



Transportation Department

Driver Handbook

Revised
July 2025

This manual contains transportation policies and procedures for the Huntington County Community Schools and is intended to be used by school bus drivers. It is essential that all bus drivers thoroughly understand the contents of this manual. All situations cannot be addressed in these procedures. The Director of Transportation may find it necessary to modify any procedure in an individual situation to meet the needs of HCCS.

Huntington County Community Schools
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Telephone:(260) 356-8312 Fax:(260) 356-2203
<http://www.hccsc.k12.in.us>
Every Student. Every Day.



Driver Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement

My signature below indicates that I have received and am familiar with the Huntington County Community Schools Transportation Department Driver Handbook.

I understand that the Driver Handbook, in conjunction with the Huntington County Community Schools Classified Staff Handbook, sets forth the terms and conditions of my employment as well as the duties, responsibilities, and obligations required by my employment as a bus driver.

I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to abide by the rules, policies, and standards it sets forth.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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This handbook contains information pertinent to bus drivers and is designed to be a supplement to the Huntington County Community Schools Classified Employee Handbook. As classified employees, bus drivers will find additional important information regarding their employment in the Classified Employee Handbook.

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Section 1: Vision & Mission Statement

Mission

Huntington County Community Schools develops students who are highly literate, able to demonstrate mastery of state and national standards, and who are college- and career-ready.

Strategic Plan 2024-2029

Vision

HCCSC will achieve 90+% results in reading and writing, mastery of state and national standards, and college- and career-readiness.



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2.0 Certification

School bus drivers must possess a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with an airbrake, passenger and School Bus endorsement, and a Standard Certificate from the Indiana State School Bus Committee to transport school children on a school bus. The process for obtaining this licensure is described below.

- Pass the written DOT/CDL general examination, passenger endorsement, school bus endorsement, and air brake endorsement at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.
- Pass a DOT/CDL physical examination from a qualified physician, who must complete the DOT/COL physical form.
- Pass a drug and alcohol screen as specified on the DOT/CDL physical form.
- Successfully complete the pre-service school bus driver safety education training presented by the Division of School/Traffic Safety and Emergency Planning. (*Information regarding this training may be obtained at <http://www.doe.state.in.us/safety/sbdt.htm>*)
- Observe a properly licensed school bus driver for a minimum of four (4) hours and drive a school bus under the supervision of a properly licensed school bus driver for a minimum of eight (8) hours. (*All previous requirements must be met prior to this. The Director of Transportation will assign a school bus driver to serve as a trainer for trainees.*)
- Pass the DOT/CDL skills test at a certified CDL testing site. With the permission of the Director of Transportation, a trainee may use a school corporation school bus if a driver, currently employed by HCCS, accompanies the trainee to the test site.
- Obtain a CDL with required endorsements from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

2.1 Minimum Standards

Drivers of school buses must meet the following minimum standards. Drivers....

- Must be of good moral character.
- May not use intoxicating liquor during school hours.
- May not use intoxicating liquor to excess at any time.
- Cannot be addicted to or use any narcotic drug.
- Must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- Must possess the following physical characteristics (agility test will be tested at the discretion of the Director of Transportation):
 - Sufficient physical ability to be a school bus driver, as determined by the State School Bus Committee.
 - Possession of full normal use of both hands, both arms, both feet, both legs, both eyes, and both ears.
 - Freedom from any communicable disease that (1) may be transmitted through airborne or droplet means; or (2) requires isolation of the infected person under Indiana law.
 - Freedom from any mental, nervous, organic, or functional disease, which might impair

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the driver's ability to properly operate a school bus.

- Visual acuity with or without corrective aids, of at least 20/40 in each eye, a minimum field of vision of 150 degrees, and depth perception of at least eighty percent (80%).
- Ability to climb and descend the bus service steps in a forward-facing position.
- Ability to exit the bus via the rearmost emergency door from a seat belted position in the driver's seat.
- Quick reaction time between accelerator and service brake.
- Ability to open and close the bus service door.
- Ability to operate one (1) hand control on each side of the steering wheel while the bus is in a safe forward motion.
- (*References: IC 20-27-8-1 and 575 IAC 1-8-1 et seq.*)

2.2 Duties and Responsibilities

School bus drivers' expected duties and responsibilities:

- Each day, during the school term, unless excused by the school corporation, the driver shall operate his/her assigned bus over the route or routes upon the schedule fixed by the school corporation.
- The school corporation may, at any time, require any driver to submit to an additional physical examination by a licensed Indiana physician selected by the school corporation. The school corporation will pay the cost of required additional physical examinations as described in IC 20-27-8-6.
- The driver agrees to abide by the provisions of all Indiana statutes, and the rules and regulations of the State School Bus Committee as they may be amended, pertaining to safety in the operation of school buses and school transportation.
- The driver shall keep order and maintain discipline among the children while in the school bus or along the route, being firm but polite, impartial, and fair, and see that no child is imposed upon or mistreated while in their charge and shall use every care for the safety of the children under their charge.
- The school bus shall be kept clean both inside and out by the driver, who shall also be responsible for determining and reporting to the school corporation when his/her bus is not in sound operating condition. Needed service and mechanical repairs shall be made at a place designated by the school corporation, who shall pay for all maintenance costs of school buses operated by drivers.
- The driver shall complete all HCCS assigned trainings by the date requested and the Annual Safety Meeting as set by the Director of Transportation and any other brief meetings for administration and safety instruction, as required from time to time by the school corporation.
- Routes and areas to be covered shall be established by the school corporation and are

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subject to change based on the needs of HCCS.

- Drivers must maintain a means of being contacted by school officials in the event of emergency situations or needed information during the school day.
- Drivers will be issued a HCCS school email account. Transportation employees including bus drivers are responsible for checking the school account regularly. Important information will be shared via e-mail and it is the responsibility of the drivers to be aware of the information that is shared without asking the Transportation Office.
- Failure of a driver to comply with the terms of this manual and the Classified Staff Handbook may be deemed cause for dismissal at the option of HCCS. The school corporation may immediately suspend a driver with or without pay for any conduct constituting cause for dismissal, pending actual dismissal.

In addition, Huntington County Community Schools requires the following. Drivers are to:

- Establish favorable working relationships with transportation staff, other drivers, maintenance personnel, teachers, students, principals, and all other school staff.
- Enjoy being in the company of children/students/young people.
- Exhibit a positive image as loyal representatives of the school corporation.
- Operate all vehicle types used in transporting students in the school corporation.
- Demonstrate knowledge of administrative guidelines as made by local, state, and federal authorities.

2.3 Training of New Drivers

Mentor school bus drivers may be selected to help applicants prepare for CDL testing. In addition, the Director of Transportation may appoint experienced drivers to assist newly hired drivers in learning policies and procedures for HCCS. Topics covered in this orientation period may include: learning safe bus operation, forms and paperwork, timeclock usage, bus cleaning procedures, parking and loading/unloading procedures for schools, procedures for fueling, and protocol for radio use.



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2.4 Dress Code

Because school bus drivers are highly visible to students, the professional staff, and the public, they are expected to be dressed appropriately and groomed in a manner appropriate for the school environment when performing their assigned duties. Discretion and common-sense call for the avoidance of any extremes that would adversely impact the education of children.

Footwear must enable a driver to operate a bus safely and allow for rapid movement in emergencies. Therefore, open-toed shoes, shoes without backs, and high-heels are prohibited. Questions regarding the appropriateness of attire should be addressed to the Director of Transportation.

2.5 Use of Drugs and Alcohol

No employee may perform a safety-sensitive function or operate a school vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. Consumption of any alcoholic beverage before operating a school bus is prohibited. The same standard applies to controlled substances and any over-the-counter medication that will or may impair mental or motor function.

2.6 Drug and Alcohol Testing

Any person who holds a CDL and operates a school bus is subject to HCCS policies regarding drug and alcohol use, and to pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, return-to-duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing. All testing shall be done in accordance with USDOT-approved procedures. Employees selected for random testing will be notified by the Director of Transportation or designee and advised where to report for testing. Failure to report for, pass, or submit to such testing is grounds for immediate dismissal.

2.7 Confidentiality

Information derived through driver drug testing is confidential medical information and may not be disclosed to any other party without the driver's written consent unless required by law. Employees may obtain copies of their tests for alcohol or controlled substances by submitting a written request to the Director of Transportation.

2.8 Use of Tobacco

HCCS prohibits the use of any form of tobacco or vaping product on school property, including school buses. Drivers and other school employees in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action stipulated in school board policy. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action as specified in their student handbooks.



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2.9 Physicals

Drivers must undergo a physical examination from the school corporation's designated licensed physician and submit the completed DOT/COL physical form to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles. Drivers are expected to maintain personal fitness, including emotional stability and physical capacity, while employed as school bus drivers.

2.10 Annual Safety Meetings

School bus drivers are required to complete the Annual Safety Meeting by November 30, sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education. Information regarding the completion of the online training will be provided to drivers by the Director of Transportation as soon as it becomes available each year. The completion deadline for the Annual Safety Meeting will be set by the Director of Transportation. If any driver does not complete the ASM by the assigned deadline, their ability to transport students on their assigned route may be suspended.

2.11 Driver Availability - During the Day

Although it rarely happens, the unexpected early dismissal of students from one or all schools in the corporation may be necessary, particularly during adverse weather or crises. School bus drivers provide a critical service in the safe and orderly evacuation of students at these times. Accordingly, the Transportation Office must have a way to reach drivers during the day, when early dismissal is necessary.

2.12 Chain of Command

School bus drivers report to and are under the direct supervision of, the Director of Transportation, who, in turn, reports to the Director of Secondary Education. Building Administrators, School Bus Driver and the Director of Transportation will work cooperatively with the Transportation Department, and are responsible for:

- Supervision at school loading and unloading zones.
- Addressing student conduct issues.
- Enforcement of traffic regulations on the school site.
- Communication with parents and students regarding student behavior, safety, and schedules.
- Conveying information about overcrowding, unsafe conditions, etc. to the Director of Transportation.



