



Natomas Unified School District TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

Instituted by Ralph Meza III

Director of Transportation

Natomas Unified School District (NUSD)

TRANSPORTATION MISSION STATEMENT

NUSD Transportation:

Natomas Unified School District (NUSD) school bus drivers rank among the safest in the nation. Through rigorous training, continuous improvement, and a focus on student and community well-being, our drivers uphold the core principles that define NUSD Transportation. NUSD Transportation Department proudly follows the **S.E.E. Program** to provide Safe, Effective, and Efficient transportation through a team of highly trained professionals. Our school bus drivers are at the heart of this mission, ensuring that every trip meets the highest standards of safety, reliability, and service excellence.

Safety, Effectiveness, and Efficiency (S.E.E.1)

As part of California's distinguished school transportation network, our drivers receive extensive training, consistently exceed state and federal safety standards, and are committed to ensuring secure and respectful transportation for all passengers. NUSD drivers play a crucial role in supporting students and families by ensuring timely and dependable transportation services. California school buses remain the safest mode of transportation nationwide, and NUSD drivers take immense pride in maintaining this reputation.

Strength, Empowerment, and Enrichment (S.E.E.2)

NUSD school bus drivers are provided with the knowledge, confidence, and skills to respond to any situation, reinforcing safety procedures, emergency preparedness, and passenger management. Strength, Empowerment, and Enrichment programs equip drivers with the tools to manage diverse transportation needs, enhance service reliability, and improve response strategies in all situations.

Support, Encouragement, and Enhancement (S.E.E.3)

Every ride our drivers strive to foster a respectful and inclusive atmosphere ensuring a smooth and effective welcoming transportation environment. Support, Encouragement, and Enrichment training provides professional development in time management, and advanced safety protocols allowing drivers to maintain high levels of efficiency without compromising safety. Our drivers have developed strong teamwork, adaptability, and customer service skills, ensuring that transportation remains responsive and efficient.

At NUSD, our drivers do more than transport students—they uphold a commitment to Safety, Effectiveness, and Efficiency, strengthened by continuous learning and professional excellence. Every ride reflects the dedication of our transportation team in making school travel a safe, empowering, and enriching experience for all.



AUTHORITY OF DISTRICT BOARDS – TITLE 13 CCR 1202(b)

The governing board of any school district, county superintendent of schools, or equivalent private school entity or official, may adopt and enforce additional requirements governing the transportation of pupils. Such requirements shall not conflict with any law or state administrative regulation.

AUTHORITY OF THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER – CCR TITLE 5, SECTION 14103 - Driver Authority and Responsibility

Under Title 5, Section 14103 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), the school bus driver has full authority and responsibility for the safe operation of the school bus and the safety of all passengers on board.

All students transported by Natomas Unified School District (NUSD) must comply with the driver's instructions at all times to ensure a safe and orderly environment. The bus driver has the authority to enforce all district and state transportation policies, including but not limited to:

- Ensuring safe boarding and exiting procedures for all students.
- Maintaining proper student conduct while the bus is in motion.
- Enforcing the use of seat belts (if equipped) and other safety restraints.
- Stopping the bus and addressing safety concerns if a situation poses a risk to passengers or the public.
- Reporting any student misconduct or rule violations to the appropriate school administrator for disciplinary action.

Failure to follow driver instructions shall result in disciplinary action, including warnings, assigned seating, suspension of bus riding privileges, or permanent removal from school transportation, depending on the severity of the violation.

Compliance with Safety Regulations:

All NUSD bus drivers undergo extensive training and certification to uphold the highest safety standards. They are required to adhere to all state and federal transportation laws to ensure that every student is transported safely and efficiently.

By enforcing CCR Title 5, Section 14103, NUSD ensures that its transportation program remains one of the safest in the state while providing students with a secure and structured riding experience.

This document serves as an official update to the 2025/2026 Natomas USD Transportation Safety Plan and reflects the district's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of school bus safety.

FOGGY DAY / REDUCED VISIBILITY POLICY – VEHICLE CODE 34501.6

School Buses: Reduced Visibility

The governing board of any local educational agency providing pupil transportation shall adopt procedures limiting school bus operation when roadway visibility is reduced to 200 feet or less during regular home-to-school transportation service. School activity trip policies shall grant school bus drivers the discretionary authority to discontinue bus operations if they determine conditions unsafe due to reduced visibility.

NUSD Foggy Day / Reduced Visibility Policy:

Foggy or inclement weather may result in service delays or cancellations. Updates will be communicated through district notifications.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN – CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE 39831.3

(a) The county superintendent of schools, the superintendent of a school district, or the owner/operator of a private school that provides student transportation must maintain a transportation safety plan outlining procedures for school personnel to ensure pupil safety. The plan shall be updated as necessary and must address:

1. Identifying pupils requiring an escort under paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 22112 of the Vehicle Code.
2. Procedures for safely boarding and exiting the school bus for pupils in prekindergarten through grade 8.
3. Safe boarding and exiting procedures at school sites and trip destinations.
4. Measures to ensure no pupil is left unattended on a school bus, school pupil activity bus (SPAB), or youth bus.

