

BUS POLICY
LOST CHILD / BUS CHECKING

Lost Child

There are incidents which sometimes occur in a Transportation Department when a report of a “Lost Child” comes in. This can happen for a number of circumstances. Whenever we are faced with this type of situation, it is only natural for all parties involved to think and act on the worst case scenario.

Some reasons for being faced with a Lost Child include (but not limited to):

- A. Child got on the bus at school, but has not returned home.
- B. Child boarded the bus in the morning, but was reported absent at school.

Supervisors will go through a process of elimination to find the student.

- A. Call the bus driver over the radio and ask if “Johnny Student” was on your bus today?
- B. Did “Johnny Student” get off at his assigned bus stop?
- C. Ask parents to check with some of their known friends to see if Johnny is at another house.
- D. Ask the school to do an “All Call” over their Public Address (PA) system requesting the student report to the office for verification.
- E. Go to the neighborhood in personal vehicles and look for the lost student.

If, after all options have been exhausted, we still are unable to find the missing student, the supervisors will:

- A. Communicate with each other the steps and process we have taken.
- B. Inform the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services the steps, process, results of our search, and inform the District Crisis Team of the next step we are about to take.
- C. Call the appropriate police department and start a missing persons report in conjunction with the parents.

Many times we are able to find the student playing with a neighbor. Sometimes they went home, but a parent was not home so they went to the neighbor’s home. There are occasions when the school thinks the student got on the bus, but when we ask them to do an “all call” the student is attending an after school activity. When this happens we ask for the parents to go to the school and pick the student up. Sometimes the student has simply fallen asleep on the bus and is still on board. In this situation we will ask bus drivers to finish the bus route, and then take the student directly to the house (K-5), or take the student to their assigned bus stop (6-12).

No school district is immune to students who fall asleep, or bus drivers who fail to thoroughly check their bus during post trip inspection. Missing children have been found sleeping, dehydrated, hot, cold, crying and wandering through bus parking lots or even dead due to poorly conducted post trip inspections. Leaving a student or passenger on the bus at the end of any run is to be considered a serious offence. Failing to provide a thorough inspection and leaving a student on the bus is to endanger the life of that student. Strict disciplinary measures will be taken for all persons who fail to comply with the post trip checking of the bus.

Checking Bus Policy

Whenever the bus is to be parked and secured, it will be inspected front to back by the driver to be sure that all passengers have left the bus.

The majority of our buses will have in place an electronic device that the driver must push or activate during the bus parking sequence.

Until the entire fleet is equipped with such devices, all buses are required to display an **EMPTY** sign in a clearly visible location in the rear windows of the bus when the bus is ready to be parked.

After each run it is recommended that bus drivers check their buses (on all tiers or field trips) for left over, sleeping children before leaving school property. This will eliminate the need for return runs to the school, will avoid students missing instruction time and will minimize risk for everyone involved.

When you have completed all of your tiers and have returned to the bus garage, you will turn the bus off, take your **EMPTY** sign and walk to the back of the bus looking (again) for left over or sleeping children. When you have reached the back of your bus, you will hang the **EMPTY** sign in a clearly visible location in the rear windows of the bus. As an extra risk reduction method, drivers should then bend over and look under the seats of the bus for a child who may be “hiding”.

Leaving a student or passenger on the bus at the end of a route, field trip or any run is to be considered a serious offence. Failing to provide this inspection and leaving a student on the bus is to endanger the life of that student. Strict disciplinary measures will be taken for all persons who fail to comply with the post-trip checking of the bus and/or fail to hang an **EMPTY** sign appropriately.