

Weslaco I.S.D. Transportation Department

“Safe Transportation of our Children – The Ultimate Goal”

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Weslaco I.S.D. Transportation Department is to utilize every available resource to guarantee the safe delivery of our children, to and from school, so they have every opportunity to learn and become productive and successful members of society.

DEPARTMENT GOALS

- I. All Transportation personnel shall follow all safety rules and regulations to safeguard our most precious commodity – our children.
- II. All Transportation personnel shall be mentally and physically prepared to transport our children to and from school on a daily basis.
- III. All Transportation personnel shall constantly focus on the job at hand and be prepared to help our children and parents understand the importance of safety on our school buses.

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2022-2023

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Transportation Manager

Mr. Joel Garza
Asst. Transportation Manager

Mrs. Carolina Garza
Route Supervisor

Mr. Rafael Reyna
Asst. Route Supervisor

GENERAL POLICIES

It is the intent and purpose of this handbook to provide guidelines, which must be followed in order to ensure a smooth operation of the Weslaco I.S.D. Transportation Department.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WELFARE

(District Policy, District Handbook)

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interest of the District, to be courteous to students, one another and the public.

Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

1. Recognize and respect the rights and property of students and coworkers and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
2. Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
3. Notify your immediate Supervisor as early as possible (preferably in advance) in the event that you are to be absent or late. **Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism and tardiness may be cause for disciplinary action. Excessive tardiness (5) or absences (10) will lead to official write ups and possible suspension up to including termination.**
4. Excessive tardiness or absences will lead to the driver being removed from their regular route to a spare driver position.
5. Know and comply with department and district procedures and policies.
6. Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
7. Use district time, funds and property for authorized district business and activities only.

EMPLOYMENT

All employee hiring shall be carried out by the Superintendent of Schools, and/or a person designated by the Superintendent and School Board. It is the practice of WISD school district to employ the most qualified people obtainable for the salary available. Weslaco I.S.D. is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary personnel shall serve at will; they are not employed for any specified length of time and have no property right to their employment. (See Employee Practices – At Will Employment DCD Local – DCD Legal)

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Weslaco I.S.D will provide and maintain a safe working environment for its employees to ensure that all students are provided with safe and dependable transportation. To accomplish this goal the District shall establish an alcohol and controlled substance testing program to help prevent accidents and injuries. The primary purpose of the testing program is to prevent impaired employees from performing “safe-sensitive” functions.

The following conduct constitutes violation of the District Drug and Alcohol policy:

1. ***Refusing*** to submit to a required test for alcohol or controlled substances.
2. Testing positive for alcohol in a post-accident test, random test, a required follow-up test, or a reasonable suspicion test.
3. Testing positive for controlled substances in a post-accident test, random test, a required follow-up test, or a reasonable suspicion test.
4. All prescriptions for controlled substances not issued by a physician licensed to practice in the United States.
5. Staff members not reporting to their supervisor any medications being taken that causes drowsiness or affects their ability to operate motor vehicles/equipment.
6. Ensure that you are utilizing alcohol free products for oral hygiene.

The consequences of testing positive for alcohol or a controlled substance will be determined by the Manager of Transportation and the Superintendent. The discipline imposed may include any appropriate action from suspension without pay during the period of removal from “safe-sensitive” functions, up to and including termination of employment.

CITATIONS

If at any time a driver is cited for any type of violation it is your responsibility to notify the Manager the next day or prior to doing your next route. If the violation was done on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, you must notify the Manager first thing Monday morning. If you receive a citation while driving a school vehicle you will be given an official letter of reprimand and may be suspended at the discretion of the of Transportation. ***If this type of incident or any other unacceptable conduct should happen again, you will be subject to further disciplinary action including but not limited to possibility of suspension, up to and including termination.***

TOBACCO

Weslaco I.S.D. policy prohibits any type of tobacco use on school property which includes all school vehicles. This includes, but is not limited to chewing tobacco, snuff, cigars, e-cigarettes and cigarettes.

MEETINGS/INSERVICES TRAININGS

Meetings and/or In-service trainings will be conducted with a specified written agenda all designated personnel will be required to attend and a sign-in sheet will be kept.

MANDATORY attendance is required for all personnel.

