. Forward facing should not be considered until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.
- Car seats should be installed on reinforced seats at the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants. Car seats should not be installed on seats in front of emergency exits.
- Toddlers over 40 pounds or those who have reached the highest allowed weight on forward-facing car seats will need to use a child safety restraint system that meets FMVSS 213 (i.e. integrated child restraints, add-on restraints or safety vests).
- Toddlers may be calmer if the parent/guardian secures them in the car seat.
- The driver, or properly trained employee, is responsible in ensuring that the child safety restraint systems and children are secured properly.
- Most toddlers will need to be carried or assisted up and down the bus steps.
- As children develop they will become more and more active, often with little to no fear. Adults will need to provide close supervision once children are off the bus.
- LEAs should secure insurance coverage for toddlers if they are not pupils or students enrolled in a program. Refer to Chapter 1 - Laws, Policies, and Legislation: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction School Support Division, Transportation Services: Insurance and Tort Claims.

Preschool Students (three to five years)

These children may be enrolled in various programs depending on what each LEA and community agency has to offer.

- A forward-facing car seat should be used when the child has reached the highest allowed rear-facing weight of the car seat. Forward facing should not be considered until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.
- Car seats should be installed on reinforced seats at the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants. Car seats should not be installed on seats in front of emergency exits.
- Preschool students under five years of age and over 20 pounds will need to use a child safety restraint system appropriate for their height and weight (i.e. integrated child restraints, add-on restraints or safety vests).
- The driver, or properly trained employee, is responsible to ensure that the child safety restraint systems and students are secured properly.
- Some students may still need assistance getting on and off the bus.
- Students will need supervision for safety once off the bus.

The Preschool Students with Disabilities (three to five years)

This population includes three to five year old children who are ineligible for kindergarten and who because of permanent or temporary cognitive, communication, social/emotional and/or adaptive disabilities, are unable to have all of their developmental needs met in a natural environment without special education and related services. Preschool children with disabilities become eligible for special education and related services upon reaching their third birthday. The student may be eligible for 'transportation as a related service' if

it is required to assist the disabled student in benefiting from special education (refer to child's Individual Education Program, IEP).

- Transporters will need to be knowledgeable about the student's disability, medical conditions, and how a particular disability may affect the student during transport (Refer to Chapter 4 - Disabilities and Medical Conditions).
- Students with disabilities should be transported on the bus in the same manner as their non-disabled preschool peers to the maximum extent possible (see information as listed above for Preschool Students).
- Consult with the school physical therapist if the student has specialized equipment such as a wheelchair or assistive walking devices.
- Whenever possible the student should walk up the bus steps, with assistance if needed.
- Students will need supervision for safety once off the bus.
- If the student is unable to walk up and down the steps, it may be appropriate to carry the student depending on the student's weight and disability.
- If it is not safe to carry the student then, the IEP team, including the student's school physical therapist, should determine the safest method of getting on and off the bus. Some students with physical disabilities may need to be loaded/unloaded on the bus via the wheelchair lift while they are in their stroller/wheelchair with wheel locks securely set.
- Students who use wheelchairs should be transported on vehicle seats in child safety restraint systems. If it is not safe to transfer a student out of his/her wheelchair to a child safety restraint, then the student should be transported in his/her wheelchair. Consult with the school physical therapist.

  (Refer to Handouts on page 7-34, 7-41, and 7-42.)

9.4 Provision of Transportation Services

Provision of safe and appropriate transportation can only be accomplished once transporters, educators, and families understand the child and his/her abilities and understand the laws and regulations that govern transporting children.

For preschool students with disabilities, the *Student Profile - Transportation Considerations* form (refer to handout on page 9.36) along with the *Emergency Medical Information Card* (refer to handout on page 8.13) will need to be completed by IEP team members to determine the most appropriate transportation plan. The IEP team must convey this information to the transportation department and/or transportation providers. Based on this information of the child's individual needs, transportation personnel can determine the most appropriate vehicle for transport, the necessary specialized equipment, and the level of supervision and/or assistance necessary for loading/unloading and securement in the bus. The route, pick up times, and drop off times may also need to be adjusted based on the student's individual needs.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends that preschool children need to be properly secured in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) when traveling in a school bus. A Child Safety Restraint System is any device (except a passenger system lap seat belt or lap/shoulder seat belt), designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat, or position a child who weighs less than 50 pounds.

When transporting preschool age children, school districts should follow these NHTSA Guidelines to the maximum extent practical.

Child Safety Restraint System Specifications
The provider of the CSRS should ensure the following:

- Each preschool age child to be transported has a CSRS appropriate for the child's weight, height, and age.
- Each CSRS meets all applicable FMVSSs (look for manufacturer's certification on the label attached to the system).
- Each CSRS has been registered with the CSRS's manufacturer to facilitate any recalls the manufacturer might conduct.
- If the CSRS is the subject of a recall, any necessary repairs or modifications have been made to the manufacturer's specifications.
- Each CSRS is maintained as recommended by its manufacturer, including disposal of any CSRS that has been involved in a crash.

For best practice guidelines, the school district should provide child safety restraint systems for use on the bus, versus using the child's personal equipment.

Proper Securement
The transportation provider should ensure the following:

- The CSRS is used and secured correctly in the school bus.
- Each child is secured in CSRSs according to manufacturer's instructions.
- All CSRS attachment hardware and anchorage systems meet FMVSS 210, Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages or FMVSS 225, Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems.
- School bus seats designated for CSRSs meet FMVSS 225, or include lap belts that meet FMVSS 209, Seat Belt Assemblies, and anchors that meet FMVSS 210.
- Personnel responsible for securing CSRSs onto the school bus seats and children into CSRSs are properly trained and all personnel involved with CSRSs are provided with up-to-date information and training.

- When transported in the school bus, preschool age children are supervised according to their developmental and functioning level.

School Bus Seats Designated for Child Safety Restraint Systems
The transportation provider should ensure the following:

- School bus seats designated for CSRSs are located starting at the front of the vehicle to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the CSRS occupants.
- CSRS anchorages on school bus seats should meet all applicable FMVSS's.
- When ordering new school buses, the maximum spacing specified under FMVSS No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, (within 24 inches from the seating reference point) is recommended for seats designated for CSRSs to provide adequate space for the CSRSs.
- The combined width of CSRS and/or the other passengers on a single seat does not exceed the width of the seat (a 39 inch wide seat will accommodate two car seats).
- If other students share seats with the CSRSs, the CSRSs are placed in the window seating position.

Retrofitting School Buses
The Transportation provider should ensure the following:

- Existing school bus seats should only be retrofitted with lap belts or child restraint anchorages as instructed by the school bus manufacturer.
- When a school bus is retrofitted with a seat to allow for proper securement of a CSRS, instructions obtained from the school bus or seat manufacturer on how to install the seat and restraining systems should be followed.
- When a school bus is retrofitted, the bus owner should ensure that seat spacing is sufficient for the CSRS to be used.

Evacuation
The transportation provider should ensure the following:

- The establishment of a written plan on evacuating preschool age children and other passengers in CSRSs in the event of an emergency. This written plan should be provided to drivers, transportation safety assistants, and emergency response personnel. The plan should explicitly state how children (both in and out of the CSRS) should be evacuated from the school bus.
- Evacuation drills are practiced on a scheduled basis, at least as often as that required for the school systems school-aged children.
- All personnel involved in transporting children are trained in evacuation and emergency procedures, including those in the written school bus evacuation plan.
- All school buses carrying children in CSRSs carry safety belt cutters that are accessible only to the driver and any transportation safety assistants.
- CSRSs are not placed in school bus seats adjacent to emergency exits.
- Local emergency response teams are provided copies of the written school bus evacuation plan, including evacuation of preschool age children. Emergency response personnel should be invited to participate in evacuation drills.

(Refer to Appendix A - NHTSA's Guidelines for Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses)

9.5 Specialized Equipment & Types of Child Safety Restraint Systems

Specialized Equipment

Refer to Chapter 6 - Specialized Equipment: Descriptions and Procedures for information on vehicle equipment and student's personal equipment.

Types of Child Safety Restraint Systems

Integrated Child Restraints

An integrated child restraint is one that is actually built into the bus seat. This restraint has a 5 point harness system. A portion of the back of the bench seat is flipped down to function as a seat used for child restraint. After use the seat may then be flipped up, integrating into the bench seat back for use by passengers not requiring a child restraint.

C.E. White and SafeGuard manufacture integrated child restraints for NC buses.

C.E. White Integrated Child Seats are indicated for students between 20-60 pounds.

Safeguard Integrated Child Restraints are indicated for students between 22-85 pounds and up to 49" tall.

(Refer to handout on page 9.39 - Procedures for Using Integrated Child Restraints on the Bus.)

ICS_Open.

Add-On Seats

An add-on seat is a 5 point restraint system that is added to a school bus seat and secured by a means of color-coded straps that wrap around the back and seat of the bus seat. An add-on seat can be attached to a non-reinforced bus seat.

Students using add-on seats should be positioned on seats toward the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the student. They should not be positioned on seats adjacent to emergency exits. If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using an add-on seat, the student using the restraint should be placed next to the window.

When using an add-on seat, the bus seat behind it must be empty or be occupied by another student who is using a child safety restraint system.

Add-on seats available at this time include the following: SafeGuard's STAR Restraint, STAR Special Needs Restraint and BESI's Pro-Tech.

STAR

STAR Restraint (Student Transportation Add on Restraint)

The STAR restraint comes in 2 sizes. The smaller size is for students weighing 25-65 pounds and up to 47" tall. The plus size is for students weighing 25-90 pounds and up to 47" tall. These restraints can be taken off the bus, or folded and kept in pouches that can be mounted under the seats.