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2.13 Time Clock

School bus drivers and bus aides will use the school-supplied tablet located on the school bus to clock in and out for any work that is performed for payroll purposes. Time will be rounded to the nearest 15 minutes using the standard scale of 7 minutes will round down and 8 minutes will round up. Drivers and Bus Aides must clock out if they have 30 minutes or more between routes. The use of an HCCS School Bus is restricted to school business only and shall not be used for personal errands. If a manual adjustment to a bus driver or bus aide's timesheet is made, the employee must fill out a timeclock punch change authorization form in the same pay period to make the change. The form would need to be submitted to the HCCS Transportation office. If no form is submitted the driver will not receive compensation or will be subject to paying back any overages. This could result in disciplinary action.

- Bus Drivers will clock in 15 minutes before their scheduled route start time to perform a pre-trip on the bus. During extreme weather conditions, additional time may be required to ensure the safety of the bus. Drivers will be required to clock in to be paid for the additional time for the extreme weather conditions.
- Bus Aides will clock in when they arrive at the bus no more than 15 minutes before the route start time.
- Bus Drivers will clock out no more than 30 minutes after the end of the scheduled bus route in the AM and PM only. A post-trip inspection will be conducted during this time along with contacting parents, fueling the bus as needed, completing paperwork, and cleaning the bus. The additional 30 minutes may be added to the front of the route if asked for bus video or to fuel the bus before starting a route.
- Bus Aides will clock out at the conclusion of the route; exceptions will be given if the bus driver would need assistance. This exception would need to be pre-approved, and a time clock change form would need to be completed.
- Bus Drivers and sub-bus drivers shall clock in using the appropriate code for the work being completed.
 - o Regular Route - This is used for a general education route, no mileage is given. Route pay starts and ends where a bus is housed. The only exception is if a driver is taking a field trip that immediately starts after the conclusion of a route the driver would clock out at the school where the field trip is needed and clock in as field trip once the trip is to start.
 - o Special Needs Route - This is used for a special needs route, no mileage is given.
 - o Shuttle - This is used for any time a student is shuttled from one location to another outside of a regular route time. No mileage is given.

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- o Field Trip - This is used for any school extracurricular trip including athletics, band, and choir. Field trip pay starts at the school of origin and ends at the school of origin if providing a two-way trip, or one-way trips the trip pay starts at the school of origin and ends at the location where the bus is housed. The only exception to this is if the trip is required to use a transit bus, then the trip would start and end at the location where the bus is housed. Overnight trips must take out 8 hours of sleep time if staying overnight.
 - o Yellowhound - This is used for after-school transportation.
 - For the efficiency of routing, once a driver is awarded a route, they will retain it until they voluntarily relinquish, or it is removed from the driver by the Director of Transportation.
 - o Garage Pay - This is used for work that is completed for the bus garage/mechanics (part pick up, shuttling buses for repair, bus inspection, etc.)
 - Participants who indicate interest in the driver survey will be used on a rotating basis, provided performance is effective as determined by the Director of Transportation.
 - o Training - This is used for training new bus drivers
 - o Summer School - This is used for Summer School Routes
 - o Bus Aide - This is used for Bus Aide's to clock in and out
- **Pay breakdown**

Step	HCCS Exp Yrs	Step Rates
1	0	\$26.25
2	1	\$26.75
3	2	\$27.25
4	3	\$27.75
5	4	\$28.25
6	5-7	\$29.25
7	8-10	\$30.25
8	11-14	\$31.50
9	15+	\$33.00

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- o Regular Route - Steps 1-9 on the pay scale based on years of experience
- o Special Needs Route - Steps 1-9 on the pay scale based on years of experience plus an additional \$2.00 premium per hour
- o Shuttle - Steps 1-9 on the pay scale based on years of experience
- o Field Trip - \$20.00 an hour for the first 6 hours, then \$10.00 per hour after for each field trip. Drivers will have to ensure to clock in and out for each trip.
- o Yellowhound - Steps 1-9 on the pay scale based on years of experience
- o Garage Pay - \$20.00 per hour
- o Training - \$20.00 per hour
- o Summer School - Steps 1-9 on the pay scale based on years of experience
- o Bus Aide - Starting Pay is \$15.00 per hour
- o Sub Bus Driver – Pay is \$26.25 per hour for Regular route and \$28.25 per hour for Special Needs route
- o Sub Bus Aide- Starting Pay is \$13.63 per hour
 - All pay listed in the handbook is subject to change based on approval of HCCS School Board and Superintendent. Every effort will be made to update to current pay scale model.
- School Closing procedures

If HCCS should not be in session Bus Drivers and Bus Aide's shall have the opportunity to make up missed hours during that same week. Work will be completed at an HCCS building under the direction of the Director of Transportation or another designee. If the employee is not able to make up time they may use a benefit day to compensate for the school closure.

 - o Any time worked during a holiday or school break must be labeled on the timesheet as the reason for the work.

2.14 Bus Driver Pay

Bus Drivers will be paid a base pay over 26 pays for the actual route hours. Pre-trip, Post-trip, shuttles, Mid-day, and McKinney Vento will not be included in the base pay. All additional hours will be paid by the hourly rates established through the School Board. Any hours worked under the regular base established hours will be deducted, as necessary. Drivers will use the Clock-in and Clock-out system determined by the HCCS Transportation Director.

- o Drivers will be required to fill out a Route Time report that will be used to help determine the actual route time. GPS and Transfinder will also be used to determine a final route time.
- o Drivers will submit the Route Time report to the transportation office each quarter.
- o Drivers will be required to fill out a new Route Time report if there is a significant change in a route's hours. These changes will then need to be approved by the School Board.

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- New drivers who are trained by HCCS as school bus drivers, must be employed for a minimum of 1 year. If employment is terminated by the employee the employee shall reimburse HCCS for the cost of the training up to \$1,000 depending on the actual cost of training to be determined by the Transportation Department and the Business Office. HCCS retains the right and may deduct training expenses from the driver's last pay to offset the training expenses if they work less than 1 year. If the employee is terminated by HCCS the employee will not owe any reimbursement.

2.15 Attendance/Benefit Time

Attendance

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential function of each employee's job at HCCS. When an employee is absent, their work must be performed by others. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, be on time, and be prepared to start work. Employees also are expected to remain at work for their entire work schedule, except for lunch and break periods, or when required to leave on authorized corporation business.

In all cases of absence or tardiness, employees must provide their supervisor with an honest reason or explanation. Documentation of the reason may be required. Employees also must inform their supervisor of the expected duration of any absence. Under normal circumstances, an employee must call in advance of their regular starting time on any day on which the employee is scheduled to work and will not be reporting to work. All classified employees are required to submit an absence statement to their supervisor for any days not worked.

Excessive absenteeism may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Each situation of excessive absenteeism or tardiness will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, even one unexcused absence may be considered excessive, depending on the circumstances. Any employee who fails to report to work without notification to their supervisor for a period of two days or more will be considered to have voluntarily terminated the employment relationship. An employee whose absence is deemed excessive by their supervisor may be required to provide a physician's note for any sick leave absences.

Medical Conditions

If an employee has a medical condition that might require treatment, please advise your supervisor of the condition. Examples of such conditions are diabetes, epilepsy, or treatment of a disease or illness, which could leave you in need of emergency treatment. We ask this only to ensure that proper emergency treatment may be provided if you should become ill while at work. This is a voluntary action on your part, and under no circumstances, other than the need for medical treatment, will this information be divulged to anyone without your consent.

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COMPENSATED AND/OR UNCOMPENSATED ABSENCES

Paid time off (vacation days, sick days, personal days, bereavement, jury duty, etc.) is only available during regularly scheduled workdays. Leave days are added at the beginning of each school year. If an employee does not start the school year due to illness or other leave circumstances, leave days will be issued upon return to work. If an employee is hired after the beginning of the school year, all compensated time will be prorated. (Please refer to Basic Corporation Policies, Orientation Period located in the Classified handbook.) Compensated time off must be taken in half or full-day increments. In no circumstances should the total for a day consisting of hours worked and compensated absence (time off) for that day be greater than eight hours, or the employee's regularly scheduled hours for that date. Benefit days cannot be "traded" to be used for other days, sick days are to be used for sick days, etc.

Sick days and personal days are to be considered a benefit to HCCS employees and are not to be abused and must be approved by the Director of Transportation. Documentation may be requested by the supervisor to verify the use of a leave day. Transportation employees are to turn in an absence form within 24 hours of securing a sub, if it is last minute issue where a sub was not secured in advance the employee must call the Transportation office to communicate the type of benefit day they will be using and who will be the substitute.

Sick Days

Employees (excluding Pool employees) shall be granted paid sick days to be used for the employee's personal illness or illness of a spouse, parent, child, or a person for whom the employee is a legal guardian. Sick days may also be used for doctor's appointments of self, spouse, parent, child or a person for whom the employee is a legal guardian. Sick leave days do not count towards the 40-hour work week for overtime calculations. Sick leave days cannot be donated to other employees to use. Sick days are granted as follows:

- Employees working 230 days or more in a school year will be granted twelve (12) sick days per year
- Employees working less than 230 days in a school year will granted ten (10) sick days per year
- Unused sick days shall accumulate to a maximum of 180 days. Any unused days above the maximum shall be paid annually on the second pay of September at the following rate:
 - Employees working between 30 to 40 hours per week - \$30.00 per day
 - Employees working between 20 to 29 hours per week - \$20.00 per day
 - Employees working less than 20 hours per week - \$10.00 per day

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Personal Days

Employees (excluding Pool employees) shall be granted paid personal days to be used for personal business that cannot be conducted outside the work day. Personal days do not count towards the 40-hour work week for overtime calculations. Unused personal days shall accumulate as sick days for the succeeding school year. Employees (excluding Pool employees) shall be granted three (3) personal days per year.