WORKING HOURS

The hours of scheduled work may vary according to the specific job classification of each individual working at the Transportation Department. It is essential all transportation personnel maintain an assigned work schedule. **Excessive tardiness (5) or absences (10) will lead to official write ups and possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

1. 6 hour drivers will be given 15 minutes for post-trip inspection and cleaning their buses after am/pm route
2. 8 hour drivers will be given 15 minutes for post-trip inspection and cleaning their buses after am/pm route

ABSENCES AND TARDINESS

All employees have a right to be off from work when needed for legitimate reasons. Nevertheless, if employees are habitually absent from work or demonstrate patterned absenteeism this behavior will lead to a documented meeting with upper management. Regular attendance at work is **very** important as absences could compromise the safety of our students. Absences and Tardiness may also cause the removal from trips and extra duties assigned.

Personnel must give notice at least one (1) day in advance if they plan to be absent. Emergency absences will be handled on a one to one basis; however, notification must be given at least by 6:00 a.m. so another driver can be assigned to the route. All absences should be kept to a minimum. Approved absences will still affect your trip rotation (with the exception of funerals or immediate family health related issues)

It is essential all transportation personnel arrive to work on time. Our profession demands everyone be on time so our students can arrive to school at the assigned time.

Being late five (5) separate times within any thirty (30) day period is considered excessive and is cause for disciplinary action **which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination. Please avoid this action and be on time.**

Doctor's appointments **must** be scheduled between employee's shifts to avoid any route disruptions. Appointments from time to time may interfere with employee's shift. However, employee must attempt to modify their appointment prior to requesting route coverage. Upper management will need sufficient time to make the proper route adjustments.

****All Personnel is required to turn in an Absent from Duty form to the office personnel for processing indicating the use of SL (Sick Leave) or PB (Personal Business). If no form is turned in, SL (Sick Leave) hours will automatically be deducted. SL or PB will continue to be used anytime an employee is absent until they are exhausted.**

*****Absent from Duty forms are to be turned in immediately upon return back to work to avoid payroll discrepancies. If employee misses on a Friday, the Absent from Duty form must be turned in no later than 8:30am on the following Monday. Failure to turn in Absent from Duty Forms will cause a payroll discrepancies which will not be corrected until the following pay period.**

******Attendance is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT during Testing Days. Attendance is Mandatory. Please note that testing dates are marked on the Academic Calendar provided to you by the Transportation Dept. Please try to refrain from taking personal time off during testing days.**

Any long term personal time off "vacation" should be planned during June through August. You are also encouraged to plan your vacation during district scheduled holidays. (Refer to District School calendar)

ABSENCES WITHOUT NOTIFICATION (NO CALL NO SHOW)

Absences without notification (NO CALL NO SHOW) are very disruptive and create extremely difficult scheduling situations. Due to the unique nature of our profession, it is very important all drivers be present for work **every day**. Therefore, **failure to notify a manager/supervisor of your pending absence may be cause for disciplinary action, and may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

Transportation Office: (956) 969-6860

1. Upon returning to work, please fill out and sign the "Absence from Duty Form" which will be available at the Front Desk.

A NO CALL no show will disqualify you from receiving trips for a week.

TIME CLOCK SYSTEM

Everyone is expected to use the Time Clock System properly and accurately. Each individual employee must clock in and out on their own.

1. No one is authorized to clock in or out for another employee.
2. Anytime any employee leaves the area for personal reasons, he/she must clock out and clock back in upon their return
3. Do not forget to clock in and out as scheduled
4. All employees are responsible for approving their time every week no later than Saturday of every week.
5. In the event that an employee has a missed punch, a Missed Punch Form must be filled out and turned in to office personnel for correction.
****This form completion should be kept to a minimum and should not become a pattern. Failure to comply is cause for disciplinary action that may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**
6. In the event that the Time Clock System is offline and is not working a Trip Card form must be filled out to ensure the employee gets paid properly

**No more than 2 missed punches per semester. Anything above 2 missed punches is considered a pattern and cause for disciplinary action. Time Clock System outage does not count towards missed punches or extreme emergencies.

***Extreme emergencies will be based upon manager's discretion.

TRIP CARDS

Everyone assigned a trip must have a Trip Card Form properly filled out and turned in immediately after the field trip. Trip Cards will be referenced together with Time Clock System to verify payroll. If the office is closed, use the drop box available to you 24/7. Failure to turn in a completed Trip Card form will forfeit your trip rotation one week. All Trip Card Forms must be turned no later than by Monday, 9:00 a.m.