A STAR Chest Strap can be used with a STAR and STAR Plus restraints to provide more trunk support

for students with special needs. After the student has been properly restrained in the STAR, the orange chest strap is placed under the shoulder straps and around the student's chest. It should be placed as close to the student's arm pit level as possible and adjusted to fit snugly.

If using 3 STAR restraints on a 39" bus seat, it is recommended that a connector strap (available through SafeGuard) be placed on the top of the bus seat to prevent the straps from slipping off the seat. Only 2 STAR Plus restraints will fit on a 39" bus seat.

STAR Special Needs Restraint
The STAR Special Needs restraint offers more external support for seated positioning than would be needed by many students with special health care needs. It is used for students weighing 25-105 lbs. with torso heights up to 20" tall (torso heights = seating position base to shoulder).

(Refer to handout on page 9.36 – Procedures for Using a STAR seat on a School Bus.)

Pro-Tech
The Pro-Tech restraint comes in two sizes. The Pro-Tech II is for students weighing 20-65 lbs, up to a 22.5" waist and up to 47" tall. The Pro-Tech III is for students weighing 20-90 lbs., up to a 30.5" waist and up to 51" tall.

Safety Vests
Safety vests are child safety restraint devices that enable students to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. Most safety vests are designed for children and adults who weigh between 20 and 164 pounds. The vest must fit the occupant snugly with the actual size of the vest determined by the passenger's waist size. Continued monitoring of the fit of the safety vest is essential. Improper fit of vests or improper securement of vests on the bus seat may result in an injury to the student. Crotch straps must be used with students under 65 lbs. Crotch straps may also be considered for students who tend to slip out of the vest. Vests that zip in the back discourage removal by the student. Safety vests should be put on the student per manufacturer's instructions prior to boarding the bus, i.e., at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon.

Safety vests can be installed on a non-reinforced bus seat using a portable seat mount or cam wrap sold by the vest manufacturer.

Students using safety vests should be positioned on seats toward the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the student. They should not be positioned on seats adjacent to emergency exits. If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using a safety vest, the student using the restraint should be placed next to the window.

The seat behind a student using a safety vest must be empty or be occupied by another student who is also using a child safety restraint system.

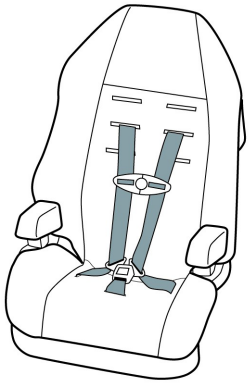
Safety vest manufacturers at this time include the following: E-Z-On, BESI, and Q-Straint. Manufacturers typically suggest replacing safety vests after 5 years. Be sure to follow specific manufacturer's

instructions for replacement as well as maintenance of the safety vests.

(Refer to Appendix 9L - Procedures for Using a Safety Vest on a School Bus.)

Car Seats

The school district should provide the car seats for student use on school buses. Car seats should be installed on reinforced seats at the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants. All seat belts used to secure a car seat and the bus seats on which they are placed must meet FMVSS 208, 209, 210, and 302. Car seats should not be installed on seats in front of emergency exits.



If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using a car seat, the student in the car seat should be placed in a window seating position.

The car seats must be appropriate for the weight and height of the student (see manufacturer's instructions).

- Students who weigh 20 lbs. or less should be in a rear-facing car seat.
- Students who weight 20-40 lbs. should be in a forward-facing car seat.

When a student using a typical car seat on the bus exceeds the weight limit set by the manufacturer the use of the car seat must be discontinued. If the child continues to require support to remain in a seated position on the bus seat, an alternative method of restraint must be determined.

Specialized car seats may be indicated for children with special medical needs. These specialized car seats are available from Durable Medical Equipment suppliers (consult with the school physical therapist).

Follow manufacturer's recommendations regarding the proper time to replace car seats. The proper procedure for disposal is to cut the restraining straps off the car seat, destroy the car seat, and throw in a trash receptacle. Do not leave the car seat on the side of the street for garbage pick-up.

(Refer to Appendix 9M – Procedures for Using Car Seats on the Bus.)

Car Seats

Child Safety Restraint Systems that are commonly referred to as "car seats" are available in a variety of different types.

- Rear-facing Only - "infant" car seats
- Convertible - converts from rear-facing to forward-facing
- Forward Facing Only with Harness
- Forward-Facing with Harness/Booster Combination - can be used with a harness up to a certain weight (per manufacturer); then converts to a belt-positioning booster
- Booster Seats - raise the child up for the proper fit of a lap and shoulder seat belt
    - High back booster
    - Backless booster
- Special Needs Seats.

Most school buses are not equipped to accommodate car seats. In order for a school bus to accommodate car seats it must have the following:

- Reinforced bus seats (those that meet FMVSS 210)
- Seat belts which meet FMVSS 209 that are properly placed and attached to the bus seat frame
- Adequate room between bus seats – maximum seat spacing allowed under FMVSS 222 which is 24"

- Adequate aisle width – greater than the standard aisle width of 12”

Car seats should be considered as a last resort when a child safety restraint system is required due to limited space on most school buses, lack of availability of bus seats that meet FMVSS 210 designed for the installation of car seats and seat belts that meet FMVSS 209. Car seats should only be used on school buses if the child must be transported in a rear-facing position or if the child requires more support to remain seated than is provided by other types of CSRS that can be used on a school bus.

Car seats must be selected and used in a rear or a forward-facing position dependent upon the age, weight, height and physical development of the child (follow manufacturer’s instructions).

A rear-facing position is generally the safest and children should ride rear facing as long as possible. A rear-facing car seat should be used until a child reaches the highest weight or height according to manufacturer’s instructions. At a minimum, use a rear-facing car seat until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 pounds.

A forward-facing car seat should be used when a child has reached the highest allowed rear-facing weight of the car seat. Forward facing should not be considered until a child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.

When a child using a car seat on the bus exceeds the weight limit set by the manufacturer, the use of the car seat must be discontinued. If the student continues to require support to remain in a seated position on the bus seat, an alternative method of restraint must be determined.

Car seats should be installed on reinforced seats at the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the occupants. Car seats should not be installed on seats in front of emergency exits.

Bus seats that are 39 inches wide (from bus wall to aisle) will accommodate two car seats. Seats that are less than 39 inches wide will accommodate one car seat.

If an unrestrained student shares the seat with a student using a car seat, the student in the car seat should be placed next to the window.

(Refer to handout on page 9.x – Procedures for Using Car Seats on the Bus.)

Special Needs Seats

Special needs seats are manufactured for children with special positioning needs that cannot be accommodated in a typical car seat. Special needs seats are available from Durable Medical Equipment suppliers and would best be ordered with input from a school physical therapist. Many seats are larger and will require special tethering. If tethering is required, the seat to which it is tethered must be unoccupied. (Consult the manufacturer for clarification on the proper use of tethers.) Due to limited seat spacing, it may be impossible to utilize a special needs seat on school buses. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for seat installation and proper restraint of the child in the seat.

Traveller Plus

The Juvenile Products Manufacturer Association suggests replacing car seats after 6 years. However, expiration dates vary by manufacturer; therefore, follow manufacturer’s recommendations regarding the proper time to replace car seats. The proper procedure for disposal is to cut the restraining straps off the car seat; destroy the car seat; and throw it in a trash receptacle.

Prior to using a Car Seat on the Bus, the transporter should ask the following questions:

- Am I using the correct car seat for the child?
- Have I routed the seat belt through the car seat as instructed by the manufacturer?
- Are the child safety seat harness straps in the right slot?
- Is the harness buckled snugly around the child?
- Are all infants semi-reclined and rear facing?
- Do all child safety seat harness straps have retainer clips?
- Have I practiced with the car seat before seating children?
- Do I have and have I reviewed manufacturer's instructions for all the car seats I am using?
- Have I checked the NHTSA Hotline in the last three months for possible recalls? (1-888-DASH-2-DOT)

From *Proper Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems in School Buses, NHTSA 2000.*

Additional Recommendations For Child Safety Restaint Systems

Provision of Child Safety Restraint Systems

The school system should provide child safety restraint systems for use on the school bus or on other contract vehicles. By providing CSRSs, the system can be assured that they meet FMVSS 213 and have not been involved in an a crash.

Exceptional Children Department and Transportation Department representatives should check with manufacturers of buses and child restraint products annually to remain knowledgeable of current CSRSs for school buses.

Documentation

Every CSRS should be registered with the manufacturer so the school system will be notified if there is a safety recall. Be sure to keep a copy of manufacturer's instructions on file.

Cleaning & Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the school system to ensure that all parts of the CSRS are present and in good working condition. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and maintenance of the CSRS. Padding must be replaced if it is torn or soiled. Harness straps must be replaced if they are frayed or heavily soiled. (Padding and harness straps must be purchased from the CSRS manufacturer and instructions for replacement must be followed.)

Replacement Following Crash

NHTSA recommends that a CSRS be replaced if it has been involved in a moderate or severe crash.

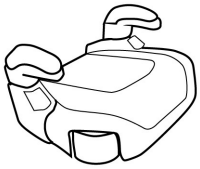
CSRSs do not have to be automatically replaced following a minor crash. Minor crashes are those that meet ALL of the following criteria:

- The school bus could be driven away from the crash site.
- The occupant space inside the school bus near the CSRS was undamaged.
- There were no injuries to any children in CSRS or serious injury to any other school bus occupant.
- There is no visible damage to the CSRS.

Child Safety Restraint Systems Not for Use on Large School Buses

Booster Seats

Booster seats are designed to elevate children who weigh between 40 and 80 pounds so they can safely utilize the protection offered by lap and shoulder belts. Booster seats cannot be used on school buses with traditional bus seats that do not have lap and shoulder belts.