Bereavement Leave

Employees (including Pool employees) shall be granted up to five (5) consecutive workdays for bereavement leave to be used in the event of the death of a member of the immediate family: legal spouse, child, parent, legal guardian, grandchild, brother, or sister. Bereavement Leave is only available during regularly scheduled work days. If an employee does not use the days within the five (5) consecutive work days and provides written notice before the completion of that time, the employee may elect to use up to three (3) of those unused days within thirty (30) days of the notification of death.

Employees (including Pool employees) shall be granted up to two (2) consecutive work days for bereavement leave to be used in the event of the death of a grandparent, in-law (father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent), niece, nephew, step-child, or an aunt or uncle of the employee. This leave does not include great-grandparents, great-aunts, or great-uncles.

Should additional time be needed for travel or other extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made in advance with the Director of Transportation.

Unpaid Leave of Absence

HCCS does not routinely grant unpaid leaves of absence. However, there may be extenuating circumstances when an unpaid leave may be granted. This decision will be handled at the Departmental Director's level as situations arise.

If an employee has an unpaid leave of absence during the twelve (12) weeks, or sixty (60) work days, of an approved FMLA leave and is enrolled in health insurance through HCCS, the employee is entitled to the continuation of the health insurance coverage during the same terms as if he or she had continued to work. An employee on unpaid FMLA leave must make arrangements to pay the normal employee portion

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of the insurance premiums in order to maintain insurance coverage. Coverage may be dropped if the employee's premium payment is late. Dental and vision premiums are 100% employee-paid at all times.

HCCS may require the employee to repay the employer's share of the premium payment if the employee fails to return to work following the FMLA leave unless the employee does not return because of circumstances that are beyond the employee's control, including a FMLA qualifying medical condition. If an employee is unable to return to work at the conclusion of an approved FMLA, insurance benefits will end at the conclusion of the twelve (12) week FMLA period.

Employees will not accrue vacation or leave days during an unpaid leave of absence. Any unpaid loss of time worked should be recorded on the employee timesheet or work calendar if a salaried employee. Any unapproved unpaid time taken will be taken into consideration during the employee's annual performance evaluation.

2.16 Bus Driver Years of Experience

Bus Drivers will be paid based on their years of experience in their current position as a school bus driver. Years of experience will be honored from other school districts located in the state of Indiana only.

- o A driver who obtains their license at HCCS on or before March 1 will start at step 1 until the start of the next school.
- o Driver's years of experience will be increased each year on August 1 after the new school year has begun. This will include the possibility of moving up on the pay scale and receiving a pay increase if applicable.
- o Drivers who have less than 5 years of experience in another district will start at step 1 on the driver pay scale.
- o Drivers who have more than 5 years of experience in another district will start at step 3 on the driver pay scale.
- o Consideration will be provided to drivers who experience a gap of less than three months of employment in which the maximum placement on the scale will be that of which they were prior to their employment gap occurring.

2.17 Evaluation Process

Each Transportation employee will receive a yearly evaluation from the Director of Transportation before July 1. All new employees will be evaluated within 90 days of employment. A positive review will generate benefits including benefit days available to the employee. Any employee who has 2 or more consecutive negative evaluations could be terminated.

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Section: 3

Title: General Use and Care of School Buses Issue

Date: _____

3.0 Use of School Buses

Only properly licensed drivers and mechanics, employed by HCCS, may operate corporation-owned school buses. The assignment of buses to drivers is the responsibility of the Director of Transportation. Personnel employed by the school corporation who hold valid licensure, but who are not employed in the transportation department, may operate school buses for legitimate reasons with proper authorization from the Director of Transportation.

3.1 Cleanliness

Drivers are responsible for keeping the interior and exterior of their assigned buses clean at all times. The Director of Transportation will inspect buses randomly. When he/she has a concern about the cleanliness of a bus it will be addressed directly with the driver. Drivers should work cooperatively with teachers and coaches to ensure passengers assume responsibility for keeping the interior free from litter during extra-curricular and athletic trips. Excessive litter by a class or school group should be reported to the Director of Transportation.

3.2 Parking and Storage of Buses

Unless authorized by the Director of Transportation, school buses are to be housed at the HCCS Bus Garage when not in use. With authorization, a driver may keep his/her assigned bus off site, provided such location affords reasonable security from damage or vandalism, and does not present a safety hazard to others.

3.3 Maintenance

School bus drivers are responsible for the buses assigned to them. Regular, preventative maintenance is crucial for maintaining the integrity and life of school buses. In order to ensure proper care, drivers must make their bus available to the mechanics at the HCCS bus garage for scheduled routine service, according to the schedule set forth by the Director of Transportation. Any issue that arises between service calls should be directed to the Director of Transportation and/or mechanics who will prioritize according to urgency. Drivers should ensure that fuel level does not fall below $\frac{1}{2}$ of a tank.

3.4 Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspections

Drivers are required to perform pre-trip and post-trip inspections every time they operate a school bus. Drivers will need to ensure they are clocked in 15 minutes prior to starting their scheduled route. Pre-trip inspections are intended to identify potential mechanical or functional hazards prior to putting a bus into service with passengers. During post-trip inspections drivers may stay clocked in for up to 30 minutes to look for vandalism, excess litter and personal items left by passengers, and for individuals who failed to disembark. Drivers should ensure that there is at least $\frac{1}{2}$ a tank of fuel in the bus at all times.

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6.3.4 Equipment, Inspection, and Use (392.7-392.9)

A vehicle may not be driven **unless the driver is satisfied** that its parts and accessories are in good working order. See the Parts and Accessories Needed for Safe Operation and Vehicle Inspections sections of this planner for additional information. Drivers must also be satisfied that the emergency equipment required in 49 CFR 393.95 is in place and ready for use. All drivers must use the vehicle's parts, accessories, and emergency equipment when and as needed.

49 CFR 392.7 notes that, at minimum, the driver should inspect these parts and accessories to ensure that they are in good working order prior to operating the vehicle. See Pre-trip Inspections.

- Service brakes, including trailer brake connections
- Parking (hand) brake
- Steering mechanism
- Lighting devices and reflectors
- Tires
- Horns
- Windshield wipers
- Rear-vision mirrors
- Coupling devices
- Wheels and rims
- Emergency equipment

Prior to departure, cargo must also be properly distributed and sufficiently secured as listed in 49 CFR 392.9 and further explained in 49 CFR 393, Subpart I (393.100-393.136).

IC 9-21-12-19 School bus and special purpose bus; end of trip inspection

Sec. 19. (a) A person who operates a school bus or a special purpose bus shall visually inspect each seat within the interior of the school bus or special purpose bus at the end of a trip during which students or passengers are transported to determine that no student or passenger has remained on the school bus or special purpose bus.

(b) The visual inspection required under subsection (a) must be conducted:

- (1) at the conclusion of each trip during which students or passengers are transported; and
- (2) before the operator exits the school bus or special purpose bus.

(c) A student or passenger is considered to have been left on a school bus or special purpose bus if:

- (1) the operator has reached the end of a trip during which students or passengers are transported and exited the school bus or special purpose bus; and

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(2) the student or passenger remains inside the school bus or special purpose bus.

(d) A school bus or special purpose bus owner shall report all instances of a student or passenger being left on the school bus or special purpose bus to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee immediately after the incident occurred.

(e) The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall report all instances of a student or passenger being left on the school bus or special purpose bus to the Department of Education not later than five (5) working days after the incident occurred.

3.5 Equipment

School buses may not be altered in performance or aesthetics. Indiana law tightly regulates specifications for school bus bodies, chassis, and equipment. Inside the bus, approved equipment and supplies must be adequately secured in such a way that they do not interfere with the driver's performance or pose a safety risk to passengers. Drivers must maintain and be proficient in the use of the fire extinguisher and first-aid kit.

3.6 Use of Spare Buses (Including extracurricular activities)

Before operating a spare bus, the driver must conduct a pre-trip inspection and become thoroughly familiar with the bus. When using a spare bus, drivers should remember the following:

- Check the fuel gauge prior to leaving.
- Report any malfunctions or mechanical problems to the transportation office. Problems that are serious in nature may require drivers to use another bus.
- Complete mileage and departure/return time forms.
- Sweep the bus after returning.
- Empty the trash can
- Ensure all items that belong in the bus remain in the bus
- Obtain fuel if the tank is less than 3/4 full.

3.7 Annual School Bus Inspection

Each year, all school buses are inspected by the Indiana State Police. School bus drivers are responsible for preparing the buses assigned to them for annual inspection. Preparation for inspection includes but is not limited to: a thorough cleaning of the bus's interior and exterior; ensuring that all emergency equipment is complete and operational; and, working with the mechanics to repair any mechanical problems prior to inspection.



Section: 4

Title: Bus Operation - Driving

Issue Date:

4.0 Overview

This section explains expectations and procedures for operating school buses. When in service, drivers must exercise continuous vigilance and alertness to provide for the safety of their riders, other motorists, and pedestrians. In addition to obeying traffic laws, drivers must employ defensive driving techniques, adjust for adverse weather conditions and road hazards, and maneuver safely in traffic. Regardless of the conditions, the first priority for school bus drivers is the safety of their passengers.

4.1 Compliance with Traffic Laws

Drivers must comply with all laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of motor vehicles, including those uniquely relevant to school buses. Any traffic violation must be reported to the Director of Transportation. Annually, the HCCS receives, from the State of Indiana, a driving record for each driver, wherein any moving violations are listed.