The following items **MUST** be filled out in order for proper payment to be processed:

1. Name
2. Date
3. Destination
4. Mileage
5. Time Worked
6. Purchase Order/Requisition Number (When Available)
7. Coach's Signature/Sponsor

EMPLOYEE PARKING

Employees must park in the areas designated for employee parking. If all designated areas are full, employees should park on the grass located southeast of the Transportation office (between the entrance gate and the wash bay). Employees should be careful and not park in the reserved parking spaces dedicated for visitors and office staff. Handicap parking is **only** for certified vehicles with handicap license plates and or handicap placards. Employees should not park buses or personal vehicles in areas other than designated parking spaces. (Example: in front of main office, south of the mechanic shop and the no parking zones).

****Mechanic Shops barricades should not be moved.**

***** Using the Main office parking to briefly park your vehicle to clock in or out, and moving your personal vehicle while clocked in, is strictly prohibited.**

EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

(District Policy DH)

Uniforms are an integral part of identifying your position and authority as a driver for the Weslaco Independent School District. All transportation department personnel, except office staff, are required to wear a uniform. All department personnel, except office staff, will be provided with four (4) uniform shirts, at the districts expense.

1. Office Staff are required to dress professionally with polo shirts.
2. No body piercing jewelry will be allowed during workdays other than woman earrings.
3. I.D. badges are considered part of the department uniform.

The Transportation Manager may designate Fridays as “spirit shirt day” and everyone will dress appropriately. Spirit shirts must be deemed appropriate by the Manager of Transportation or his/her designee. Uniforms will be kept clean and pressed at all times and uniform shirts will be neatly tucked. Shorts, sleeveless shirts, muscle shirts, workout apparel, open toe sandals, high heels, and any other article of clothing or footwear which is deemed inappropriate and will not be permitted. Capri pants are permitted however, they must be below knee.

Transportation Employees will wear only the provided or approved Transportation “spirit shirt.”

As per District Policy DH, “in departments such as Food Service, Transportation and Maintenance, where a distinct style of clothing is required, **there shall be just grounds for dismissal of any person who refuses to abide by the dress code requirements.**”

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Policies DHC, FNCJ, FFG

Employee- to-Employee: Sexual harassment of a coworker is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct under the following conditions:

1. Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decision.
3. The conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive work environment.

Employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed by another employee are encouraged to come forward with complaints. The District will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and will take prompt appropriate disciplinary action against employees found to have engaged in conduct constituting sexual harassment of other employees. The District's policy outlining the process of filing complaints of sexual harassment may be found in policy DHC.

Employee-to-Student: Sexual harassment of students by employees is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment of students includes any welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other oral, written, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Romantic relationships between District employees and students are strictly prohibited. Other prohibited conduct includes the following:

1. Engaging in sexually oriented conversations for the purpose of personal sexual gratification.
2. Telephoning/texting/instant messaging/snap chatting/FB messaging/tweeting/insta-graming, etc. students/staff members/parents at home or elsewhere and engaging in inappropriate social relationships.
3. Engaging in physical contact that would reasonably be construed as sexual in nature.
4. Enticing or threatening students to get them to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school-related benefits.

In most instances, sexual abuse of a student by an employee violates the student's constitutional right to bodily integrity. Sexual abuse may include, but is not limited to: fondling, sexual assault, or sexual intercourse.

Employees who suspect a student is being sexually harassed or abused by another employee are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal. All allegations

of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a student will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. Conduct that may be characterized as known or suspected child abuse also will be reported to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. Employees with questions or concerns relating to the alleged sexual harassment of a student should contact the Assistant Superintendent of Administration at (956) 969-6511.

RESIGNATIONS

An employee who contemplates resigning should discuss the intent with the Manager of Transportation. Resignations should be submitted at least ten working (10) days prior to the last working day. Once an employee resigns, all property belonging to the District must be returned before the last paycheck is issued.

SUSPENSIONS

An employee may be suspended, with or without pay, at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee pending the completion of the investigation regarding WISD violation charges. Suspension may be extended until the investigation decision has been made at a trial or hearing.

There will be a 3 day suspension on any at fault accidents.