Backless Booster

High Back Booster

Lap Belts

The use of a lap belt only as a child safety restraint on large school buses is NOT recommended.

An analysis of crash test data by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) concluded that lap belts appear to have little, if any, benefit in reducing serious and fatal injuries in severe frontal crashes. Also, NHTSA states that the use of lap only seat belt by children on large school buses could increase the incidence of serious neck injuries and possibly abdominal injuries among young passengers in severe frontal crashes.

9.6 Decision Making: Loading/Unloading & Selecting a CSRS for the Bus

Student Loading/Unloading

Infants & Toddlers & Preschool Students
These children will need to be assisted and/or supervised up and down the bus steps depending on their age and developmental levels.

Preschool Students with Disabilities
Students with special needs will often be able to load/unload the school bus using the steps in the same manner as non-disabled students. If a student is ambulatory (able to walk) but has difficulties with balance, decreased muscle strength or diminished stamina, he/she may require assistance to negotiate the steps. Consultation with a school physical therapist would be beneficial to determine the feasibility of an ambulatory student utilizing the bus steps with or without adult assistance.

If the method of loading/unloading is not apparent, review the options below to facilitate the decision making process. The student's IEP/504 team should consider the first option and continue down the hierarchy to determine the most appropriate method.

- Student is able to ascend/descend bus steps independently.
- Adult assistance is needed for student to ascend/descend bus steps.
- Student needs to be carried up/down the bus steps (option ONLY for preschool students who are less than 40 pounds).
- Student is unable to safely ascend/descend the bus steps with assistance; therefore, student must use the lift while seated in a wheelchair.
- Student uses a manual/power wheelchair and requires a bus with a power lift.

If a student has a deteriorating medical condition, ongoing monitoring of the student's ability to safely negotiate bus steps is necessary. This will ensure that the student is loading/unloading the bus in the most appropriate manner.

(Refer to handouts on page 7-33 and 7-34.)

Use of A Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS)

Pre-school children should be transported in a child restraint on the bus as recommended NHTSA.

(See Appendix A - "Guidelines for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses", NHTSA publication February, 1999)

Refer to the table below to determine most appropriate child restraint.

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) for School Buses typically used in North Carolina	Student's Weight in lbs
Integrated Child Restraint Bus Seat ➢ Child restraint is part of the bus seat and has a 5 point harness system ➢ Available on some buses manufactured after 2000	CE White 20–60 SafeGuard 22-85
STAR RESTRAINT – (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-65 lbs
STAR RESTRAINT – **Plus** (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-90 lbs
E-Z On Safety Vest (Adjustable safety vest that zips up the back) ➢ Vest must be put on student prior to student getting on the bus (i.e., vest *put on student at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon)* ➢ Vest attaches to a seat mount that is secured to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS ➢ ***Indicated for students who are over 90 lbs or who INAPPROPRIATELY unbuckle front buckles in car seats or the harnesses on other CSRS***	20 -160 lbs Size based on child's waist **Size: Waist:** XS 19-23" S 25-30" M 32-37" LG 37-42"
Car Seats (RARELY used on buses) ➢ Only select this option if child requires a rear-facing position or if student requires more support to remain seated than is provided by CSRS listed above. ➢ Car seat internal harness must be adjusted to the student ➢ Car seat must be installed on reinforced bus seats	Up to 65 lbs per manufacturer's instructions

(Refer to Appendix 9H – Student Profile - Transportation Considerations)

9.7 Training

Prior to transporting preschool children, the driver and transportation safety assistant should be trained and competent in the following:

- CSRS securement procedures (to include car seats, add-on restraints, safety vests, and integrated seats when applicable)
- Child securement procedures for the child safety restraint systems
- Methods to assist students on/off the bus
- Evacuation procedures (including proper use of seat belt/strap cutter)
- Proper lifting and handling techniques
- Knowledge of disabilities and medical conditions specific to the children transported
- Knowledge of adaptive equipment specific to the children transported

A method to document the training sessions as well as the names of the participants in attendance should be established. Training should be completed annually or more frequently if indicated. Training sessions may also be indicated for parents, designated school personnel, and emergency response personnel. Physical therapists, occupational therapists, and nurses may be involved in the training sessions for children with medical conditions, disabilities, and/or adaptive equipment. For more information refer to Chapter 2 – Roles, Responsibilities and Training.

9.8 Equipping School Buses to Comply with NHTSA Guidelines

School districts should follow the NHTSA Guidelines for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses to the maximum extent practical.
All North Carolina school buses built after January 1, 2000 are equipped with CSRS compliant seats (lap-belt ready seats that meet FMVSS 210). The 35-36 passenger buses are equipped with two CSRS compliant seats and the 53-53 passenger buses and the 65-66 passenger buses are equipped with four CSRS compliant seats. If the buses that are to be used to transport preschool age children do not have 'lap-belt-ready seats', school districts should retrofit the buses as instructed by the school bus manufacturer to meet the NHTSA guidelines. School districts must ensure that no existing Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards are rendered inoperative when performing any modifications, changes, or additions to buses. Bus model years 2000-2007 are equipped with CE White integrated seats in the first two rows and 2008 model has SafeGuard integrated seats in the first two rows. Model years 2000-2001 have MOMS seats which are largely out of date now. Starting with the 2009 model year it will be a county option as to whether they want buses with the integrated seats.

Appendix 9A — Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses

February 1999

Introduction

School age children transported in school buses are safer than children transported in motor vehicles of any other type. Large school buses provide protection because of their size and weight. Further, they must meet minimum Federal motor vehicle safety standards (FMVSSs) mandating compartmentalized seating, improved emergency exits, stronger roof structures and fuel systems, and better bus body joint strength.

As more preschool age children are transported to school programs, often in school buses, the public is increasingly asking the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) about how to safely transport them. To help answer these questions, NHTSA conducted crash testing of preschool age size dummies in school bus seats. The test results showed that preschool age children in school buses are safest when transported in child safety restraint systems (CSRSs) that meets FMVSS 213, Child Restraint Systems, and are correctly attached to the seats.

Based on its research, NHTSA recommends preschool age children transported in school buses always be transported in properly secured CSRSs. In partial response to questions from school (and child care) transportation offices, this Guideline seeks to assist school and other transportation managers in developing and implementing policies and procedures for the transportation of preschool age children in school buses.

> **Note:** The proper installation of CSRSs necessitates that a school bus seat have safety belts or other means of securing the CSRS to the seat. NHTSA recommends that lap belts or anchorages designed to meet FMVSS 225, Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems, be voluntarily installed to secure CSRSs in large school buses.

Recommendations for the Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses

When preschool age children are transported in a school bus, NHTSA recommends these guidelines be followed:

- Each child should be transported in a Child Safety Restraint System (suitable for the child's weight and age) that meets applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSSs).
- Each child should be properly secured in the Child Safety Restraint System.
- The Child Safety Restraint System should be properly secured to the school bus seat, using anchorages that meet FMVSSs.

Child Safety Restraint System Defined

A Child Safety Restraint System is any device (except a passenger system lap seat belt or lap/shoulder seat belt), designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat, or position a child who weighs less than 50 pounds.

Child Safety Restraint Systems Guideline

1. Child Safety Restraint System Specifications

The provider of the CSRS should ensure:

- Each preschool age child to be transported has a CSRS appropriate for the child's weight, height, and age.
- Each CSRS meets all applicable FMVSSs (look for the manufacturer certification on the label attached to the system).

- Each CSRS has been registered with the CSRSs manufacturer to facilitate any recalls the manufacturer might conduct.
- If the CSRS is the subject of a recall, any necessary repairs or modifications have been made to the manufacturer's specifications.
- Each CSRS is maintained as recommended by its manufacturer, including disposal of any CSRS that has been involved in a crash.

2. Proper Securement

The transportation provider should ensure:

- The CSRS is used and secured correctly in the school bus.
- Each child is secured in CSRSs according to manufacturer's instructions.
- All CSRS attachment hardware and anchorage systems meet FMVSS 210, Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages or FMVSS 225, Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems.
- School bus seats designated for CSRSs meet FMVSS 225, or include lap belts that meet FMVSS 209, Seat Belt Assemblies, and anchors that meet FMVSS 210 (designed to secure adult passengers or CSRS).
- Personnel responsible for securing CSRSs onto school bus seats and children into CSRSs are properly trained and all personnel involved with CSRSs are provided up-to-date information and training.
- When transported in the school bus, preschool age children are supervised according to their developmental and functioning level.

3. School Bus Seats Designated for Child Safety Restraint Systems

The transportation provider should ensure:

- School-bus seats designated for CSRSs are located starting at the front of the vehicle to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of the CSRS occupants.
- CSRS anchorages on school bus seats should meet all applicable FMVSSs.
- When ordering new school buses, the maximum spacing specified under FMVSS No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, (within 24 inches from the seating reference point) is recommended for seats designated for CSRSs to provide adequate space for the CSRSs.
- The combined width of CSRS and/or other passengers on a single seat does not exceed the width of the seat.
- If other students share seats with the CSRSs, the CSRSs are placed in window seating position.

4. Retrofitting School Buses

The transportation provider should ensure:

- Existing school bus seats should only be retrofitted with lap belts or child restraint anchorages as instructed by the school bus manufacturer.
- When a school bus is retrofitted with a seat to allow for proper securement of a CSRS, instructions obtained from the school bus or seat manufacturer on how to install the seat and restraint systems should be followed.
- When a school bus is retrofitted, the bus owner should ensure that seat spacing is sufficient for the CSRS to be used.

5. Evacuation

The transportation provider should ensure:

- The establishment of a written plan on evacuating preschool age children and other passengers in CSRSs in the event of an emergency. This written plan should be provided to drivers,

monitors, and emergency response personnel. The plan should explicitly state how children (both in and out of the CSRS) should be evacuated from the school bus.