1. Speed

Speed zones and posted speed limits are to be observed at all times. No school bus may be operated at a speed greater than sixty (60) miles per hour on federal or state highways, or greater than forty (40) miles per hour on any county or township highway. If the posted speed limit is lower than the absolute limits noted above, or if the absolute limits do not apply, the maximum lawful speed of a bus is the posted speed limit. (Reference: IC 9-21-5-14)

2. Railroad Crossings

- Engage 4-way flashers approximately 200 feet from the crossing.
- Before crossing a railroad, drivers must stop the vehicle not more than fifty (50) feet and not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail of the railroad. While stopped, the driver shall:
 - o Listen through an open window and door.
 - o Look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train.
(Rock and Roll)
 - o Not proceed until he/she can do so safely.
 - o Proceed only in a gear so there is no necessity for changing gears while traversing the crossing. The driver may not shift gears while crossing the track or tracks.
- This regulation does not pertain to railroad crossings that are designated by the Indiana Department of Transportation and marked "out of service".
- If a police officer or traffic control signal directs traffic to proceed at a railroad crossing, drivers shall proceed following the instructions of the police officer or traffic control signal.

(Reference: IC 9-21-12-5)



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Title: Bus Operation - Driving

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3. Loading and Unloading on Highways

- (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), when a school bus is operated on a:
- (1) U.S. route or state route, the driver may not load or unload a student at a location that requires the student to cross a roadway unless no other safe alternatives are available; and
 - (2) street or highway other than a U.S. route or state route, the driver shall load and unload a student as close to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway as practicable.
- (b) Subsection (a)(1) does not apply to a location on a U.S. route or state route that is within the boundary of a city or town.

(Reference: IC 9-21-12-20)

4. Use of Arm Signal Device

Whenever a school bus is stopped on a roadway to load or unload a student, the driver shall use an arm signal device, which must be extended while the bus is stopped. Buses are not to move while the arm is extended. Use of the arm signal device is not necessary at designated stops off the roadway.

(Reference: 9-21-12-13)

5. Special Purpose Buses

Special Purpose Buses must be operated in accordance with the same Speed and Railroad Crossing guidelines applicable to school buses. A school bus or special purpose bus may not be operated with passengers on board if an exit or emergency exit window is obstructed.

(Reference: PL 107-2006)

4.2 Backing

No bus shall back up on school property in the presence of pedestrians or traffic unless properly supervised by an adult outside. Buses shall not travel in reverse on roadways except where authorized to do so on assigned routes by the Director of Transportation. In all cases, where backing is necessary and allowed, drivers must exercise extreme caution. Proper mirror adjustment and use are critical for safe backing.

4.3 Stopping in Traffic

School bus drivers must be aware of, and considerate toward, the drivers of other vehicles. Adequate notice that a school bus is about to stop is important to enable other drivers to reduce their speed. When preparing to stop to load or unload students, bus drivers should activate the amber lights at least two hundred (200) feet before stopping. After stopping, the bus should be placed in neutral, the parking brake set, and the arm signal device (stop arm) should be activated. A bus may not move while the arm signal device is activated. The arm signal device must not be retracted until all unloaded passengers have cleared the Danger Zone and are out of the roadway.

When preparing to stop at railroad crossings, as required by law, a driver should activate emergency flashers upon approaching the crossing and continue the use of the flashers until after the bus has cleared the last track. This alerts other motorists that the bus is reducing speed, is traveling at a reduced speed, or is preparing to stop.

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4.4 Aid to Other Vehicles

Drivers are not to provide assistance to any vehicle, other than another school bus unless authorized by the Director of Transportation or in an emergency. When such assistance is necessary, drivers must exercise caution to ensure that the bus is stopped in a safe location.

4.5 Use of Bus Radios

For safety and security, drivers must maintain the capacity for communication with the Director of Transportation (or Transportation Office) at all times when buses are in service. For this reason, sound radio function and proper use by drivers are necessary. The radio communications system, linking buses to one another and to corporation buildings, is for the exchange of necessary, school-related information. Any communication over this system may be heard by the general public. School bus drivers are expected to transmit only information that is necessary, and to do so in a professional manner. Caution must be exercised when the names of students and staff are broadcast via the radio. Names are to be used only when necessary and never in a way that could disclose personal information about an individual. Excessive, unnecessary conversation and comments that are discourteous or derogatory toward other individuals, groups, or agencies are prohibited.

Whenever possible, wait until the route is concluded then call or visit schools and offices in person instead of using the bus radio.

4.6 Use of Commercial Radios on Buses

The use of commercial radios can add to students' enjoyment of riding school buses. When using these radios, drivers must ensure that the volume does not interfere with their ability to safely operate the bus or supervise their students. In addition, some broadcast messages from commercial radio broadcasting systems may raise quality and content issues. Special care must be exercised to avoid broadcasting questionable or undesirable content.

4.7 Use of Cellular Phones

School bus drivers are prohibited from using cellular phones or any type of wireless communication device while operating their buses. Communication with other buses, schools, and corporation offices is to occur using the installed radio equipment on school buses. In emergencies, cellular telephones may be used by drivers to communicate with school personnel or students' parents only after the bus is parked in a safe location.

4.8 Use of Strobe Lights

Strobe lights are intended to draw the attention of other drivers to the location and movement of school buses, particularly in weather conditions where visibility is significantly reduced. Drivers are to use strobe lights in such conditions or when directed to do so by the Director of Transportation. Strobe lights should not be used when visibility is not impaired.

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4.9 Use of Seat Belts

Drivers are required to be secured in their seats by a seat/shoulder belt at all times while operating a school bus. Drivers are also to require students who are seated in seat belt-equipped seats to be secured during transport on the school bus. Each Semester Seat belt safety instructions must be taught to all students on school buses.

4.10 Aisles

School bus aisles are to be kept unobstructed and clear of any items that would impede rapid evacuation. Sports equipment, coolers, larger band instruments, fundraiser boxes, and other large items must be held by students or secured on seats. During transit, students are to remain seated facing forward.

4.11 Forward Area Off-Limits

When a school bus is in motion, no student shall be permitted to occupy the space forward of the white and/or yellow line that is printed on the aisle floor at the front of the bus. A sign indicating this rule is to be posted at the front of the bus.

(Reference: IC 9-21-12-16)

4.12 Use of Mirrors

For bus drivers, exterior mirrors are critical tools for safely maneuvering their vehicles. During pre-trip inspections and when necessary, drivers are to ensure that all mirrors are properly adjusted and free from anything (dirt, snow, etc.) that would obstruct the driver's view.

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Section: 5

Title: Transporting Students

Issue Date:

5.0 Overview

For many students, bus drivers are the first school employees they encounter each day. While transporting children, safety to and from school and school-related activities is the primary responsibility of school bus drivers. The quality of interaction between students and drivers is critical to maintaining a safe environment. Drivers are charged with the responsibility of maintaining discipline on their buses and ensuring that all students under their supervision are safe and afforded a reasonable standard of care.

5.1 Supervision

During regular routes, drivers are responsible for supervising students assigned to them at all times. Drivers shall never leave their buses when students are present.

In the morning, students are to remain on their buses until the time established by each school for students to enter the building. In the afternoon, drivers must be inside their buses to supervise student loading.

School bus drivers are not responsible for student behavior at bus stops - prior to the student boarding the school bus or after the student has disembarked. Nevertheless, bus drivers should report any observed misbehavior at bus stops to the appropriate school administrators. Drivers **are** responsible for the safety of students during loading and unloading. That is, drivers are to ensure that traffic is stopped and that students stay clear of the Danger Zone and off of the roadway.

5.2 Student Discipline

School employees are entrusted with the well-being of children by parents and the community. As drivers carry out their duties, in light of this trust, they are to display a professional attitude and behavior at all times. Accordingly, school bus drivers are expected to:

- Treat all students with respect, regardless of past behavior, socioeconomic status, hygiene, race, religious beliefs, etc.
- Periodically review behavioral expectations and safety procedures with all students.
- Support school personnel, showing discretion regarding what is discussed with students about other school employees.
- Consistently enforce expectations over time and with all students.
- Give verbal commands using a respectful tone and in a direct, non-judgmental manner. If necessary, drivers should repeat the same command ("broken record" tactic) until the student complies.

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<i>Effective command:</i>	<i>Tom, do not throw anything while riding the bus.</i>
<i>Ineffective command:</i>	<i>Tom, cut that out. You know you're not supposed to do that. How many times do I have to tell you?</i>

- Do not argue or engage in debates with students at any time. As noted above, drivers should give direct commands using an unemotional tone.
- Talk with students away from their peers when a discussion about misbehavior is necessary.

Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct

Through student handbooks, parents of all students will be advised that school bus transportation is a privilege, provided by the Huntington County Community Schools. In addition, parents and students will be advised of the expectations for behavior, consequences for misbehavior, and that school bus drivers are the sole authority while students are under their charge.

The following consequences are customary. School administrators, working cooperatively with bus drivers, reserve the right to issue more serious consequences if warranted by the nature of a student's misconduct. Procedures for addressing misconduct are to be initiated as described in Section 5.04.

First Offense: Misconduct Report sent to parents.

Second Offense: One-day suspension of riding privileges.

Third Offense: Three-day suspension of riding privileges.

Fourth Offense: Five-day suspension of riding privileges.

Fifth Offense: Suspension of riding privileges for one or two semesters, depending on the seriousness of the offenses.

In addition to the above, parents are responsible for any damage done to school buses by their children and may be liable for corresponding reparations. Suspension of riding privileges from one bus includes all other buses to which the student is assigned and shall include extracurricular activities. A determination as to whether the suspension will include study trips is to be made by the student's school administrator. If a child is allowed to participate in a study trip while suspended, the school must ensure that the child is closely supervised and adheres to all bus conduct expectations. Students are expected to attend school throughout the suspension period, with parents providing alternative transportation. Days absent during a period of suspension does not count toward the suspension.