CELLULAR PHONES

Use of cell phones, and/or texting while operating a District vehicle is **PROHIBITED**. Blue tooth devices are **not** permitted on the school bus. (i.e. headphones) Using cell phones and/or texting and use of blue tooth devices while operating a District vehicle will be **cause for disciplinary action that may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.** Department heads and/or Administration will investigate all reports of drivers using cell phones/texting and using blue tooth devices while operating a District vehicle.

If an **EMERGENCY** arises, please pull over, park your bus and step out of the drivers chair to use the phone.

Bus Aides are not allowed to have cell phones, tablets, or Bluetooth devices while on their bus routes.

TWO WAY RADIOS

Two-way radios should only be used for official school business only. Anyone caught using a two-way radio or reported using a two-way radio in an appropriate manner will be **cause for disciplinary action which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

GPS SYSTEMS

Transporting students safely is a top priority for our school district. Our school district vehicles have been equipped with a GPS System. EZ Pass is a new implementation that will allow students to be scanned via a card when loading and unloading the bus each day. This will assist us in providing accurate locations and routes when providing information to parents, administrators, etc... Anyone caught tampering with the GPS Systems or EZ Pass system is **cause for disciplinary action which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

BUS MONITORS/AIDES

Bus Monitors are to clock in at the start of their shift and report **IMMEDIATELY** to their assigned bus. Bus monitors must walk to their assigned bus on a daily basis. Bus Monitor/Aides are not authorized to change bus assignments without the authorization of the Transportation Supervisor or Asst. Supervisors. **DO NOT** take it upon yourself to report to the bus of your choice. **Failure to follow directions may be cause for disciplinary action which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

Clocking in on time is extremely important as it has a direct impact on drivers departing for their route. Bus Monitor/Aides will work 3 hours in the morning route and 3 hours in the afternoon route with your assigned bus. If you are scheduled for mid-morning, you will work 2 hours. **** Please note that if you do not have a mid-day route you must adjust your hours and get prior approval from your supervisor.** Check with the Transportation Supervisor or Asst. Supervisors for a schedule of mid-morning assignments. If you are unable to work mid-morning you will need to notify your Supervisors so they can make the proper arrangements for your route. Excessive absences could result in loss of your bus route causing you to become a spare. **Bus Monitor/Aides who are absent during AM route and have a mid-day route will have their mid-day route revoked for that day. They will still be required to work the PM route. Tardiness will not be tolerated and Bus Monitor/Aide will be sent home for the duration of their route. Extra duties may be revoked if attendance and tardiness pattern continues.** It is your responsibility to monitor your hours and keep any overage to a minimum unless approved by your Supervisor. Occasional overages may occur from time to time and this is acceptable. Excessive abuse of this leeway is prohibited and will be determined by your supervisor. **Failure to follow instructions may be cause for disciplinary action which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

Bus Monitors/Aides are there to assist but are not responsible for the Bus Drivers duties. They are not to:

1. Turn on the bus for the bus driver.

2. Inspect the bus for the bus driver.
3. Disinfect buses.

If you are absent on a mid-morning route you must continue to follow your set schedule. There is no make time or extra duties unless previously approved by a supervisor.

**Rotation-A weekly rotation schedule will be assigned to all Bus Monitors/Aides.

BUS DRIVER GUIDELINES

The bus driver guidelines are intended for the sole purpose of informing the Transportation personnel of all their required duties and responsibilities. This ensures a smooth and proper operation of the WISD Transportation Department.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Bus driver must be 18 years or older.
2. Must have a Class A or B Commercial Driver's License issued by the State of Texas with Passenger and School Bus Endorsement.
3. Must possess a valid certificate stating the driver is enrolled in or has completed a driver training course in school bus safety education approved by the DPS.
 - a. All school bus drivers must take school bus training course.
 - b. Region One Service Center will schedule and teach the course.
 - c. The training course is a twenty (20) hour course.
 - d. An eight (8) hour refresher course is required every three (3) years.
 - ❖ It is the driver's responsibility to attend these courses when scheduled by Region I and the Transportation Office. If you do not attend your scheduled training the cost for rescheduling will be **YOUR** Responsibility.
4. Must meet the mental and physical capability requirements established by the DPS and annually pass a DPS examination.
5. Must have a driving record which is acceptable according to minimum standards adopted by the DPS.
6. Driver's Record Check will be done prior to employment as required by the Texas Education Code. In accordance with this code, DPS has established the following minimum requirements that have to be met.
 - a. All drivers' driving record will be evaluated prior to employment.
 - b. All driving records will be re-evaluated each year and penalty points will be assessed for traffic violations and accidents as per DPS.
 - c. Any driver who has accumulated ten (10) or more penalty points shall be considered ineligible to transport pupils until such time as he/she becomes qualified.