(b) A current copy of the plan shall be retained at each school and made available upon request to the Department of the California Highway Patrol.

SCHOOL BUS SIGNAL AND STOP PROCEDURES – VEHICLE CODE SECTION 22112

Key Requirements:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=VEH§ionNum=22112.

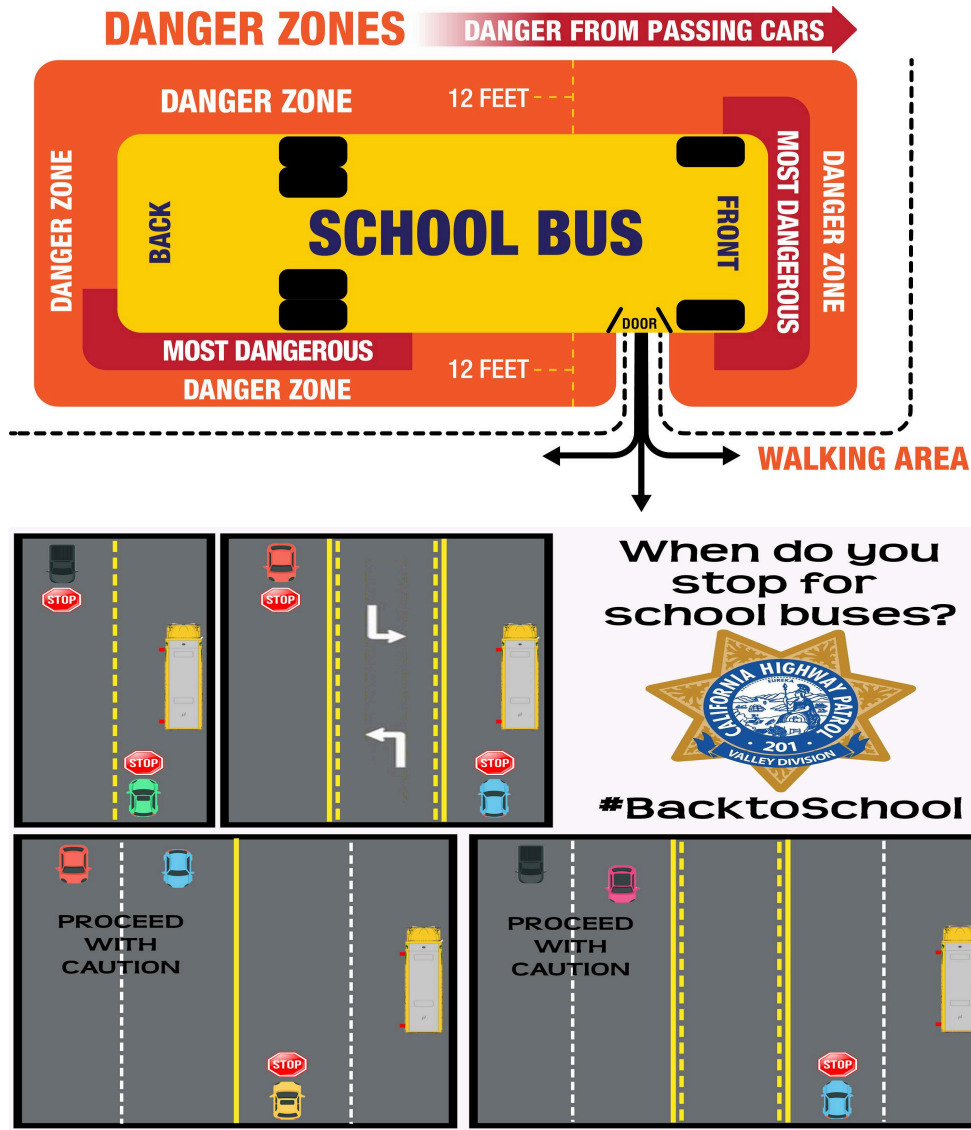
- Drivers must activate amber warning lights (if equipped) at least 200 feet before stopping and deactivate them upon arrival.
- Flashing red lights and stop signal arms must be used when loading or unloading pupils unless traffic is controlled by an officer or traffic control signal.
- School buses must only stop at district-approved bus stops.
- Before opening the bus door, drivers must ensure flashing red lights and stop signal arms are activated.
- Pupils in prekindergarten through grade 8 who must cross a highway or private road must be escorted by the driver using an approved hand-held "STOP" sign.
- Pupils must cross in front of the bus under driver supervision to ensure safety.
- Pupils must remain cautious while in the Danger Zone.