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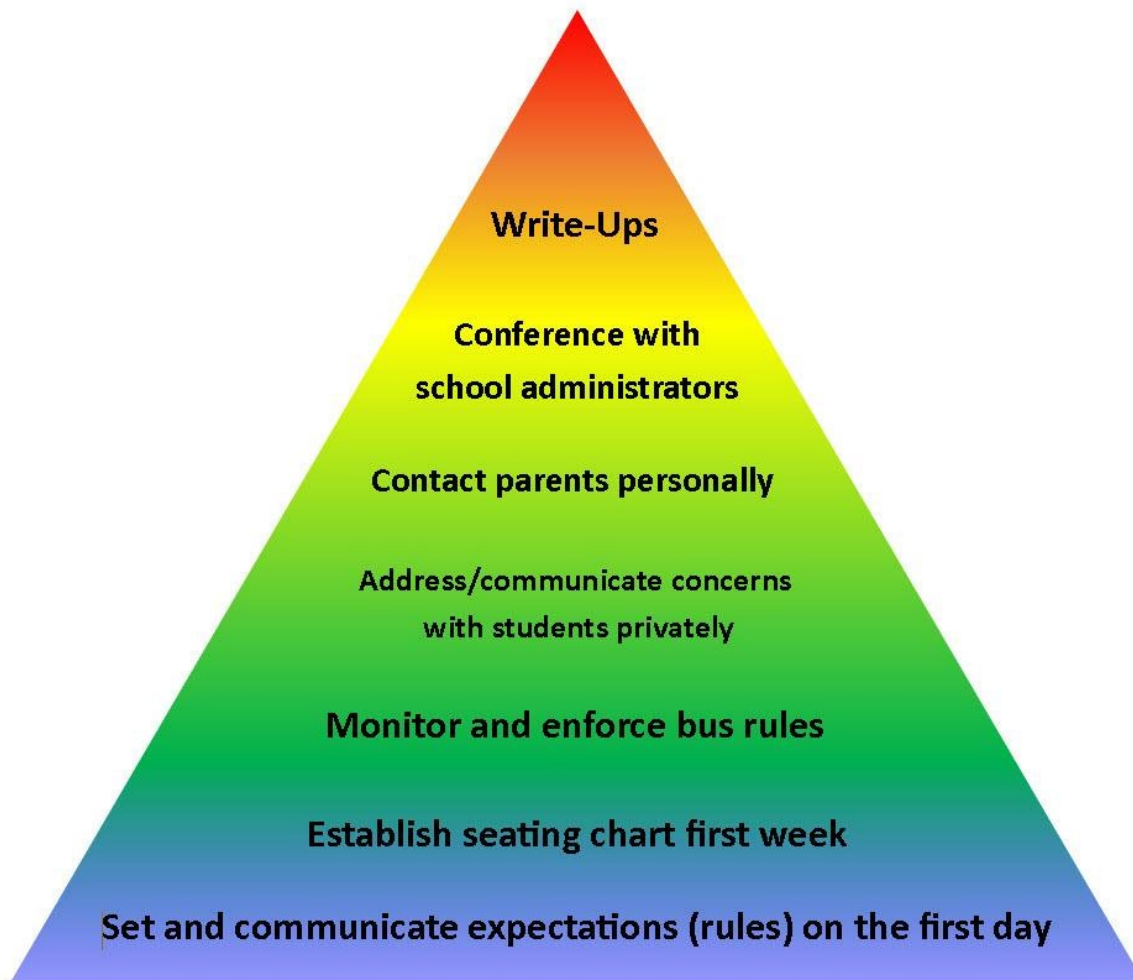
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Student Discipline Pyramid

Drivers are expected to "set the tone" for student conduct on the very first day of school (first level of the pyramid) and work their way up the levels (1-7) before filling out Write-ups. Good disciplinarians on the bus are like good basketball officials-they take charge before the "game gets out of control!" The more effectively a driver addresses levels 1-4, the less time he/she has to spend in levels 5-7. Drivers should fill out a misconduct report immediately for severe disruptions like fighting or excessively foul language. School administrators will decide the disciplinary consequences once students are referred for misconduct on the bus.



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5.3 Expected Conduct of Students

To be sure that students are transported safely, certain behavior is expected of all students. Any behavior that interferes with a driver's ability to operate his/her bus safely, or behavior that jeopardizes the safety or property of one's self or peers, is considered inappropriate. All students are expected to:

- Report to their loading locations five (5) minutes prior to scheduled pick-up times.
- Stay off roadways while waiting for their buses and remain off roadways until buses come to a complete stop.
- Be seated and remain in their seat, facing forward, while riding.
- Use voices that are respectful and not disturbing.
- Keep windows closed unless given permission to open them by their bus drivers.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.
- Carry only permissible items on the bus that can be held in their laps.
- Ride the buses to which they are assigned.
- Do not throw objects of any kind, within the bus or from the bus.
- Put trash in waste baskets and not leave refuse on the bus.
- Move away from the roadway and directly onto a sidewalk or toward their houses after disembarking.
- Cross streets and roadways only in FRONT of buses, and do so at least ten (10) feet from the front.
- Do not damage or deface any part of the school bus or the property of others.
- Do not use profane, indecent, or lewd language or gestures. - This will be grounds for immediate suspension
- Keep all parts of their bodies within the school bus.
- Act respectfully toward their driver and obey their driver's directives.
- Not to be in possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or weapons of any kind.

*At times, it may help students' behavior if they stay engaged in a portable game or listening to music. As long as it does not disturb the driver or other passengers.

Bullying Indiana: Ind. Code Ann.§ 20-33-8-13.5 (b) (2010), Disciplinary Rule Requirements: "The discipline rules [related to bullying]...must apply when a student is: (1) on school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; (2) off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; (3) traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or (4) using property or equipment provided by the school."

Prohibited Conduct also includes:

1. Retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.
2. Perpetuating bullying or harassing conduct by spreading hurtful or demeaning material even if the material was created by another person (e.g., forwarding offensive e-mails or text messages).



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5.4 Involving Parents in Student Safety and Disciplinary Matters

Highly effective and successful school bus drivers know that parents can be their greatest ally in matters of student safety and discipline. When parents believe that their child's driver is respectful and enforces behavioral expectations in a fair and consistent manner in order to ensure safety, they are much more likely to cooperate with school personnel in disciplinary matters involving their children. The following are suggestions to facilitate effective interaction:

- Contact parents before issues become problems. Keep them informed, bearing in mind that you are building relationships with them, not placing blame or complaining.
- When a child's behavior is good or has improved, let parents know.
- When talking with parents, first (and sincerely) convey positive traits about their children, such as promptness or honesty.
- Address behaviors and issues, not people, with a focus on positive solutions.

If a parent approaches a bus to discuss an issue with the driver, the driver should express interest in the parent's wish to talk and make arrangements to contact the parent at a time when the driver can provide the parent with undivided attention. Do not let the parent board the bus.

5.5 Student Illness and Injury

(For emergency procedures, see Section 7)

If a child becomes ill on the bus, the driver should notify the student's school to relay this information to the child's parent or guardian.

If a student is injured on the school bus, the driver should notify the school and the Director of Transportation.

5.6 Student Medication

Medication may not be sent to school in the possession of students. Such arrangements should be made by parents with their child's school and not sent on the bus.

The stipulations above do not pertain to children who have chronic diseases, and who may possess and self-administer medications, under written authorization from their parents and physicians. In such cases, students' parents are to notify bus drivers that their children are in lawful possession of medication and the conditions under which the medication will be administered by the child. Parents should also advise drivers of proper procedures for providing care in the event of an emergency. With the exception of the above, drivers may not provide prescription or over-the-counter medication to students.

(Reference: IC 20-34-3-18)



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5.7 Transporting Large Materials

Students may transport on school buses only those items that can be secured out of the aisle and do not obstruct the view of the bus driver. Balloons, large display boards, and other sizable items should be transported to and from school in private vehicles unless arrangements can be made to accommodate them safely on a bus. Determination of acceptable items will be made by the Director of Transportation who will make every effort to accommodate reasonable requests.

5.8 Transporting Dangerous Materials Forbidden

Any items that pose a danger to other occupants or impair the driver's ability to safely operate the school bus may not be transported on the bus by students. Glass containers, flammable liquids, dangerous animals, alcoholic beverages, drugs, ammunition, explosives, firearms, knives, and any object that can reasonably be construed to be a weapon are examples of items that are forbidden. Notwithstanding the above, if a student, upon boarding a bus, notifies his/her driver that he/she is unintentionally in possession of a legal object, which is forbidden on the bus or at school, the driver, if practical, will take possession of the object and convey it to the principal upon arriving at school. Consequences, if any, shall be at the discretion of the principal.

5.9 Video/Audio Surveillance on School Buses

Video and/or audio surveillance may be used by the school corporation to promote order and to ensure the safety and security of students, staff, and property. The video/audio records are protected under FERPA {20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). Only school corporation-approved and installed equipment shall be used for this purpose. Included in such recordings may be the verbal and physical actions of any school bus occupant, including school bus drivers. In addition, some equipment may record mechanical operations such as speed, use of signal lights, and the application of brakes.

Any information provided by the surveillance system may be used by corporation administrators to adjudicate matters involving students, school personnel, and any other passenger on school buses. To this end, and to ensure that the rights of all are protected, the following guidelines shall apply regarding the use of school bus surveillance systems.

- Only the Director of Transportation, bus driver, and/or school administration are authorized to view surveillance footage. The Director of Transportation may appoint a designee, when needed, to process video in the case of stop-arm violations. Only school administration and/or the Director of Transportation can store video footage electronically. All others are "read only" access.

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- One or more highly visible signs shall be posted on the bus stating that surveillance is being used.
- Video recordings of actions by student passengers may be used by administrators as evidence in any disciplinary proceedings against students, where the student's conduct violated school corporation policies or conduct expectations.
- Video recordings of school bus passengers may be audited for the purpose of determining adherence to school corporation rules and to determine if a reported incident of misconduct, vandalism, or property damage was recorded.
- In no case will parents be granted permission to view the actions of other students. The school may deny such requests if the recording's release would reasonably violate other students' right to privacy under FERPA. Only the driver of the school bus from which the recording was made, the Director of Transportation, and the school administration, may view surveillance videos. Any other personnel require authorization from the Director of Transportation or school administration to view video recordings.