- Evacuation drills are practiced on a scheduled basis, at least as often as that required for the school systems school-aged children.
- All personnel involved in transporting children are trained in evacuation and emergency procedures, including those in the written school bus evacuation plan.
- All school buses carrying children in CSRSs carry safety belt cutters that are accessible only to the driver and any monitors.
- CSRSs are not placed in school bus seats adjacent to emergency exits.
- Local emergency response teams are provided copies of the written school bus evacuation plan, including evacuation of preschool age children. Emergency response personnel should be invited to participate in evacuation drills.

6. Other Recommendations

- The school transportation provider should establish a policy on whether they or the child's guardian must supply a CSRS to be used on a school bus.
- School bus purchases should be based on the needs of a projected student population, taking into consideration projected ages, sizes, and other characteristics of the students, including any special needs, and whether preschool age children or medically fragile students will be transported.
- Specified procedures should be established for loading and unloading children in CSRSs.
- Procedures should be established for the periodic maintenance, cleaning, and inspection for damage of CSRSs.
- Procedures should be established to train personnel involved in direct service delivery of infants, toddlers, and preschool children on the physical day-to-day handling of these young children and means to handle potential exposure to contagious and communicable diseases.
- When school bus procedures are established, it should be noted that some children in CSRSs might have special needs, including medical fragility, which must be addressed on a child-by-child basis.

Appendix 9B — Summary of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards

FMVSS 209 Seat Belt Assemblies
This standard specifies requirements for seat belt assemblies. The requirements apply to straps, webbing, or similar material, as well as to all necessary buckles and other fasteners and all hardware designed for installing the assembly in a motor vehicle, and to the installation, usage, and maintenance instructions for the assembly.

FMVSS 210 Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages
This standard establishes requirements for seat belt assembly anchorages to ensure proper location for effective occupant restraint and to reduce the likelihood of failure. The requirements apply to any component, other than the webbing or straps, involved in transferring seat belt loads to the vehicle structure.

FMVSS 213 Child Restraint Systems
This standard specifies requirements for child restraint systems used in motor vehicles and aircraft. Its purpose is to reduce the number of children killed or injured in motor vehicle crashes. FMVSS 213 is applicable to all child restraint systems designed to transport children under 50 pounds. Examples of the common terms used for the kinds of child safety seats (usually portable and removable) manufactured to meet this standard are listed below:

"Infant Only" Seats
These seats are small, lightweight safety seats which are designed for rear facing use only. This kind can be used only as long as the top rim of the seat encloses the baby's head. The label on the seat gives the upper weight limit (17-22 pounds). One seat can be converted into a car bed for babies who must lie flat. It is important to maintain a 45-degree angle when installing the seat to ensure that the infant can breathe properly (sometimes it is necessary to insert a rolled up towel or cut up Styrofoam pool noodles under the seat to achieve this angle).

"Convertible" Seats
These seats are larger seats, usually designed to fit children from birth to about 40 pounds. Some new models have weight limits as high as 35 pounds for rear facing use. These products are especially good for babies under age one who are growing more rapidly than average. Convertible seating may be turned around to face the front when the baby is one year old and at least 20 pounds. It is important to follow manufacturer guidelines regarding adjustment of the harnessing straps when reversing the seat from rearward facing to forward facing.

"Forward Facing Only" Seats
These seats are non-convertible child safety seats used only in the forward-facing position. This category has different lower weight limits. Most start at 20-25 pounds and go to about 40 pounds (check the manufacturer's label) and fit children from one year to about four years of age. Some of these seats have removable harness systems to accommodate later use as a belt-positioning booster seat. A three-point lap/shoulder harness is required to operate the seat in this capacity. Since school buses do not have lap/shoulder belts, this seat will not accommodate a child larger than 40 pounds. It is recommended that "forward facing only" seats be used on school buses only with the child seat's built-in harnessing system in place and in use securing the child to the seat. Shield booster-type seats should not be used on school bus bench seats.

FMVSS 222 School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection
This standard establishes occupant protection requirements for school bus passenger seating and restraining barriers. The purpose of this standard is to reduce the number of deaths and the severity of injuries that result from the impact of school bus occupants against structures within the vehicle during crashes and sudden driving maneuvers. This standard is frequently referred to as compartmentalization.

FMVSS 225 Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems
This standard establishes requirements for child restraint anchorage systems to ensure their proper location and strength for the effective securing of child restraints. This standard is established to reduce the likelihood of anchorage systems' failures and to increase the likelihood that child restraints are properly secured. In the future, vehicles will be equipped with child restraint anchorage systems that are standardized and independent of the vehicle seat belts. FMVSS 225-compliant systems are sometimes referred to as "UCRA" systems (Universal Child Restraint Anchorages). As of September 1, 2002, UCRA systems are required in two seating positions on Type AII school buses and optional for all Type AI, B, C, and D school buses.

FMVSS 302 Flammability of Interior Materials
This standard specifies burn resistance requirements for materials used in the occupant compartments of motor vehicles, including the materials used for child safety seats. Its purpose is to reduce deaths and injuries to motor vehicle occupants caused by vehicle fires, especially those originating in the interior of the vehicle from sources such as matches or cigarettes

Appendix 9C - Summary of Head Start Transportation Regulations

As of January 18, 2006 vehicles and personnel transporting students in Head Start Programs must comply with the following:

- All Head Start drivers must have a valid CDL. Drivers must also have physical exams, driving record checks, and criminal record checks.
- Vehicles must have communication system and safety equipment, including a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit and a seat belt cutter.
- Head Start agencies will be required to provide a maintenance program for vehicles, including annual inspection, preventative maintenance, and daily pre-trip inspections.
- Head Start agencies must meet specific restrictions in trip routing. Children should not be in transit for more than one hour. Vehicles may not be required to back up or make "U" turns. Stops must be located so that children need not cross the street. Alternative routes should be established in case of hazardous conditions.
- Head Start agencies must provide a monitor to escort children across the street if curb side drop-off is not possible.
- Head Start agencies must ensure that children who are transported are taught safe riding practices, including boarding and leaving the vehicle, crossing the street, recognition of danger zones and emergency evacuation procedures. They must also provide safety training for parents and children in pedestrian safety.
- Head Start agencies must conduct at least three bus evacuation drills during the program year.
- All Head Start drivers must receive a combination of classroom and behind-the-wheel training that meets state school bus training requirements and includes on-board evaluation of road performance and basic first aid.
- At least one monitor must be present on each vehicle. These monitors need to be trained on child boarding and exiting procedure, use of child restraint systems, and emergency evacuation procedures.
- Each vehicle must be equipped with height- and weight- appropriate child restraint systems.
- Agencies must use only school buses or allowable alternate vehicles to provide transportation services.
- Vehicles must be adaptable or designed to transport children with disabilities.

From *Driver Training Mandates Loom for Head start Programs*, School Bus Fleet February 2002.

Appendix 9D — Typical Development Levels

The Infants (birth to one year)

Birth to Six Months

- Communication/Social Skills
  - Moves in response to voice and noises
  - Exhibits different types of crying
  - Quiets to faces or voices or to being picked up
  - Smiles and laughs
- Motor Skills
  - Eyes follow moving object
  - Reaches for toys
  - Head bobs when upright
  - Rolls from stomach to back
- Cognitive Skills
  - Brings hand to mouth
  - Looks at objects

Six Months to One Year

- Communication/Social Skills
  - Imitates sounds
  - Starts to respond to 'no'
  - Looks at familiar objects or people when named
  - Participates in simple social games (e.g. pat-a-cake and peek-a-boo)
- Motor Skills
  - Sits upright unsupported
  - Starts to stand and take steps
- Cognitive Skills
  - Likes to bang toys and will look to floor if toy drops
  - Imitates facial movements
  - Reacts to new features on a toy and is aware if toy is hidden

Toddlers (one to two years)

- Communication/Social Skills - prior to the third birthday the child usually
  - Uses two to four word sentences
  - Follows simple directions
  - Prefers to play near or with other children
  - Separates from familiar person for a few minutes
- Motor Skills - prior to the third birthday the child usually
  - Goes up and down steps with a hand held
  - Runs and jumps
  - Uses both hands for pre-writing activities (scribbles, cuts, builds towers)
- Cognitive Skills - prior to the third birthday, the child usually
  - Identifies several objects by their use
  - Matches colored objects

Preschool Students (three to five years)

- Communication/Social Skills - by the fifth birthday, the child usually
  - Speaks in complete sentences
  - Answers and asks questions
  - Plays with other children and understands sharing and taking turns
- Motor Skills - by the fifth birthday, the child usually
  - Runs, hops, climbs, jumps, goes up and down steps
- Cognitive Skills - by the fifth birthday, the child usually
  - Knows numbers up to twenty, performs simple addition
  - Understands simple sequences in events, stories, and daily routines
  - Starts to read simple words and books (recognizes various signs while traveling)

Appendix 9E — Proper Use of Child Safety Restraint Sytems in School Buses

Proper Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems in School Buses Page 1 of 1

The number of pre-school age children transported in school buses to school and child care programs is at an all time high. Just as in other vehicles, these children need to be properly secured in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) when traveling in a school bus. This publication is designed to assist you in correctly securing pre-school age children in CSRS and properly securing the system to a school bus seat. It provides the basic rules of proper CSRS usage and illustrates the most common mistakes made when installing a CSRS. Use this brochure in conjunction with the instructions that come with the CSRS to assure each child is properly restrained each time they travel in a school bus.

For more information on CSRSs and their use, product recalls, and a listing of Child Passenger Safety Technicians available to assist you, check NHTSA's website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov. You can also call the Auto Safety Hotline 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236).

