

## (School District/ISD)

### BUS SAFETY PROCEDURES

Proper transportation of students is a matter of continuing concern and it is imperative that all staff members associated with student transportation adhere to the following guidelines which have been designed to maximize the safety of students.

- A. Each bus driver must maintain effective communications with the Director of Special Education at all times and particularly when she/he encounters any situation that is out of the ordinary. To that end, each bus shall be equipped with a two-way radio which is to be kept in operating condition at all times.
- B. At the completion of each bus run, the driver is to do a complete walk-through of the bus to make sure that no student has remained.
- C. The Director/Superintendent shall maintain a record of each student rider for ready reference whenever a question arises about a student. Such a record shall include name, address, telephone number, name and location of contact person, the bus driver's name and the number of the bus the student rides. This record shall also contain confidential information regarding physical and/or mental characteristics of the student which would require special attention.
- D. In addition, the Superintendent shall:
  - 1. conduct routine and periodic surveys of the School Corporation area and routes to determine the safety of current bus routes and bus stops;
  - 2. ensure that each bus driver's records of qualifications and certification are up-to-date and on file in the Superintendent's office with a physician's certificate that the bus driver has passed an annual physical;
  - 3. ensure compliance with all Department of Education safety specifications for school buses as well as statutory requirements for first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, traffic flares, and other safety features;
  - 4. maintain and update a booklet containing traffic rules and regulations and distribute a copy to each driver;
  - 5. ensure that there is no smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages on any school bus or in the refueling area.

## **Evacuation of Bus**

The following procedures are to be followed when evacuating the school bus.

- A. Stop bus, if not already stopped, off the road and out of the mainstream of traffic, if possible.
- B. Put on emergency flasher lights and immediately issue orders as to which exit is to be used.
- C. Maintain calm and direct students to "walk - not run", not to take books, lunch boxes, etc., and to be careful when disembarking.
- D. Send someone or call for help after making sure that all students are evacuated.
- E. Form students into a group at least 100 feet from the bus and as far away from traffic as feasible.
- F. Check bus list to ensure all students are accounted for and are in good condition.
- G. Emergency evacuation of disabled students may require modification of the above procedures.

## **Evacuation Drills**

The bus driver shall organize and conduct three (3) emergency exit drills for all students who ride school buses to and from school.

- A. Each of the following three (3) emergency procedures shall be conducted at least once annually:
  - 1. everyone exits through the front entrance door;
  - 2. everyone exits through the rear emergency door;
  - 3. front half exits through the front door and rear half exits through the rear door.
- B. All drills shall be arranged and scheduled by the bus driver
- C. Drills shall be held on school property when possible and not on the bus route.
- D. The driver shall stay in the bus during evacuation drills. The parking brake must be set, ignition turned off, and transmission in gear or park.
- E. Children shall not take lunch boxes, books, etc., when they leave the bus.
- F. Students shall assemble at a distance of at least 100 feet from the bus in an "emergency drill" and remain there until given further directions.

- G. The driver shall report to the Director that a drill has been conducted.

### **Accidents**

- A. In the event of an accident involving the bus, the bus driver shall:
  - 1. evaluate the need for medical assistance;
  - 2. if necessary, evacuate the students to a safe area away from the scene of the accident;
  - 3. notify the appropriate law enforcement agency;
  - 4. notify the Director.
- B. The Director shall collect the data concerning the accident, notify the parents, and if necessary, arrange for another bus to transport the students.
- C. In the event of a serious accident, the procedures stipulated by the law enforcement agency shall be followed.

### **Railroad Crossings**

Before crossing a railroad track at grade, the driver shall:

- A. stop the vehicle within fifty (50) feet but not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail;
- B. activate hazard warning lights, turn off all interior switches including fans, heaters, and radios;
- C. open passenger door and driver-side window and, while stopped, listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train or signals indicating a train approach;
- D. proceed only after ascertaining that no train is approaching and using a gear that does not require changing gears while crossing the tracks.

The driver does not have to follow the above procedure if:

- A. the track is abandoned as designated in the Corporation's route plan,
- B. there is a police officer or traffic-control signal directing the traffic to proceed, or
- C. the crossing is on freeway or limited-access highway if a clearly-visible signal, crossing arm, or other automatic barrier is not activated.

### **Tornado**

In the event of a tornado sighting or warning, the bus driver shall:

- A. contact the Director's office;
- B. pull the bus off the roadway;
- C. evacuate the bus;
- D. bring the first aid kit;
- E. take students to the nearest building, if possible;
- F. if in the open, take the students to a ditch, ravine, or embankment which is at least 200 feet from the bus;
- G. instruct students to lie down on their knees with their hands clasped behind their heads;
- H. once the danger is past, assess students for any needed medical attention;
- I. contact Director as soon as possible.

### **Bus Breakdown**

In the event of a bus breakdown, the bus driver shall:

- A. move the bus off the roadway, if possible;
- B. notify the Director, who shall arrange for another bus to transport the students;
- C. evacuate the students to a safe area, if necessary;
- D. stay close to the scene until assistance arrives;
- E. assist in transferring students to the backup bus;
- F. arrange, together with the Director to have the bus towed/repaired.

### **Inclement Weather**

Whenever the weather forecast indicates inclement weather approaching, the Superintendent/Director is to inspect the condition of the roads. If the forecast relates to the next school day, the Transportation Supervisor is to make his/her recommendation to the Superintendent prior to 5:00 AM. The

recommendation should be based on both personal observation of the roads and discussion with the Highway Department and/or the State Highway Patrol or Sheriff.

If transportation is cancelled, bus drivers will be notified by means of the telephone chain and parents by means of the radio and TV stations.

### **Dangerous and Illegal Weapons**

The safety of students and staff is of paramount importance, and control of dangerous and/or illegal weapons is a particularly sensitive and critical responsibility. No weapon or other device that poses a danger to anyone in the vehicle shall be permitted. If a staff member discovers such a weapon or device, she/he should take the following actions:

- A. Radio for help immediately.
- B. Isolate the student, if possible, and if necessary, evacuate the bus.
- C. Avoid attempts to disarm the student unless the situation appears to be life-threatening.

### **Quelling a Disturbance**

If, during a bus trip, any students become unruly or two (2) or more students become involved in a fight or create a disturbance, the driver should proceed as follows:

- A. Stop the bus and command the students to stop the disturbance and sit properly in their seats.
- B. Do not attempt to use physical force to quell the disturbance or dispossess students of any weapon or threatening object unless assured that such action is likely to be successful and not endanger the other students or the driver.
- C. If the students do not obey, drive the bus to a safe area while notifying the transportation office of the disturbance and request assistance.
- D. If the disturbance is or may be jeopardizing to the safety and well-being of the other students, evacuate all uninvolved students from the bus using the standard evacuation procedure.
- E. Do not, under any circumstances, discharge an unruly student from the bus other than at his/her regular bus stop, a law enforcement agency, or a Corporation school, and only then, if an official at that location takes custody of the student(s).

- F. Make a full report of the disturbance to the Superintendent/Director upon completion of the trip.