5.10 Transporting Students with Special Needs

The educational program for all students who are identified as having special needs is developed during an initial case conference and reviewed annually. These conferences involve students' parents, necessary school personnel, and other individuals who have a legitimate need for participation. As with all students, ensuring that students with special needs are transported safely to and from school, study trips, and extra-curricular activities is the responsibility of the school corporation's transportation department.

When considering transportation arrangements for students with special needs, case conference committees should take into account:

- The nature of the disabling conditions and whether children would present reasonable risks to others by riding buses. Likewise, the committees must consider any unreasonable risks to which the students are likely to be exposed.
- The need for any assistive or adaptive equipment to accommodate students.
- The length of time children will be on school buses, in light of their conditions.
- The need for school bus assistants or monitors.
- Training is necessary for bus drivers so that students' medical and/or behavioral conditions can be successfully managed.

Communication between schools and bus drivers is vital to ensure the best care for all students, particularly those who have special needs. In the morning, bus drivers should

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notify school offices (in person or by telephone, not by radio) to relay pertinent information regarding any noteworthy behaviors or health issues observed during morning routes. Likewise, in the afternoon, school personnel should advise bus drivers of any issues that might require special attention.

Bus drivers, working with other school personnel, must maintain meaningful communication with students' parents, working cooperatively to manage health and behavioral issues in a proactive manner.

While all students are expected to behave in a safe manner, the process for teaching this and the consequences for misconduct can vary from the norm for this group of students. School personnel and the bus driver should work together to ensure that all students understand the expected conduct. For some students with special needs, it may be necessary to modify and repeat this instruction.

When a Behavior Intervention Plan (or IEP) is developed for a student, the student's bus driver must be advised of any procedures that pertain to transportation. Special training associated with such procedures will be provided by HCCS. In many cases, working with students' parents or implementing components of the Behavior Intervention Plan, will be sufficient to stop misbehavior. Examples of interventions that may be used to resolve recurring misbehaviors include but are not limited to:

- Moving the child to an assigned seat with other children.
- Moving the child to an assigned seat with no other child.
- Altering the bus route to shorten the student's time on the bus.
- Allowing the child to listen to a personal device with headphones.
- Allowing the child to play a portable video game.
- Use of a harness (requires parental consent).

If a student's misbehavior is significant and creates a potentially dangerous risk of harm, the child may be removed from his/her assigned bus. Prior to being denied transportation privileges for misconduct, the case conference committee must convene and determine whether or not the misconduct was a manifestation of the child's disability.



Section: 6

Title: Routes & Trips

Issue Date:

6.0 Eligible Passengers & Disembarking at a Different Location

Only students who are enrolled in Huntington County Community Schools and personnel from the school corporation are authorized to ride school bus routes. Each student must ride the bus to which he/she has been assigned. Once a student has boarded an HCCS bus they may only be dropped off at their designated stop unless authorization has been given by the Transportation Office. For the safety of our students, students can only have one designated pick-up spot and one designated drop-off spot. Changes in pick-up or drop-off spots will only be allowed if the student moves to a new residence. If a parent or guardian will be picking up a child who normally rides the bus, they must send in a written note to the school office. Students in Preschool to grade 2 must have an adult visible during the afternoon bus drop-off to ensure someone is home to care for the child.

6.1 Routing

Routes and the assignment of drivers to routes are the responsibility of the Director of Transportation and the Transportation Router. Open routes will be e-mailed via HCCS school corporation email and those who are interested can apply by email within 48 hours. Some routes may be combined/altered when needed. With student safety as the primary criteria in establishing routes, cost efficiency, employee performance, and the length of time students must ride are considered as well.

There may be instances when drivers will be required to help cover other routes. This could include picking up additional students, doubling up of routes, or the temporary need to move drivers to other routes. All routes are subject to change.

A regular daily route is considered to be the route where students are transported to school in the morning and from school in the afternoon. At the beginning of the school year, bus drivers will be given a list of students on their routes. This list will include students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers.

Drivers are to familiarize themselves with their new routes, determine estimated pick-up and drop-off times for students, and contact the parents of all their assigned students to introduce themselves and convey the estimated times for pick-up and delivery.

Drivers may not alter their routes without approval from the Director of Transportation and or Transportation Router. If a driver believes that he/she can improve a route, a meeting with the Transportation Router must be held to discuss changes and receive approval before implementation.

6.2 Road Hazards on Routes

Any road hazards (low hanging branches, points of obstructed visibility, deteriorating shoulder, etc.) observed by drivers should be reported to the Transportation Office by use of the appropriate form. Unless the hazard constitutes an emergency, the driver should not use the bus radio to make such reports, do so in person or by telephone.



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Issue Date:

6.3 Assignment of New Students

As students enroll throughout the school year, they will be assigned to bus routes according to the location where they are to be picked up and dropped off. The Transportation Router will work to determine the routes to which students are to be assigned. Upon making this determination, drivers are to contact the parents/guardians of their new students to discuss pick-up/drop-off times and expectations for riders' behavior.

6.4 Substitute Drivers

When a regular route driver must be absent, a substitute must be obtained.

Drivers should submit their leave request forms as soon as the need for an absence is known. Requests for personal days must be submitted at least two days in advance of the absence. The Driver will need to work to secure coverage for the requested absence. If no coverage is available, approval of the request is not guaranteed. Requests for unpaid leave must fall within the guidelines outlined in the Classified Staff Handbook.

Regular drivers must maintain current route sheets and seating charts in their buses and in the Google file set up by the Transportation office and should make route sheets and seating charts available for substitute drivers in advance.

6.5 Exchange of Passengers

As part of the route-planning process, the Director of Transportation will establish necessary locations for bus drivers to exchange passengers. Such locations will be off the roadway and allow for the safe movement of students from one bus to another. No other points of exchange are permitted unless an emergency situation exists and permission is granted from the Director of Transportation.

6.6 Timeliness

Notwithstanding exceptions due to poor road conditions, drivers are expected to execute their designated routes as scheduled. Students and parents should know the time their bus will arrive. Drivers are not to arrive before scheduled pick-up times once they have been established. The bus must arrive as close to the same time each day, therefore drivers must start their routes at the same time each day.

6.7 Extra Trip Eligibility and Selection

All drivers are eligible to drive for field trips, athletic activities, extra-curricular trips, and shuttle runs. Drivers for extra trips that are to occur regularly for a specified period of time (e.g. athletic shuttles, shuttles, garage help, yellowhound, mid-day pre-school trips, special needs shuttles, etc.) will be assigned by the Transportation Office based on the driver survey that is to be completed at the end of each school year. Drivers must complete the survey by

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the date requested to be eligible. New employees will complete the survey upon hire. Best practice, availability, and experience will be used for determination. If more drivers are interested in an extra trip category we will use the same process that is used for trip pick.

Distribution of the trips (Trip Pick):

1. We will have Trip Pick every Thursday at 9:00 a.m. for all bus drivers. There are a few exceptions that include school closings or 2-hour delays and heavy trip days (such as the Shrine Circus). In these cases, the transportation department will reschedule the trip pick at the earliest convenient time. Trip pick is voluntary and will not be paid to attend.
2. Only those drivers present at trip pick or those working for the corporation during trip pick will be eligible to select trips during trip pick. If a driver cannot attend due to a trip, shuttle, etc., the Driver is responsible for making sure their trip pick sheet is taken care of by another driver. The secretary/director will not be responsible for covering trip pick sheets and making selections for the driver.
3. If a regular driver is not present at trip pick and is NOT working for the school corporation in any capacity, they may choose trips after trip pick.
4. Drivers who have a family connection with a specific trip can announce their desire for that trip before the selection process starts. Other drivers may relent and allow that driver to select that trip during their turn. In no way is any driver obligated to yield to this request. Common courtesy should dictate your actions toward your fellow workers.
5. The Transportation Secretary or Director will conduct a trip pick. We will continue to use the chip system for selecting the picking order. Drivers have to sign in and place their chip in the bucket before 9:00 AM.
6. If a driver arrives after the selection process has started, that driver must wait until the end of the first round and will be selected as the last pick of the first round.
7. Trips cannot be passed around from driver to driver. The driver who selects the trip will be the only driver eligible for the trip.
8. When a driver selects a trip, the driver is responsible for making sure that they can honor the trip times. If a selection is made and then realized later in the trip pick that they cannot honor the trip, the driver will have to wait until the current round is over to select another trip.
9. If a driver who selected a trip finds that the trip cannot be taken as scheduled, for any reason, the driver shall return the trip to the Transportation Office as soon as possible.
10. Trips not selected at trip pick, or trips that come to our office after trip pick that need to be filled before the next trip pick, will be distributed at the discretion of the transportation department in whatever manner necessary. Trips that come in that are scheduled after the next trip pick will be put in that next trip pick. Drivers will not be allowed to turn in already selected trips to take these newly scheduled trips.

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Rules:

1. If at all possible, be at your pickup school early.
2. If for any reason a driver misses a trip, that driver will be subject to progressive discipline up to and including dismissal.
3. Full-time drivers are to clock in starting at the school and finishing at the school. The only exception to this would be if you had to pick up a transit bus at the bus garage. Your time would then start and finish at the bus garage.
4. Sub-bus drivers are to clock in their time starting at the bus garage and finishing at the bus garage.
5. All drivers should be honest and forthright with their hours.

6.8 Transportation for Field Trips and Other School-Related Activities

Well-planned field trips are important ingredients for developing students' understanding of concepts learned in the classroom. Students' participation in extra-curricular and athletic events also serves to develop individuals' skills and abilities. When transported for these purposes, students are to be accompanied on buses by trip leaders and/or chaperones. School bus drivers, in cooperation with trip leaders (teachers, coaches, or sponsors who are employed by HCCS), are expected to provide safe and efficient transportation to and from such activities. While trip leaders are responsible for student behavior and the conduct of chaperones, the bus driver is responsible for the bus and has ultimate authority over routes and operations. If the driver deems that conditions constitute a safety hazard, he/she has the authority not to proceed.