Correct usage is key to the safety of all children!

NHTSA People Saving People http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov | U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

For a complete borchure, refer to the following website:

http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/buses/busseatbelt/index.html

9/13/20

Appendix 9F — School Bus Seat Spacing Information

North Carolina School Bus Seat Spacing Information

The concept of Compartmentalization of school bus passengers plays a key role in providing protection on school buses. One of the main factors in the success of this design is the proper spacing of passenger seats.

Through Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) testing of school bus passenger seats, the bus body manufacturers have determined the proper spacing of passenger seats to provide the best level of passenger crash protection which meets the requirements of FMVSS 222. Therefore, whenever a new bus is received or an existing bus has seats removed or reinstalled, school district maintenance staff should check for proper seat spacing before returning the bus to service to transport students.

Attached is a chart listing the seat spacing (in inches) of manufacturer's bus body by type. North Carolina School Bus Specifications specify the minimum spacing that may be allowed, and FMVSS 222 specifies the maximum spacing that may be allowed, providing a range that must be adhered to. The two measurement methods are at two different locations to assist in determining the proper seat spacing; they are knee-room or center-to-center spacing. The dimensions listed in the attached chart are North Carolina minimum and Federal maximum measurement specifications. The seat can be positioned anywhere within these minimum and maximum specifications. A line drawing is provided to describe in detail where each reference point is to be measured; either the knee-room or center-to-center method can be used.

If you need any further assistance or information, please call the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/Transportation Services at (919) 807-3570.

NOTE: FMVSS does specify the minimum and the maximum spacing required for seating. These dimensions will vary depending on the seat manufacturer. The Child Safety Restraint Systems are set at a maximum spacing to allow clearance for the child carrier. It is best if reinstalling seats that have been removed that the original floorplan be referenced for correct placement.

Refer to the diagram on the following page.

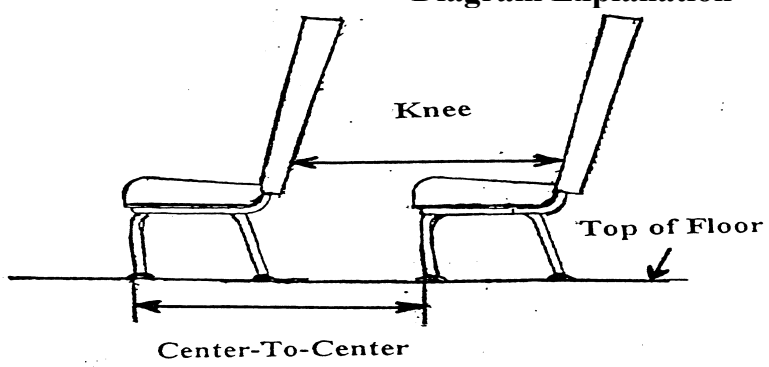
TYPE A, B, C, and D (78 passenger or less)
SCHOOL BUSES

	Knee Room Method		Center-To-Center Seat Leg Method	
Bus Body Company	North Carolina Min. Knee Spacing	Federal Max. Knee Spacing	North Carolina Center to Center Min.	Federal Center to Center Max.
Thomas	24.25 inches	28.5 inches	25.5 inches	29.75 inches

TYPE A, B, C and D (Rows with Child Safety Restraint Systems)
SCHOOL BUSES

	Knee Room Method		Center-To-Center Seat Leg Method	
Bus Body Company	North Carolina Min. Knee Spacing	Federal Max. Knee Spacing	North Carolina Center to Center Min.	Federal Center to Center Max.
Thomas	28.5 inches	28.5 inches	35.2 inches	35.2 inches

Diagram Explanation



Appendix 9G — Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Laws and Guidelines

Q. ***What does the North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law state in regards to the preschool population?***

A. The North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law states that a child less than eight years of age and less than 80 pounds in weight shall be properly secured in a weight-appropriate child passenger restraint system. In vehicles equipped with an active passenger-side front air bag – if the vehicle has a rear seat, a child less than five years of age and less than 40 pounds in weight shall be properly secured in a rear seat, unless the child restraint system is designed for use with air bags. Children may be secured in a properly fitted seat belt at age 8 (regardless of weight) or at 80 pounds (regardless of age) – which ever comes first. If no seating positon equipped with a lap and sholder belt to properly secure a belt positioning booster seat is available, a child which weighs at leasst 40 pounds may be restrained by a properly fitted lap belt only.

North Carolina Child Passenger Safety Law - Effective June 1, 2007

Q. ***Are vans/cabs contracted by school systems included in the NC Child Passenger Safety Law?***

A. Yes. Vans and cabs contracted by the school system are covered under this law because they are required to have seat belts.

Q. ***Are school buses included in the NC Child Passenger Safety Law?***

A. Yes and No. Seat belts are required on small school buses (under 10,000 lbs.) and children being transported in these smaller buses are covered under the NC Child Passenger Safety Law. The law exempts vehicles not required to have seat belts and federal standards do not require seat belts on larger school buses (over 10,000 lbs.). The larger buses do not have seat belts because they rely on strong, well-padded, energy absorbing seats and higher seat backs to 'compartmentalize' and protect passengers during a crash.

Q. ***What does the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommend in regards to preschool age children transported in school buses?***

A. NHTSA recommends that preschool children need to be properly secured in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) when traveling in a school bus.

Child Safety Restraint Systems

Q. ***Where should a student secured in a child safety restraint system (CSRS) sit on the bus?***

A. The student should never be positioned adjacent to an Emergency Exit. The CSRS should be positioned near the window (not aisle seat). When using a car seat the lap belt buckle needs to be on the outside near the area where the seat and back meet so that in the event of a emergency, the buckle can be readily released.

Q. ***Who should secure a CSRS in the bus?***

A. A trained employee should secure the CSRS. The bus driver should always check to make sure that the CSRS is properly secured in the vehicle prior to placing the child in the CSRS.

Q. ***Who should place and restrain a student in a CSRS?***

A. A trained employee should place and restrain the student in a CSRS. In some situations, the bus driver may allow the parent/caregiver to assist with restraining the student in the CSRS. The bus driver should always check to make sure that the student is properly restrained in the CSRS. Students or peers should never fasten or unfasten straps/harnesses of a CSRS.

Q. ***How should a car seat be secured in the bus?***

A. The car seat should always be secured in the vehicle per manufacturer's instructions. When properly installed, the child safety seat must not move more than one inch when pushed side to side at the base.

Q. ***What resources are available to answer questions regarding correct installation of child safety restraint systems?***

A. Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations are located throughout the state. These stations provide additional information, safety checks, and training. Inspection stations can be located by accessing the following website www.buckleupnc.org (click on find local programs and checking stations). Additional information regarding child passenger safety can be found at http://www.safekids.org/.

Q. ***Can loop-type belts that tie or loop around a seat frame be used to secure a car seat on the bus?***

A. No. Lap belts that are not compliant with FMVSS 225, Tether Anchorages and Child Restraint Anchorage Systems; FMVSS 209, Seat Belt Assemblies; or FMVSS 210, Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages should not be used to secure a car seat on the bus.

Q. *What options are available for students who inappropriately unfasten buckles of CSRSs?*

A. A safety vest may be indicated for students who inappropriately unfasten front buckles of car seats, integrated child restraints, and add-on restraints. Most safety vests are designed for children and adults who weigh between 20-164 lbs. Measure the student's waist to determine the appropriate size.
(Refer to Appendix 9L – Procedures for Using Safety Vests on the Bus.)

Q. *How should a safety vest be used on the bus?*

A. The safety vest must be used with a seat mount as specified in the manufacturer's instructions. Transportation personnel or other trained employee will mount the safety vest seat mount to the bus seat. The safety vest should be put on the student prior to getting on the bus (at home in the morning, at school in the afternoon). If it is an adjustable safety vest, put the vest on the student with the zipper in the back. The safety vest must be adjusted snugly around the student. If the safety vest is too loose, the student will not be secure. Position the student with the safety vest on the bus seat with the buttocks and shoulders touching the seat back. Attach the seat mount hip snap hooks to the hip D-Rings on the safety vest. Attach the two shoulder snap hooks on the seat mount to the shoulder hooks on the vest. Adjust the webbing on the shoulder snap hooks on the seat mount to the height of the student, if needed. Check to make sure that all hooks and buckels are secure and the straps have no slack. Some safety vests may have an additional crotch strap to help keep the safety vest properly positioned low over the student's hip.

Q. *What is the maximum number of CSRS passengers allowed per bus?*

A. You should not transport more CSRS passengers per bus than can be safely evacuated in an emergency situation.

School Bus Specifications

Q. *Do existing FMVSS 210 seats (lap belt ready seats which are reinforced) comply with the NHTSA Guidelines?*

A. The 210 bus seats will comply with the NHTSA guidelines if they are spaced to provide the maximum seat space requirements according to FMVSS 222. FMVSS No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection (within 24 inches from the seating reference point) is recommended for seats designated for CSRSs to provide adequate space for the CSRSs.

Q. ***Can other students use the bus seats that are designated for CSRSs and meet applicable FMVSSs?***

A. Yes. Bus seats that are compliant with FMVSSs can be used by other students when not in use to transport preschool age students. The maximum seat spacing needed to accommodate space for the CSRSs falls within the maximum seat spacing specifications as required in FMVSS 222.

Q. ***Do school bus specifications comply with the NHTSA guidelines?***

A. All North Carolina School Buses built after January 1, 2000, are equipped with CSRS compliant seats. The 35-36 passenger buses are equipped with two CSRS compliant seats and the 53-54 and the 65-66 passenger buses are equipped with four CSRS compliant seats.

