

STUDENT SAFETY WALKING, BIKING, AND RIDING BUSES

The district will adopt a comprehensive school trip safety program that addresses bus safety, walking and biking and route plans, vehicle access to the school, circulation and parking at the school, pedestrian circulation on and around the school campus and safety education and enforcement.

Bus Safety

The superintendent or designee will develop written rules establishing the procedures for bus safety and emergency exit drills and for student conduct while riding on buses. The procedures for bus safety will include rules restricting bus access to students and those persons authorized by the superintendent or designee to ride the bus to and from any school activity.

The bus driver is responsible for the safety of his/her passengers, particularly for those who cross a roadway after leaving the bus. No bus driver will order or allow a student to disembark at other than his/her customary boarding or stopping place unless so authorized by the superintendent or designee. In order to ensure the safety of all, the bus driver may hold students accountable for their conduct during the course of transportation and may recommend corrective action against a student. Bus drivers are expressly prohibited from using corporal punishment. Bus drivers are expressly prohibited from allowing anyone to board the bus who is not a student, or a person authorized to ride the bus by the superintendent or designee.

Emergencies

In the event of an accident or other emergency, the bus driver should follow the emergency procedures in accordance with the School Bus Driver Handbook produced by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). A copy of the emergency procedures will be located in each bus. To ensure the success of such emergency procedures, each bus driver shall conduct an emergency evacuation drill within the first six weeks of each school semester. The district shall conduct such other drills and procedures as may be necessary.

Student Conduct on Buses

The superintendent or designee shall establish written rules of conduct for students riding school buses. Such rules shall include as a minimum the requirements of WAC 392-145-021 and will be reviewed annually by the superintendent or designee and revised if necessary. If the rules are substantially revised, they shall be submitted to the board for approval.

At the beginning of each school year, a copy of the rules of conduct for students riding buses shall be provided to each student who is scheduled to ride a school bus. The classroom teacher and/or bus driver shall review the rules with the students at or near the beginning of each school year. A copy of the rules shall be available upon request at the district office.

Safe Route to School Plan

Pursuant to WAC 392-151-025, all elementary schools that have students who walk to and from school are required to develop a suggested route plan. These route plans shall limit the number of school crossings so that students move through the crossings in groups. The walking route plan shall be distributed to all students. All schools are encouraged to have a walking/biking route plan in place. To develop the school walking/biking route plans, the superintendent will establish a Safe Routes to School committee.

The committee district will conduct a walking and biking audit within a one-mile radius of the school and develop a Safe Routes to School walking/biking map or plan. The plan will recommend the best routes for students walking to and from school, as well as the best routes to and from school bus stops. In developing the plan, the committee will consider, at a minimum, the following:

1. traffic patterns;
2. existing traffic controls;
3. existing school patrols;
4. limits on the number of school crossings so that students have to move through the crossings in groups;
5. allowing only one entrance-exit from each block to and from school;
6. routes that provide the greatest physical separation between walking children and traffic;
7. routes that expose students to the lowest speeds and volumes of moving vehicles; and
8. routes that include the fewest number of road or rail crossings.

The superintendent or designee will review the plan with the Safety Advisory Committee and, upon its their approval, distribute the plan to all students with instructions that it be taken home and discussed with parents. The plan will be routinely updated as conditions change. The superintendent or designee will include the plan in the district's School Wellness Plan to encourage parents and students who walk and bike to school to use the recommended routes.

Cross References:

3241	Student Discipline
6700	Nutrition, Health, and Physical Education

Legal References:

RCW 28A.600.010	Enforcement of rules of conduct--Due process guarantees— Computation of days for short-term and long-term suspensions
RCW 46.61.385	School patrol - Appointment - Authority - Finance - Insurance
Chapter 392-144 WAC	School Bus Driver Qualifications
WAC 392-145-021	General operating regulations
WAC 392-145-016	Rules for students riding school buses
WAC 392-151-025	Route plans

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