STUDENT BOARDING AND EXIT PROCEDURES – VC SECTION 22112:

In compliance with **California Vehicle Code (VC) Section 22112**, NUSD has established the following procedures to ensure safe student boarding and exiting:

- **Activation of Warning Lights:** Bus drivers must activate amber warning lights (if equipped) at least **200 feet before stopping** and deactivate them upon arrival.
- **Use of Red Lights and Stop Arm:** Flashing **red lights** and stop signal arms must be used **at all times** when stopped to load or unload pupils unless traffic is controlled by a traffic officer.
- **Approved Bus Stops:** Buses may **only stop at district-approved locations** to pick up or drop off students.
- **Crossing Procedures for Grades Pre-K Through 8:** Students required to cross a roadway must be **escorted by the driver** using an approved hand-held **STOP** sign. Students must cross **in front of the bus** while under the driver's supervision.
- **Danger Zone Awareness:** Students must remain cautious while in the **danger zone** (the 12-foot perimeter surrounding the bus) and follow the driver's instructions to ensure safety.

These procedures ensure that students **board and exit safely**, reducing potential risks and maintaining compliance with **state-mandated safety regulations**.



Transporting Passengers with Special Needs

The Natomas Unified School District (NUSD) is committed to providing safe, supportive, and responsive transportation services for students with special needs, as determined through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.

When transportation is identified as a related service in the IEP, the Special Education Department will submit a transportation request form. The student will be added to a route within 10-14 working days, and parents will be contacted with pick-up and drop-off

details. Services cannot begin until transportation has been approved by the Special Education Department.

Transporting students with special needs requires collaboration between drivers, parents, and school staff. Positive communication, empathy, and a consistent understanding of each student's unique needs help ensure a safe and welcoming ride. Drivers are trained to maintain confidentiality in accordance with FERPA and IDEA guidelines and are provided with essential student information to support safe transport.

Parental involvement is vital. Parents are responsible for communicating relevant health or behavioral needs, ensuring students are ready at the bus stop, and maintaining equipment such as wheelchairs. Parents must notify transportation of absences, address changes, or changes to emergency contacts. A student's stop may be suspended after three consecutive absences unless transportation is contacted.

Transportation Guidelines:

- **Students should be ready 5 minutes prior to pick-up time.**
- Students are picked up/dropped off curbside on the right side only; drivers do not escort students across the street unless required under Vehicle Code 22112.
- Parents or authorized adults must be present at drop-off unless a waiver is on file.
- Medication must be transferred to the driver and will be secured and delivered to school staff.

Specialized Equipment and Safety: Drivers receive training on operating specialized equipment including wheelchairs, lifts, and car seats. Wheelchairs must meet safety standards per Title 13 CCR 1293 and be in safe operating condition. Safety vests or support systems may be used as determined by the IEP team.

Behavioral Support and Communication: Understanding student behavior and maintaining consistent communication between drivers, parents, and teachers is essential. Drivers are trained to observe patterns of behavior and respond proactively with positive behavioral interventions. When behavior challenges arise, transportation works with school staff and families to support the student and prevent suspensions when possible.

CHILD SAFETY ALERT SYSTEMS – TITLE 13, CCR, DIVISION 2, CHAPTER 6.5, ARTICLE 6, SECTION 1294

Title 13, Section 1294 of the California Code of Regulations outlines the requirements for "Child Safety Alert Systems" on school buses, youth buses, child care vehicles, and school pupil activity buses, essentially mandating that these vehicles must be equipped with a system that alerts drivers to ensure no children are left behind when exiting the vehicle by automatically activating a warning signal if a child is still on board after the vehicle is stopped and doors are closed.

- Automatic activation when the vehicle is in motion.
- The driver must manually deactivate the alert before exiting the vehicle.
- Audible or visible warnings activate if a pupil is left on board, ensuring no child is left unattended.



SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER RESTRAINT SYSTEM – CALIFORNIA VEHICLE CODE 27316

Passenger Restraint System Requirements:

- All school buses manufactured after July 1, 2005, must be equipped with three-point lap/shoulder seat belts.
- Students must wear seat belts whenever the bus is in motion.
- School bus drivers are responsible for instructing students on proper seat belt use and ensuring compliance.
- Students who refuse to wear seat belts may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with district policies.
- Emergency procedures must include instructions on the proper use and release of seat belts during an evacuation.

Exemptions:

- School buses manufactured before July 1, 2005, are not required to have seat belts unless retrofitted.
- Special Education buses may have alternative restraint systems as per individualized education plans (IEPs).



ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Students, parents, and school staff can access Transportation Department information through the District's website under the "Transportation" tab.

School Bus Routes & Schedules:

<https://natomasunified.org/departments/transportation/school-bus-route-schedule/>

Closing Statement

At Natomas Unified School District, student safety is not just a priority—it is a promise. Our Transportation Safety Plan reflects our unwavering commitment to ensuring that every student's journey is secure, respectful, and empowering. Through continuous training, strategic planning, and a deep sense of responsibility, our team upholds the foundational aspects of **Safety, Effectiveness, and Efficiency** in every decision and every mile.

Together, we move forward—driven by purpose, united in mission, and dedicated to providing the safest possible transportation for the students and families we proudly serve.

Welcome to Natomas Unified School District!

With the utmost respect,
Ralph Meza III
Director of Transportation
Natomas Unified School District

Contact Information:

Telephone: (916) 567-5493

Address: 1931 Arena Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95834