Trip leaders are to:

- Ensure that students understand that regular bus rules apply and that all students understand the expected conduct as described in SOP 5.3.
- Report any discipline problems to the appropriate principal as soon as feasible.
- Review the destination and routes with the bus driver before departure.
- Ensure that emergency medical information is on hand and secured.
- Introduce chaperones to the driver before the trip and review the school corporation's policies and guidelines on student discipline with the chaperones.
- Assist the driver in enforcing the rules of the bus.
- Place himself/herself and any chaperones strategically in the middle and rear portions of the bus when necessary or as requested by the driver.
- Account for all students and chaperones before leaving each stop.
- Ensure that all students have transportation home upon completion of the trip.

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- Ensure that trip requests are entered into Mylearning Plan for approval 3 weeks before events.
- Report any cases of a driver's poor judgment or improper behavior to the Director of Transportation.

In addition, trip leaders are expected to see that the interior of the school bus is reasonably clean (i.e. free of litter and refuse) before students disembark at the conclusion of the trip. In planning the event, trip leaders must allow for reasonable travel time to and from the destination(s), recognizing drivers' obligations to follow all school bus-related traffic laws and regulations.



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7.0 Overview

Prevention and preparedness are two essential factors in transportation safety. At any time, any driver can be faced with a situation that threatens the lives of passengers. Drivers must seek to reduce the chances of such situations through prevention and understand what to do to ensure passengers' safety, through preparedness. During an emergency, the driver must take charge of the situation, establish order, and do what is necessary to ensure passengers' well-being.

7.1 PREVENTION OF MECHANICAL FAILURE

A pre-trip inspection is absolutely necessary before a driver begins a route. The pre-trip inspections should take no longer than 15 minutes and shall be recorded on HCCS tablets installed inside the school bus. It is essential to have a routine for systematically inspecting the bus. Drivers must become familiar with the looks, sounds, and smells of their buses, to sense when something is wrong. Any malfunctions are to be reported to transportation mechanics immediately.

7.2 DRIVING IN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Operating a school bus in hard rain, high winds, or icy roads is a great responsibility, requiring greater concentration by a driver.

Drivers should:

- Remind students as they enter the bus (morning) or before leaving school property (afternoon) that their cooperation is especially important in bad weather.
- Reduce speed as necessary according to road and visibility conditions.
- Allow more time to stop for students, vehicles, and at intersections.
- Give other motorists more advanced warning of their intention to stop, especially at railroad tracks, and when dropping-off/picking up students.
- Watch closely to ensure that other drivers do not "slide through" activated stop arms.
- Use strobe lights if visibility is reduced.
- Advise students to wait behind snow banks and to walk clear of them - not climb over them - when leaving the bus.
- DO NOT use roadways with rising water.

7.3 Tornadoes

Tornado watches are issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are ideal for the formation of tornadoes. When watches are issued, school operations should proceed as usual, but school personnel are to be alert of developing dangerous weather. Bus drivers should listen carefully to the corporation's radio system and be observant of the weather around them, watching for the appearance of violent wind, rain, hail, or funnel-shaped clouds. Tornado warnings are issued when a tornado has been sighted or detected by radar. When a tornado warning is issued, school personnel are to immediately direct students into shelter areas.

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If a tornado warning is issued before morning routes, school will be delayed until the warning is lifted or local conditions are determined to be safe. If a tornado warning is issued before dismissal, at the end of the day, students will remain in their buildings until the warning is lifted or conditions are determined to be safe.

When a bus is on the road and a tornado is spotted by the driver or a driver is told to find shelter for his/her riders, he/she should immediately seek the best shelter outside of the bus. If possible, the driver should advise the Transportation Office of his/her location. Drivers must never try to "outrun" a tornado. Instead, a driver should park the bus in a safe position for evacuation, take the emergency kit, and evacuate students to a shelter location a safe distance away from the bus and power lines.

The best shelter is the lowest level of a sturdy building, preferably a basement. If a structure is not available, students should take shelter in a ditch or ravine, lying face down with their hands covering their heads. After the danger has passed, the driver should check for injuries and seek medical assistance. The driver should be cautious of weakened structures, tree damage, downed power lines, and other hazards presented by the storm.

7.4 Bus Fires

Fires on school buses can be caused by mechanical failure, accidents, or riders. In all cases, rapid response by drivers to evacuate students is essential. During these emergencies, the first priority for drivers is to ensure that students are safe from flames and smoke. The following instructions apply:

- Don't hesitate - Evacuate. If drivers "smell something hot", see smoke, or suspect a fire for any reason, students are to be evacuated immediately.
- Shut off the engine.
- Do not open the hood.
- If it is safe to do so, drivers should hang the bus radio microphone out of the driver's window and, once out of the bus, notify the Transportation Office of the nature of the emergency and its location. (Drivers must be cautious of traffic, flames, and smoke, and remember that student safety is the first priority.)
- Fire extinguishers are not to be used to extinguish flames unless the flames block an exit from the bus. Students are to be evacuated and supervised. The fire department will extinguish the fire.
- If a fire extinguisher must be used, the driver must pull the pin, aim at the base of the flame, and squeeze the handle. The extinguisher's contents must be concentrated on the base of the flame.
- Students who are closest to flames and smoke should be evacuated first. (See Reverse Evacuation below)
- Remain calm and focused.

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7.5 Evacuating the Bus

Reasons for Evacuation

Because of the size and construction of school buses, children are often safer on a school bus than they are outside of it. In addition, having children inside of a bus enables the driver to "hold" students in a confined area, which is more conducive to better supervision. There are times, however, when passengers must evacuate. These times are:

Fire	Possibility of the bus being struck
Leaking fuel	Possibility of the bus tipping or rolling
Approaching tornado	Submersion or partial submersion in water
Illness of a passenger that requires emergency medical attention	Violent behavior by a person on the bus

In each of these cases, it is important that students exit the bus quickly and carefully. Students should be directed to gather at a specific location a safe distance from the bus, if feasible. After students have exited the bus, continued supervision is required.

Evacuation should NOT occur when:

- P**ower lines are down on or near the bus
- H**azardous chemicals are on the ground outside the bus
- D**angerous lightning or hail is in the immediate vicinity
- A** person off the bus intends to harm one or all of the passengers
- T**emperatures are below freezing and no immediate danger exists

Exit Selection

The circumstances involved in an emergency will dictate which exit(s) are used. Passengers should know how to evacuate using all points of exit. Evacuation may take place through the service door (front), rear emergency exit, emergency exit windows, side emergency door (if equipped), or roof hatches (if equipped). Drivers and students should be aware that bus windshields are removable. Firmly striking the windshield in the lower corner will "push" that area of glass free. Further pressure around the perimeter will remove the entire window. Should the glass break, extra caution should be used to ensure that no jagged glass exists. The fire extinguisher may be used to clear such glass.

Although circumstances vary, drivers should select the means by which to exit using the following considerations:

- The exit(s) should be away from points of danger outside the bus (fire, traffic, etc.)
- The exit(s) should be clear of any obstructions inside and outside the bus.
- Students nearest the point of danger should exit first.

When students must evacuate the bus, the driver should:

- Stop the bus in the safest possible location.
- Turn off the engine, set the emergency brake, activate 4-way flashers, and take the key.

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- Determine if evacuation is necessary and which exit(s) to use.
- Notify the Transportation Office via bus radio or cell phone with the following information:
 - Bus number
 - Location of the bus (road or street and nearest crossroad/street)
 - Type of emergency
 - Form of assistance needed
 - Whether or not the bus will be evacuated
- Direct students to evacuate using the safest exit(s). Say:
 - *This is an emergency.*
 - *Stay calm, stop talking, and follow my directions.*
 - *We must evacuate.*
 - *We will use _____ exit(s).*
 - *Leave your possessions on the school bus.*
 - *Walk quickly to the exit.*
 - *Meet at _____*
 - *Remember to stop, squat, and drop (Rear exit only)*
 - *Begin!*
- Have the first students off of the bus assist others who are evacuating by standing on one or both sides of the exit.
- Release students from left to right, row by row
- Take the first aid kit and reflective triangles.
- Ensure that all students are off the bus before evacuating.
- Place reflective triangles per CDL training.
- Account for all students and keep them together.

7.6 Evacuation Drills

Preparedness for evacuation, through regular practice, will enable students and drivers to more calmly and smoothly carry out evacuations in actual emergency situations. For safety reasons, evacuation drills are to be limited to the service door (front) and/or rear emergency exit. Drills are to be conducted two (2) times during the year on school property when buses are not on established routes.

With students, prior to conducting a drill, drivers are to:

- explain the purpose of evacuation drills;
- advise them that they are to leave items on the bus.
- direct them to listen carefully and remain quiet at all times.
- explain how to evacuate from the front, rear, and both exits.
- explain how student assistants will aid other passengers.
- instruct students to gather at a specific point no less than twenty (20) feet from the bus.

During drills, drivers should:

- observe student movement, watching for that which is being done correctly and that which needs to improve.
- note their own strengths and errors.

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Following the drill, the driver should compliment students for that which was done well and advise students as to how they are to correct errors.

7.7 Student Assistants

When evacuation is necessary, rapid and safe movement can mean the difference between life and death. Drivers, alone, will find it very difficult to have students evacuate rapidly and safely without assistance. To assist, student assistants should be selected, within the first two (2) weeks of school, to be trained to aid during emergencies. Those selected should be frequent riders, who are on the bus for most of the route, and who are responsible and trustworthy.