For existing school buses, refer to the North Carolina School Bus Specifications and the North Carolina School Bus Inspection Manual to assure compliance according to model year and manufacturer, as well as applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. Also refer to the manufacturer information on maximum seat spacing (Appendix L).

Retrofitting School Buses

Q. ***Are school districts required to retrofit existing school buses to comply with the NHTSA guidelines?***

A. No. School districts are not required to retrofit existing school buses; however, it is recommended to retrofit the buses that are used to transport preschool age children.

Q. ***How do school districts retrofit existing school buses?***

A. The school district must contact the manufacturer to request instructions to retrofit the bus. The request must include the model, model year, and body number of the bus. School districts must also ensure that no existing FMVSSs are rendered inoperative when completing the modifications.

Q. ***Is there a designated number of seats that must be CSRS compliant when retrofitting a bus?***

A. No. The NHTSA guidelines do not specify the number of seats that must be CSRS compliant. The number of CSRS compliant seats would depend on the number of preschool age children who are transported on the bus.

Preschool Children with Disabilities

Q. *What is Transportation as a Related Service?*

A. Transportation is a related service if it is required to assist the disabled child in benefiting from special education. "In making this determination, the IEP team must consider how the child's disability affects the child's need for transportation, including determining whether the child's disability prevents the child from using the same transportation provided to non-disabled children, or from getting to school in the same manner as non-disabled children." Appendix A, Q. 33 Regs.

Q. *When is transportation as a related service indicated?*

A. Transportation with non-disabled peers, whenever possible, should always be the assumed mode of transportation. At the IEP team meeting the 'Student Profile - Transportation Considerations form should be completed. The completion of this form will give the IEP team the necessary information about the student to make the best decision for the need for transportation as a related service. The IEP team makes this decision based on the student's disability. If the IEP team determines that transportation as a related service is needed to address the student's needs or disability, then the IEP must reflect the recommendation for 'Transportation' as a related service.

Q. *Should the bus driver and transportation safety assistant be informed of the student's disability and pertinent medical information?*

A. Yes. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations state that the public agency must ensure that "each related services provider and other service providers of an eligible child (1) have access to the child's IEP, and (2) are informed of his or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the IEP, and of the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided to the child in accordance with the IEP. This requirement is crucial to ensuring that each child receives Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in accordance with his or her IEP, and that the IEP is appropriately and effectively implemented." (Appendix A. Q. 23, Regs). The Commentary to the Regulations states that "it would be highly beneficial to the education of children with disabilities to ensure that… other service providers of the child who are not members of the IEP team are informed about the contents of a child's IEP to ensure the IEP is appropriately implemented." Sharing of information with transporters can be essential in implementing safe transportation of a child. Transporters should be trained in appropriate use and non-disclosure of such information (confidentiality).

Q. *How should the preschool student with disabilities get on and off the vehicle?*

A. Whenever possible the preschool student should walk up the steps with assistance if needed. If the student is unable to walk up the bus/van steps, then the IEP team including the student's school physical therapist should determine the safest method of getting on and off the vehicle for the student and for the staff. Depending on the preschool student's weight and disability, it may be appropriate to carry the student up the bus steps. Some students with physical disabilities may need to be loaded/unloaded on the vehicle via the lift while they are in their stroller/wheelchair with wheel locks securely set. An adult must hold onto the frame of the stroller/wheelchair while the student is on the lift and while the lift is being operated. The adult should not ride the lift. Some of these students may then need to be transferred into a Child Safety Restraint System.

Appendix 9H — Student Profile - Transportation Considerations

STUDENT PROFILE - TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Transportation and Exceptional Children staff will use the following information to develop a transportation plan.

Student Name _____ **ID #** _____
Parent/Guardian Name _____ **Phone** _____
Address _____ **Assigned School** _____
_____ **Bus Number AM** _____ **PM** _____
Pick Up Address _____ _____
For Preschool Students:
Drop Off Address _____ **Anticipated Date of Enrollment** _____
_____ **Days of Week** (circle) **M T W Th F**

School Contact/Case Manager and Email Address _____

Student Information

Age _____ **Weight** _____ **Height**_____ **Exceptional Children Code** _____ **504 Plan**: **Y N**
Medical Diagnosis _____ **Additional Medical Conditions** (check all that apply)

- ☐ Allergies _____ ☐ Heat Intolerance ☐ Seizures
- ☐ Shunt ☐ Spinal Rod ☐ Respiratory Difficulties
- ☐ Other _____

Equipment that Must be Transported and Secured (check all that apply)

- ☐ Wheelchair ☐ Crutches ☐ Oxygen Tank
- ☐ Wheelchair Tray ☐ Walker ☐ Communication Device
- ☐ Other _____

Communication Abilities (check one)

- ☐ Age Appropriate ☐ Non Verbal ☐ Other _____

List any Special Behavior Strategies to be Implemented During Transport

_____

Transportation Summary (complete with information obtained from page 2)

Mode of Transportation: *(check one):*

- ☐ Bus ☐ Lift Bus/Vehicle ☐ Parent Contract
- ☐ Other _____

Pick Up / Drop Off Location: *(check one):*

- ☐ Bus Stop ☐ Address Stop

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS)*: (check one):*

- ☐ None ☐ Integrated Bus Seat or STAR Restraint
- ☐ Car Seat ☐ Safety Vest (circle size: XS S M Lg)

Note: *If Vehicle Contract (van or auto) is necessary due to routing, then students under 8 years or under 80 lbs will be transported in a weight-appropriate car seat or booster seat that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.*

Loading on/off Bus Steps: (*check one*):

- ☐ Independent ☐ Supervision ☐ Assistance Needed

Principal/Assistant Principal (Signature) _____ **Date:** _____

Student's Name _____ **Date Form Completed** _____

Method of Transportation *Complete the following section. Check only **one**.*

☐ Student is able to sit on the bus seat without modifications.

☐ Student remains seated in his/her wheelchair with appropriate securement/restraint systems.

☐ Student is unable to remain seated on the bus seat during transport due to a disability and will need a **C**hild **S**afety **R**estraint **S**ystem. **If checked, indicate the appropriate CSRS and size (see table below) on page 1 under Transportation Summary**

Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) for School Buses typically used in North Carolina (Products from other manufacturers may be used.)	Student's Weight in lbs
Integrated Child Restraint Bus Seat ➢ Child restraint is part of the bus seat and has a 5 point harness system ➢ Available on some buses manufactured after 2000	CE White 20–60 SafeGuard 22-85
STAR RESTRAINT – (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-65 lbs
STAR RESTRAINT – **Plus** (**S**tudent **T**ransportation **A**dd on **R**estraint) ➢ Child restraint that is attached to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS	25-90 lbs
E-Z On Safety Vest (Adjustable safety vest that zips up the back) ➢ Vest must be put on student prior to student getting on the bus (i.e., vest *put on student at home in the morning and in the classroom in the afternoon)* ➢ Vest attaches to a seat mount that is secured to the bus seat ➢ Seat behind restrained student must be empty or have a student who is in a CSRS ➢ ***Indicated for students who are over 90 lbs or who INAPPROPRIATELY unbuckle front buckles in car seats or the harnesses on other CSRS***	20 -160 lbs Size based on child's waist **Size: Waist:** XS 19-23" S 25-30" M 32-37" LG 37-42"
Car Seats (RARELY used on buses) ➢ Only select this option if child requires a rear-facing position or if student requires more support to remain seated than is provided by CSRS listed above. ➢ Car seat internal harness must be adjusted to the student ➢ Car seat must be installed on reinforced bus seats	Up to 65 lbs per manufacturer's instructions

Method of Assisting Student on/off the School Bus *Check only **one**.*

☐ Student is able to ascend/descend bus step(s) independently.

☐ Adult assistance is needed for student to ascend/descend bus steps.
Describe method of assist: _____
(*Note: parent/guardian can assist student up/ down the bus step(s) at the home; school personnel can assist student at the school. Transportation staff typically assists student inside the vehicle*).

☐ Student needs to be carried on bus steps (option **only** for **preschool students** who weigh less than 40 lbs).

☐ Student is unable to safely ascend/descend the bus step(s) with assistance; therefore, student must use the lift while seated in a wheelchair. Once on the bus, student may be moved to a seat (student may need a child restraint while sitting on bus seat).

☐ Student uses a manual/power wheelchair and requires a transport vehicle with a lift

****

IEP TEAM or 504 Case Manager Must provide page 1 of this form to the Transportation Department.

The need for a Child Safety Restraint System on the bus must be documented in the 504 Plan or IEP

This form should be reviewed annually or as needed to reassess the transportation needs for this student.

Appendix 9I — Emergency Medical Informaton Card

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
Confidential Emergency Information

The following information must be provided on a yearly basis by parent/guardian for students requiring special transportation. Parent/guardian will be required to complete a new form when there is a change in the information provided.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Student Name:	Birth Date:	PHOTOGRAPH
School:	Date:	HERE

A. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Height:	Weight:	Hair Color:	Eye Color:	Visually Impaired YES NO	Hearing Impaired YES NO	Verbal: YES NO	Language Spoken:
Physical Disability: YES NO	If Yes, please describe the physical disability:						
Exceptionality (circle): Au BED DB HI EMD TMD S/PMD MU OI OHI LD S/L TBI DD VI							
Special considerations which may affect transportation:							

B. FAMILY INFORMATION

Name: Parent Guardian	Address:	Daytime Phone(s):
Name of other adult authorized to act on your behalf:	Daytime Phone(s):	

C. EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION

Student's Doctor:	Phone:
Hospital Preference:	Phone:
Insurance Provider:	Medicaid: YES NO

D. MEDICAL HISTORY

Does the student have seizures? YES NO On seizure meds? YES NO	If yes, describe symptoms: If yes, list name, dosage, and frequency of medication:
Does student take other medication? YES NO Need to know for reasons of drug interactions.	If yes, list name, dosage, and frequency of medication:
Is student allergic to food or medication? YES NO	If yes, what?
Does student have any of the following? Asthma Bleeding Disorder Brittle bones Diabetes Heart Disease Respiratory problems Other:	

E. CONSENT (Print name)

I, _____ father, mother or legal guardian of _____ in the event of accident, injury or serious illness to him/her, do voluntarily hereby give consent to and authorize the school district to secure medical aid or transportation to a medical facility. I understand that neither the school district nor the individual responsible for obtaining medical aid will be responsible for expense incurred.