7. Must have an acceptable criminal history record.

BUS ROUTES AND BUS DRIVER CONDUCT

The most important, task of all staff members in the Transportation Department is the safe transportation of our students to and from school and/or school sponsored activities.

Consequently, all transportation staff needs to conduct themselves in a professional manner with students, parents and with each other at all times. To ensure a successful year, please keep the following points in mind:

1. No one should deviate from his or her assigned route for any reason at all unless directed to do so by the transportation management.

Anyone who deviates from their assigned route will be subject to disciplinary action which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.

*After the route, driver will have 15 minutes for post inspection and clean his or her bus which must be done at the transportation department and fill out a Daily Bus Sanitation check list form.

2. Always conduct yourselves in a professional manner. When transporting students to and from school and/or school sponsored activities, be sure students are aware of the bus rules and that you enforce them in a professional manner. Never joke with students or make any derogatory comments to them. Please keep conversations with students at a minimum.
3. If you have discipline, problems on the bus, be sure to fill out a “Bus Conduct Form” identifying the student and the campus they belong, to that same day before leaving the Transportation Department. Be sure to keep a copy of the Bus Conduct Form for your files. If the need arises to return the group of students back to their respective campus, be sure to get the name and title of the administrator, and/or staff member that you reported the incident to. Also, submit a written report to transportation management describing the sequence of events.
4. Due to the rising cost of fuel and the uncertainty of the state funding, buses will be turned off when not in use. Do not leave, buses idling more than 5 minutes while waiting for students to complete an event, activity or while buses are being cleaned.
5. Be sure to contact the transportation management with any and all questions or concerns that you might have.
6. Bus drivers are not allowed to drive into dead ends or cul-de-sacs unless approved by a transportation management.
7. If a student misses his or her bus pick up stop, bus driver is prohibited from stopping at unapproved bus stop.
8. If a student misses his or her designated drop off, drivers do not stop for parents that follow the bus to pick up student at an unapproved bus stop. Dispatch will be called and student will be returned back to school

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Drivers shall obey all traffic and safety laws, rules and regulations.
2. Drivers shall drive at safe speeds as per speed limits and weather conditions.
3. Drivers shall drive carefully and alertly in order to avoid an accident.

4. Drivers shall be courteous to other bus drivers, motorists, or other District staff.
5. Drivers shall follow state approved loading and unloading procedures.
6. Drivers shall stop at all railroad crossings and turn on four way lights only.
7. Drivers shall drive with door closed at all times.
8. Drivers shall be responsible for smooth operation of bus route.
9. Drivers shall be responsible for the adequate care of the bus (inside and out).
10. Drivers shall be responsible to take proper procedures when the bus stalls or is having mechanical problems, call the office for help. Radio in to notify immediately office staff to mechanical or emergency issues **Use Emergency Reflectors at all times
11. Drivers are responsible for buses at all times, under **no circumstances** should a bus be left unattended.
12. Drivers are to assist students while loading and unloading the bus.
13. If driver's bus is assigned to a field trip, driver must utilize assigned bus for his route. This is non-negotiable.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENT MANAGEMENT

Drivers are expected to utilize their judgment in keeping order during their routes. Drivers and monitors/aides need to be very firm and consistent throughout the year so students can get accustomed to following all rules and regulations. Drivers will be responsible for setting the tone for good bus behavior. Students are to be given strict instructions on proper bus behavior just as students are expected to have good classroom behavior. They need to know that **riding the bus is a privilege**, not a right. This means that this privilege can be revoked. The following are also very important responsibilities:

1. Drivers are responsible for all student welfare.
2. Drivers are responsible for assigning seats.
3. Drivers are responsible for ensuring unauthorized persons do not board the bus.
4. Drivers are responsible for reporting student misbehavior.
5. Drivers are responsible for maintaining order on the bus.
6. Drivers are responsible for maintaining student noise levels at an acceptable level.
7. Drivers are responsible for not allowing students to stand inside the bus while the bus is in motion.
8. Drivers are responsible for not allowing students to throw objects out the windows
9. Drivers are responsible for not allowing students to stick their heads or body parts out the window

ELIGIBLE RIDERS

Eligible riders are those students living two (2) miles or more from their assigned school or live in areas that have been declared hazardous.