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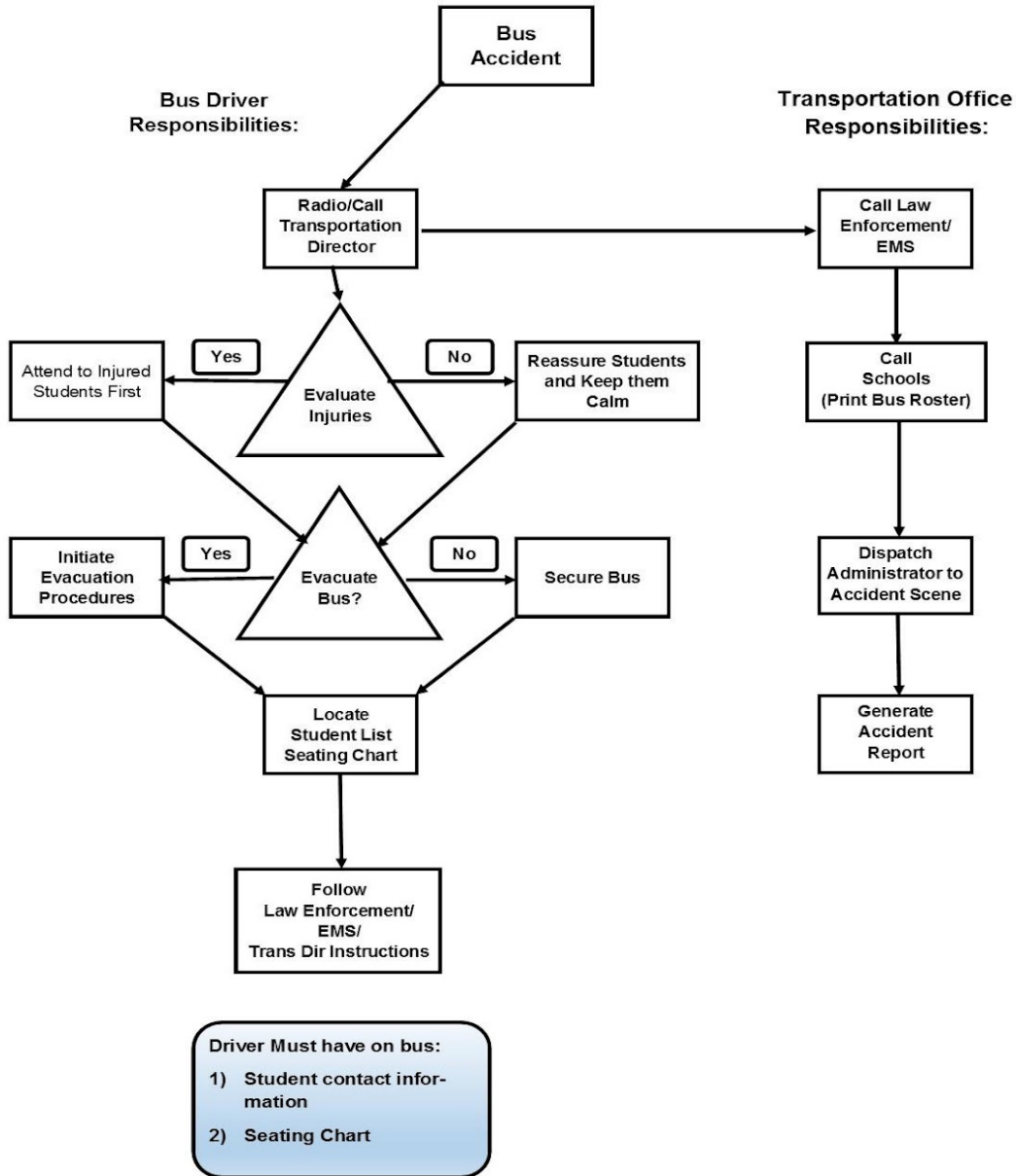


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7.8 Accidents



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Safety Procedures

Although the circumstances for accidents vary - no two accidents are alike - drivers must be able to act competently in all situations. Common sense and an understanding that passenger safety is the driver's primary responsibility are two important elements in such situations. In the event of an accident involving a school bus, the driver should:

- Remain calm and focused.
- Reassure students and keep them calm.
- Stop the bus, if it is moving, and turn off the ignition. The bus should not be moved unless directed to do so by a police officer or unless there is imminent danger of fire or another collision. If movement is necessary, the driver should make a mental note of exactly where the bus stopped after the collision (e.g. *"My front bumper was just behind the stop line."*)
- Set the emergency brake and activate the four-way flashers (hazard lights).
- Assess the situation....*Is anyone injured? Is evacuation necessary? If so...*
 - Attend to seriously injured passengers.
 - Initiate evacuation procedures.
- Notify the Transportation Office that an accident has occurred and of the location.
- NQIE: Other drivers and school offices should avoid radio transmissions and allow the involved driver to communicate with the Transportation Office.
- Place warning triangles in front of and behind the bus.
- DO NOT release passengers until cleared to do so by emergency personnel or the Director of Transportation.
- Provide emergency medical personnel with relevant student medical information.
- Provide the Transportation Director with a list of students.
- Assist in transferring students to a backup bus.
- In addition to the emergency steps listed above, drivers should:
 - o Do not make any statements regarding fault or blame anyone for the accident.
 - o Discuss details about the accident only with the Director of Transportation and the police.
 - o Be able to identify witnesses to the accident.



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Following an accident, each driver may be required to undergo a post-accident drug test. He/she is to accompany the Transportation Director to the testing site immediately after being released by the law enforcement officer in charge of the scene.

ENSC reserves the right to conduct drug testing for any ENSC employee, coach, or other activity volunteer involved in an accident while using one of our motor vehicles. Even though some individuals driving our white activity buses (or any other ENSC motor vehicle) may not need to have a yellow bus card certificate, those individuals can nevertheless be required to be drug tested when an accident occurs. Those individuals who have a yellow bus card certificate are subject to the ENSC random drug testing pool and are also subject to drug testing after an accident occurs.

7.9 Responding to Conflict and Acts of Violence on the Bus

If two or more students become engaged in unruly behavior or a physical confrontation, the bus driver should understand that his/her priority is to protect all passengers and him/herself. While each situation is different, drivers should:

- Stop the bus in a safe location, activate the four-way flashers, and set the emergency brake.
- Notify the Transportation Department of the situation and bus location.
- Command all students to remain seated and those involved to stop the disturbance.
- Move other students, who are in jeopardy of being harmed, to a safe location on the bus until the disturbance or fight ceases.
- Evacuate students from the bus if those involved continue to fight and other students are in jeopardy on the bus.
- Separate involved students (into seats away from one another) following the incident and direct them to remain seated.
- Not attempt to grab weapons from students.
- Notify the Transportation Department immediately if a weapon is involved.
- Not physically intervene in a fight or conflict.
- Not discharge unruly students from the bus at a location other than their designated stop or school unless law enforcement or school officials take custody of the students from the bus.
- Make a full report to the students' principal upon completion of the route.



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7.10 Driver Illness

If a driver becomes ill during his/her route and the driver believes that it is not safe to continue driving, he/she should stop the bus in a safe location, activate the four-way flashers, and contact the Transportation Director, advising him/her of the situation and bus location. A student assistant should be advised by the driver of the situation in the event the driver loses consciousness. The driver and/or student assistant should call 911 if emergency assistance is required.

7.11 Medical Emergency

During transit to or from school, or on school-sponsored trips, students may become ill or injured on the bus. Epileptic seizures, allergic reactions, diabetic-related emergencies, and choking are a few of the many incidents that may occur while school buses are on the road. While each situation will be unique, it is important that drivers be able to react promptly and in a manner that ensures the safety of all passengers. When a child becomes seriously ill or injured, the driver should:

- Park the bus in a safe location as quickly as possible, activate the four-way flashers, and set the emergency brake.
- Notify the Transportation Office of the situation, including the bus location. Caution should be used when using students' names via the bus radio.
- If the child requires emergency assistance, call 911.
- Move other children away from the student.
- Provide first aid/care for the child to the extent possible.
- If emergency medical personnel must attend to the student, temporarily evacuate the other students to a safe location.
- Reassure students to calm anxiety that may occur, especially if a student must be transported from the bus by ambulance.

7.12 Delays and Cancellations

The Transportation Director, in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies, the county highway department, and the Superintendent, will assess road conditions and weather forecasts to determine whether or not the school should be delayed or closed. To the extent possible, this determination will be made before 5:30 A.M. When it is determined that it is unsafe to conduct school, drivers will be notified by the corporation's chosen method of communication.

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7.13 Unsafe Conditions

Drivers become familiar with families' habits and expectations, often through ongoing, meaningful communication with students and their parents. If a driver observes something "out of the ordinary" (e.g. a person waiting in a car that is not normally parked in a location near a drop-off point), he/she should notify the Transportation Office immediately. Care should be taken not to transmit the names of students or their families unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. The Transportation Office or the child's school may be able to contact the child's parent to determine if it is safe to allow the child off of the bus. If the driver determines that it is unsafe to allow the child to disembark, the driver should contact the Transportation Office and/or the child's school so that the child will be returned to the school. If no one is available at the school, the child should be taken to a location as directed by the Director of Transportation.

7.14 Drug and Alcohol Policy – Personal Information Collected and Maintained

FMCSR 382.601(b)(12):

The requirement that the following personal information collected and maintained under this part shall be reported to the Clearinghouse:

- (i) A verified positive, adulterated, or substituted drug test result;*
- (ii) An alcohol confirmation test with a concentration of 0.04 or higher;*
- (iii) A refusal to submit to any test required by subpart C of this part;*
- (iv) An employer's report of actual knowledge, as defined at § 382.107:
 - (A) On duty alcohol use pursuant to § 382.205;*
 - (B) Pre-duty alcohol use pursuant to § 382.207;*
 - (C) Alcohol use following an accident pursuant to § 382.209; and*
 - (D) Controlled substance use pursuant to § 382.213;**
- (v) A substance abuse professional (SAP as defined in § 40.3 of this title) report of the successful completion of the return-to-duty process;*
- (vi) A negative return-to-duty test; and*
- (vii) An employer's report of completion of follow-up testing.*