_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date

Appendix 9J — Procedures for Using Integrated Child Restraints on the Bus

Procedures for Using Integrated Child Restraints on the Bus

An integrated child restraint is a child safety restraint system built into the bus seat that enables preschool students and students with disabilities to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. An integrated child restraint has a 5-point harness system. The decision to use an integrated child restraint for school age children is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

SafeGuard

CE White Integrated Child Restraint – children between 20-60 pounds (*per manufacturer)*
SafeGuard Integrated Child Restraint – children over 1 year of age, between 22- 85 pounds and whose height is less than 49 inches. The student's shoulder height must be lower than the shoulder belt slots and the student must be capable of sitting upright without assistance. (*per manufacturer)*

PREPARING THE SEAT

- Lower the seat cushion from the seat back.
- On a SafeGuard seat, fold the outer part under to create a cushion for the child to sit.
- Release the harness clip and metal latches from the buckle.
- Lengthen the shoulder straps by one of the following methods depending upon the type of seat:

CE White – Pull up on the tab at the upper right hand corner of the seat while pulling the shoulder straps outward.

SafeGuard – Press the adjustor button on the side of the seat base while pulling up on the shoulder straps. Repeat on the other side.

PUTTING THE STUDENT IN THE SEAT

- Position the student in the seat with hips as far back as possible.
- Place a shoulder strap over each of the student's shoulders.
- Fasten the two metal latches into the buckle to form a belt around the student's pelvis. Be sure to hear a click to ensure the buckle is secure.
- Tighten the shoulder straps to remove slack by one of the following methods depending upon the type of seat:

CE White – Pull up on the strap at the upper right hand corner of the seat.

SafeGuard – Pull up on the free end of the strap at each belt adjuster.

  - Straps should lie in a relatively straight line without sagging. They should not put pressure on the student's body.
- Fasten the harness clip and adjust it to the level of the student's armpits.
  - The harness clip keeps the shoulder belts correctly positioned.
- Harness straps must lie flat and be adjusted so that excess webbing cannot be pinched both above the student's shoulders and below the harness clip.

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Appendix 9K — Procedures for Using STAR Restraints on the Bus

Procedures for Using STAR Restraints on the Bus

STAR RESTRAINTS - Student Transportation Add-On Restraint

A STAR restraint is an add-on seat with a 5 point harness system that enables preschool students and students with disabilities to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. The decision to use a STAR restraint for school age children is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

STAR restraints meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.

DETERMINING APPROPRIATE SIZE

STAR	Student's Weight 25-65 lbs	Student's Height 47 inches or less
STAR Plus	Student's Weight 25-90 lbs	Student's Height 47 inches or less

INSTALLING THE STAR RESTRAINT ON THE BUS SEAT

- Wrap the gray, tan, and black straps at the top of the STAR restraint around the bus seat back.
- Insert the gray and tan straps at rear of the STAR base into the opening between the bus seat and back.
- Connect the gray straps and connect the tan straps.
- Wrap the black strap at the front of the STAR base underneath the bus seat.
- Connect the black straps.
- Tighten the straps snugly and secure the free ends with the Velcro or plastic holders.

PUTTING THE STUDENT IN THE STAR RESTRAINT

An adult must always put the student in the STAR restraint.

- Release the harness clip and metal latches from the buckle prior to student sitting in the STAR restraint.
- Adjust the two comfort slides located at the top of the straps to student's shoulder height.
- Position the shoulder straps over student's shoulders. If additional length is needed, press the adjuster button on the side of the seat base while pulling on the strap (repeat on other side).
- Insert the two metal latches into the buckle.
- Tighten the harness straps snugly around the student by pulling up on the two straps located on the sides of the seat base at the same time.
- Fasten the harness clip and position it at armpit level.
- Some STAR restraints have additional chest straps that can be fastened under the shoulder straps once the student has been secured in the seat. Position the chest strap as close to the student's armpit level as possible and adjust it to fit snugly.

REMOVING THE STUDENT FROM THE STAR RESTRAINT

An adult must always remove the student from the STAR restraint.

- Release the harness clip.
- Loosen the shoulder straps by pressing the adjuster buttons located on each side while pulling on the straps.
- Push the button to release the metal latches.

The bus seat behind a student in a STAR restraint should be unoccupied or be occupied by a student using a child safety restraint system.

Technical Information from SafeGuard®

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Appendix 9L — Procedures for Using Safety Vests on the Bus

Procedures for Using Safety Vests on the Bus

SAFETY VEST

A safety vest is a child safety restraint system that enables preschool students and students with disabilities to remain seated on the bus seat during transport. A safety vest is also useful for students who inappropriately unbuckle front buckles on other child restraints. The decision to use a safety vest for school age children is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

Safety Vests must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213.

SIZING & ADJUSTMENT OF THE SAFETY VEST

Safety vests are designed for children and adults who weigh between 20-168 lbs.
Safety vest sizes are based on the individual's waist size.
The vests are adjustable with 3 zipper sizes to accommodate growth.

X- Small (19-23" waist)	Small (25-30" waist)	Medium (32-37"waist)	Large (37-42"waist)

Students should be wearing their safety vests prior to getting on the bus (i.e. apply vest at home in the morning and at school in the afternoon). The safety vest must be put on so that the zipper is located in the back with the hip strap low around the student's lap**.** The vest should be put on under winter coats. The shoulder straps are adjustable and may be lengthened or shortened to properly fit the student. The shoulder webbing must be 'back threaded' into the black webbing guides to prevent the webbing from slipping. X-small, small, and medium safety vests have additional straps between the legs that are adjustable to help keep the safety vest properly positioned at the student's hips. Do not remove the webbing guides or the buckles on the vests.

The safety vest must be snug and applied correctly in order to provide a safe and secure bus ride.

INSTALLING THE SAFETY VEST SEAT MOUNT

- Install the safety vest seat mount by wrapping the mount securely around the bus seat back.
- Position the push button closure facing the seat back to prevent accidental release.
- Position the non-adjustable webbing snap hooks at the bottom of the seat.
- Position the adjustable webbing snap hooks at the top of the seat back.

SECURING THE SAFETY VEST & STUDENT ON THE BUS SEAT

- Position the student on the seat with his/her hips and shoulders touching the seat back.
- Attach the seat mount hip snap hooks to the D-Rings on the vest at student's hips.
- Adjust the webbing on the shoulder snap hooks on the seat mount to the height of the student, if needed.
- 'Back thread' the webbing in the black webbing guides to prevent the webbing from slipping.
- Attach the shoulder snap hooks to the metal slots on the vest at the student's shoulders.
- Check all hooks, webbing, and buckles to ensure they are secure and snug.

The bus seat behind a student utilizing a safety vest should be unoccupied or be occupied by a student using a child safety restraint system.

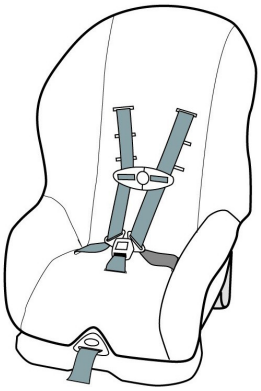
Technical Information from E-Z-ON Products, Inc. of Florida

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Appendix 9M — Procedures for Using Car Seats on the Bus

Procedures for Using Car Seats on the Bus

CAR SEATS ON THE BUS



A car seat is a child safety restraint system with a harness that is used on the school bus for children who require a rear-facing position or who require more support to remain seated than is provided by other types of child safety restraints. The decision to use a car seat for a school age student is an IEP/504 team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP/504 Plan.

PROVIDING THE PROPER CAR SEAT

- Car seats should be provided by the school system.
- Car seats must have a label stating that it meets FMVSS 213.
- Car seats must be appropriate for the height & weight of the child (see manufacturer's instructions).
  Rear-facing car seats - use until a child reaches the highest weight or height according to manufacturer's instructions. At a minimum, use a rear-facing car seat until the child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.

Courtesy of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

- Forward-facing car seats - use when the child has reached the highest allowed rear-facing weight of the child restraint. Forward facing should not be considered until a child is at least 1 year of age and at least 20 lbs.

ADJUSTING THE CAR SEAT FOR THE CHILD

Harness straps may need to be adjusted for the child before the car seat is secured on the bus. Refer to manufacturer's instructions regarding which slots to use as well as removing and re-threading harness straps into the correct slots.

- Rear-facing - use the harness slots that are even with or below the level of the child's shoulders.
- Forward-facing - use the top set of harness slots unless lower slots that are even with or above the child's shoulders are allowed to be used forward-facing by the manufacturer.

SECURING THE CAR SEAT ON THE BUS

Car seats must be installed:

- On reinforced seats (those that meet FMVSS 210)
- With seat belts meeting FMVSS 209 and installed according to the bus manufacturer
- Before placing the child in the car seat
- So that the car seat does not move more than one inch when pushed side to side at the base

Car seats should be installed:

- By bus driver or other trained staff member
- With seat belt buckle positioned towards the bus aisle so it can be readily secured/released
- At the front of the bus to provide drivers with quick access to and a clear view of occupants
- Next to the window (not the aisle) if a student not in a child safety restraint system shares the seat

Car seats should never be installed next to an emergency exit

If the non-adjustable part of the lap belt is too long after being buckled and tightened, then it may be twisted one to three times to shorten the belt (adding knots is not acceptable).

