707.05 TRANSPORTATION: TYPE III SCHOOL BUSES

I. POLICY PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this policy is to establish rigorous safety, maintenance, and operator standards for "Type III" vehicles (small passenger cars, vans, and SUVs) used to transport students. It ensures that any non-bus vehicle used for District business—whether owned by the District or a private volunteer—meets the same legal and safety benchmarks as a full-sized school bus.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

1. A Type III school bus is restricted to passenger cars, station wagons, vans and buses having a maximum manufacturer's rated seating capacity of ten people, including the driver, and a gross rating of 10,000 pounds or less. Type III vehicles are divided into two categories.
    a. Vehicles owned by the District Transportation Department or by school bus companies under contract to the District, and;
    b. Private vehicles owned by District staff or volunteers.

2. Each Type III school bus, whether owned by the District or one of its school bus contractors, or by a school staff person or volunteer, shall be free from any structural damage which might lead to or cause injury to a child due to jagged or sharp edges. Each Type III vehicle shall be maintained in good mechanical condition, have all operational and safety systems in proper working order, and shall be free from any defects which might lead to student injury.

3. Each Type III vehicle shall be inspected by the Minnesota State Patrol and shall display on the lower left windshield a valid State of Minnesota School Bus Inspection sticker.

4. The condition of each Type III vehicle, and the safety/emergency equipment in the vehicle, shall be subject to additional inspection by District Transportation Department staff. Inspections shall be made utilizing the inspection criteria contained within the Minnesota State School Bus Inspection Handbook.

5. Type III school buses owned by the District Transportation Department or by District school bus contractors may transport students to or from school, or on school related activities, as assigned by the Transportation Department staff. All Type III school buses owned by the District, or by a bus company under contract to the District, must meet the school bus inspection and equipment requirements of Minnesota statutes.

6. A privately owned vehicle operated by an employee or school volunteer may only be utilized for the transportation of a student(s) if the following criteria are met:
    a. The vehicle carries a current Minnesota State School Bus Inspection sticker.
    b. The vehicle meets the age and equipment requirements contained in Minnesota statutes.
    c. The principal, or their designee, has determined that a good and sufficient reason for transporting the student exists and that no other form of transportation is reasonably available.
    d. The principal or their designee has approved the use of a privately owned vehicle to transport.

7. Each person operating a Type III school bus transporting District students must be registered and approved by the District Transportation Department. Each driver who does not possess a valid commercial driver's license with current school bus endorsement must comply with the criminal background and licensing requirements of Minnesota statutes for drivers of Type III school buses.

8. The Transportation Department shall conduct a check of the driver's license record of each person seeking to transport students in a Type III vehicle in conjunction with the regular drivers license checks run on District and contract school bus drivers. Permission to transport students shall be denied based upon the disqualifying driving offenses for school bus drivers contained

in Minnesota statutes and the District contract standards for school bus drivers.

9. All drivers transporting students in Type III vehicles must have in their possession a valid Minnesota driver's license, or equivalent out-of-state driver's license, while transporting students.

10. All students who are provided transportation for field trips, athletic trips or other school-sponsored events by the School District, or under arrangements made by the School District, must be transported from the school site to the field trip, game site or event location by vehicles owned by or arranged by the Transportation Department. This policy does not prohibit a parent or guardian from arranging for the transportation of their own child to or from school-sponsored events in a private passenger vehicle.

11. In the event of an accident, either vehicular or personal injury, while transporting a student in a Type III vehicle owned by a staff person or volunteer, the driver shall immediately notify the Transportation Department and the building principal.

12. The driver of the Type III vehicle shall file a written report with the Transportation Department within two (2) working days of the accident. The accident report shall include all information required by the Transportation Department.

13. Training Requirements: Per Minn. Stat. § 171.02, all Type III drivers must now receive annual training on student conduct, passenger loading/unloading, and emergency procedures. Ensure your "registration and approval" process includes a record of this training.

14. Pre-Trip Inspections: Type III drivers need to perform a daily "pre-trip" inspection. The District will provide a standard checklist to be completed before each trip.

15. Every passenger in a Type III vehicle **must** be buckled, as these vehicles do not use the "compartmentalization" safety design of large yellow buses.

III. DEFINITIONS

Type III Vehicle – A classification for smaller passenger vehicles used for student transportation that do not look like traditional school buses, that include 10 passenger vans, 7 passenger vans, etc.

Accident - Define as any contact with another vehicle, person, or object, regardless of the amount of visible damage

Personal Injury - Any reported pain or visible injury, however minor, sustained by a student, staff member, or third party

Written Report - A specific form required to ensure all statutory data points are collected.

LEGAL REFERENCES:

Minn. Stat. § 169.01 SUBD.6 (5) - *Authorized emergency vehicle*

169.443 SUBD.6 - *Safety of School Children; Bus Drivers Duties: Type III Buses*

123B.01 7 SUBD.1(8) *Definitions: Independent School Districts*

Minn. Stat. § 171.02 - *Licenses; Types, Endorsements, Restrictions*

CROSS REFERENCES:

707.00 – *Transportation: Eligibility*

707.02 – *Transportation: Student Conduct*

707.05 – *Transportation: Type III School Buses*

710.00 – *Transportation: Field, Athletic, Community Education Trips*