PUTTING THE CHILD IN THE CAR SEAT

- Put the child in the car seat.
- Position the harness over the child's shoulders and secure the buckle.
- Secure the harness retainer clip and tighten the harness straps.
- Position the harness retainer clip at armpit level.

The harness straps must lie flat and be adjusted so that excess webbing cannot be pinched at the child's shoulders.

ALWAYS CHECK THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS

REFERENCES

Chapter 1 - Laws, Policies, and Regulations

Head Start Transportation Regulations; Federal Register/Vol. 66, No.12/ Thursday, January 18, 2001/ Rules and Regulations. 45 CFR 1310

Howell, Angela. "Law and Exception Students". Retrieved April 23, 2008, from: www.unc.edu/~ahowell/exceplaw.html

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Guidelines for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Children in School Buses, February 1999. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

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Glossary

Address Stop: Regular bus stop as defined by Public School Laws.

Ambulatory: Capable of walking, to move from place to place

Anchorage point: The point of attachment of a securement system, or occupant restraint to the vehicle structure.

Assistive technology device: Any item or piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to maintain or improve functional capabilities. Examples of assistive technology are lap tops and word processors.

Augmentative communication devices: Electronically operated or non-electronically operated equipment that students use to support their communication or spoken language; also know as aug com or AAC devices.

Behavioral Contract(ing): A written and signed agreement between a teacher and a student (and others if needed) that specifies expected behavior, positive and negative consequences, and contract duration.

Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP): An intervention plan designed to replace problem behavior with an alternative replacement behavior, and/or to eliminate circumstances associated with the problem behavior.

Behavioral Support Plan: A brief, written plan, designed to understand why a behavior has occurred and to teach/elicit alternative behavior.

Belt cutter: A device with protected blades, designed to quickly cut restraint belts.

Body fluids cleanup kit: Package of materials including; but not limited to, latex gloves, disposal bag, and absorbent material, used to clean up spills of potentially infected bodily fluids, under OSHA's blood borne pathogens regulations and Universal Precautions practices; also know as hygiene kit.

CDL: Commercial Drivers License

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

Companion animal: An animal trained to provide assistance for persons with disabilities, can be a guide animal, assistive animal, or service animal.

Continuum of services: The range of possible options, from least restrictive to most restrictive, available to students with disabilities for transportation services.

Crisis Intervention: A procedure that requires specialized training in restrictive and intrusive interventions.

CSRS: Child Safety Restraint System; a device meeting the requirements of FMVSS 213, designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat, or position a child who weighs less than 50 pounds; also know as a child safety seat and car seat.

Curb to curb: Pick-up/drop-off location, bus stops at the curb in front of or near a student's house.

DNR: Do not resuscitate; an order from a parent, legal guardian, or court that prohibits the use of emergency measures to prolong the life of an individual.

Door to door: Pick-up/drop-off location - bus personnel go to the door of the student's home and provide transport to/from the bus.

Employee contract: An agreement between the Transportation Department and an employee of the LEA to transport a student with special needs via the employee's private vehicle. Reimbursement, typically at the standard mileage rate, is normally offered to the transporter; however, terms for reimbursement may be negotiated.

Evacuation drill: Performance of a mock school bus evacuation in order to teach students proper emergency procedures and to provide practice in the use of emergency exits, also know as bus safety drills.

FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education; guaranteed by the EHA for all handicapped children. It includes special education and related services, including transportation.

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC 1232, which requires confidentiality of student records in public schools, but allows access to necessary information regarding student disabilities and/or health needs to those who have a need to know, including school bus drivers.

FMVSS: Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, 49 CFR 571; construction standards developed and enforced by NHTSA that apply to all new motor vehicles and items of motor vehicle safety equipment.

Forward facing: Installation of securement system in such a way that the mobile seating device and its occupant face the front of the vehicle when secured.

Four-point tiedown: A securement system in which four strap assemblies attach to the wheelchair frame at four separate points and anchor to the vehicle floor at four separate points.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA): A method of identifying and evaluating the occurrence of problem behavior.

Head Start: A program initiated in 1965 to provide comprehensive child development services to preschool children of predominately low-income families.

IDEA: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, passed in 1990 as P.L. 101-476 (Part B) as approved in March of 1999, to replace the EHA.

IEP: Individualized Education Program; a written plan including information for each child with disabilities required under P.L. 101-476 (Part B).

IEP Team: A group of individuals (multidisciplinary) as described in the IDEA that is responsible for the development, review, and revision of the IEP.

IFSP: Individualized Family Service Plan; a written plan similar to the IEP for the family of a child receiving early intervention services required under P.L. 102-119.

Integrated restraint system: A system in which the occupant restraint of an individual in a wheelchair/ mobility aid connects directly to; and is dependent upon, the mobility aid's securement system's rear strap assemblies.

Intervention: An action designed to modify an inappropriate behavior.

IWEN: Individual With Exceptional Needs.

Joystick: A device used by a student to operate a power wheelchair.

Lap belt: A Type 1 belt assembly meeting the requirements of FMVSS 209, intended to limit movement of the pelvis.

Lap/shoulder belt: A Type 2 belt assembly meeting the requirements of FMVSS 210, intended to limit the movement of the pelvis and upper torso.

LEA: Local Education Agency; school system

LRE: Least Restrictive Environment; a concept embodied in IDEA which requires that children with disabilities be integrated as fully as possible into situations and settings with their non-disabled peers.

Manifestation determination: A review to determine if there is a significant relationship between a student's behavior and his/her disability.

Medical support equipment: Portable equipment used by students to maintain life functions, such as oxygen bottles, intravenous, or fluid drainage apparatus.

Medically fragile: Refers to students who require specialized technological health care procedures for life support and/or health support.

Mobility aid: A wheelchair, or other device, either battery-powered or manual that is used to provide support to and movement of a person with a physical disability.

Modeling: An intervention procedure that elicits a desired behavior through observation of modeled behavior.

Monitor: An unpaid volunteer with responsibilities to preserve order upon the bus and do such other things as may be appropriate for the safety of pupils and employees assigned to such bus.

NAPT: National Association for Pupil Transportation, a membership organization comprised of individuals and organizations representing all facets of school transportation.

NASDPTS: National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, a membership organization primarily comprised of state officials responsible for pupil transportation.

NHTSA: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Parallel restraint system: A system in which the occupant restraint lap belt anchors directly to the floor track or plates, and is independent of the wheelchair/mobility aid securement system.

Parent contract: An agreement between the Transportation Department and the parents/guardians of students with special needs to all the parent/guardian to transport their child to/from school via their own private vehicle. Reimbursement, typically at the standard mileage rate, is normally offered to the transporter; however, terms for reimbursement may be negotiated.

Part B: The section of IDEA that outlines services for children ages 3-21.

Part C: The section of IDEA that outlines services for children birth to age 3.

Positive Reinforcement: An intervention procedure that rewards desired behavior.

Postural support: A seat, belt, or other component used to support a child with disabilities in a desired position but not designed or intended to provide occupant restraint in a crash; also know as a positioning belt or device.

Power lift: A mechanized platform designed to provide access to a vehicle for a mobility aid/wheelchair, also know as a wheelchair lift.

Preschool: A program serving children between the ages of three and five years.

Preschooler: Refers to a child between the ages of three and five years who is not yet in kindergarten

Private Contract: An agreement between the Transportation Department and a third party provider (i.e. taxi, transit bus, private contractor, etc) to transport students with special needs to/from school via private vehicle. Reimbursement terms may be negotiated.

Prompting: An intervention procedure that facilitates a desired behavior through visual, auditory, and physical cues.

Reinforced seats: Bus seats with attachment framework or anchorage devices conforming to FMVSS 210. Also know as “210 seats” or “lap-belt ready seats.”

Related services: Support services documented in an IEP that are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Some of these services are occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and transportation.

Restraint system: A generic term for one or more devices intended to secure and protect a passenger with or without a mobility aid in a vehicle, including lap belts, lap/shoulder belts, child safety seats, safety vests, etc.

Scooter: A motorized mobility aid with three wheels, handle bar or tiller, and a swiveling seat.

Seat restraints: A passenger restraint system incorporating lap belts or lap/shoulder belts and meeting the requirements of FMVSS 209 and 210.

Section 504: Section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, PL93-112, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by any recipient of federal funding.

Securement points: Locations on the base or seat frame of the wheelchair/mobility aid where the securement system should be attached.

Securement system: The means of securing a mobile seating device to a vehicle in accordance with FMVSS 222, including all necessary buckles, anchors, webbing/straps, and other fasteners.

Securement and restraint system: The total system, which secures and restrains both a wheelchair/mobility aid and its occupant; also known as WTORS.

Shaping: An intervention procedure that systemically reinforces each behavioral sequence that leads to the desired behavior.

Stroller: A lightweight folding mobility aid. Some strollers have been crash tested and may be occupied by a student during bus transport.

Tether: An upper anchor strap used in addition to a seat belt to hold certain types of restraint devices in place.

Transportation Safety Assistant (TSA): An individual who is employed by a school system with responsibilities to assist the bus drivers with the safety, movement, management, and care of children boarding the bus, leaving the bus or being transported in it.

WC/19 wheelchairs: Wheelchairs that have met rigorous crash testing criteria; also know as transit wheelchairs or wheelchairs with a transit option.

Wheelchair: A seating system comprising at least a frame, seat, and wheels for the support and mobility of a person with physical disabilities.