DRIVER'S LICENSE AND T.E.A. CARD

All drivers of a school bus are required by state law to have in their possession at all times:

- Valid Texas Class A or B license
- Texas Education Certification Card or Enrollment Card

- Medical Card

If either item is lost, you must notify upper management and it is mandatory you replace it.

RECERTIFICATION CARDS

All Region I Certification Cards must be up to date. If a card expires, you **WILL NOT** be allowed to operate a school vehicle and will not be able to return to work. You will not be paid for the days out due to the expired card.

INSPECTION OF BUS

All bus drivers must check their bus immediately before boarding the students and again after unloading the students. During the bus inspection, look for articles of clothing, books or any other type of personal items left behind by the students. Any items found need to be turned in to the Transportation Office. Drivers are to check for vandalism to try and identify the student(s) and/or person who might have done it.

After your last stop, the bus should be completely inspected for any student(s) that may have fallen asleep on the bus. If this is done after the last student is dropped off, any student that has fallen asleep can be found and taken home (notify dispatch) before returning to the Transportation Dept. Be sure to check under the seats as well.

A Pre-Inspections must be done prior to leaving on any transportation school bus route or field trip. Post-Inspections must done immediately after returning from route and or field trip. Pre/Post Trip Inspection forms must be turned in **DAILY** for filing. Failure to comply with this process may be cause for disciplinary action. Please report any upcoming or overdue license plate stickers.

BUS COUNT

Bus Counts are due on the date assigned by the Transportation Administration. **Failure to follow directions may be cause for loss of trips and/or disciplinary action which may include possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

** Copies from previous Bus Counts are not permitted to be turned in at the time of Bus Count. For each Bus Count request new forms need to be turned in.

FIGHTS

In case of a fight on board the bus, drivers are to stop the bus at a safe place, utilizing all emergency lighting and attempt to stop the fight. Drivers are to call in their bus number and location immediately before attempting to stop the fight. If the fight occurs immediately off the bus, the driver is to call in their bus number and location, then use minimum force to try to stop the fight. Minimum force is defined as asking them to stop fighting and getting the names of the people involved after the fight. Drivers are **NOT** to leave their bus unattended.

EMERGENCY DOORS

Students are not allowed to enter or exit the bus through the emergency doors unless a true emergency exists. Loading and unloading of band and/or athletic equipment through the emergency door is discouraged. However, it is permitted with driver supervision. Afterwards, the driver is responsible to ensure that the emergency door is securely closed before the bus is put back in motion.

**Students are not to be seated in the last 2 seats of the bus unless extremely necessary.

PLEASE DO NOT TAMPER WITH SENSORS OR EXITS.

BACKING THE SCHOOL BUS

School buses should never be backed up unless it is absolutely necessary. Only under extreme circumstances should backing a bus be considered. If it is necessary to back up, the driver must get someone (use another driver, a monitor/aide or an adult) to guide him/her.

USE CAUTION WHEN FOLLOWING OTHER VEHICLES

When following another vehicle remember that the bus will not stop as quickly as an automobile. Remember to use the defensive driving course rule of ***four (4) seconds following distance***. This is particularly true when following another bus, as in a caravan. The distance rule should be doubled in adverse weather or road conditions. To always be safe, ***never tailgate another vehicle!***

PARKING THE BUS

When parking your bus, make sure the bus is parallel with and between the white lines. Make sure your bus is clean and that all items found in the bus are turned in to the office. All windows and doors should be closed.

**Parking around the lounge area is strictly prohibited.

DO NOT PARK YOUR BUS AT THE SHOP AFTER YOUR ROUTES UNLESS PRIOR AUTHORIZATION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU BY A SUPERVISOR.

VANDALISM

All drivers will be responsible to look for and report any vandalism done to the bus. The type of damage done to the bus, the student's name and seat number must be reported to the office. Defacing with stickers, pictures, personal notes, stuffed animals, etc. are not allowed.

BOMB THREATS

All bomb threats are to be taken seriously. If no particular bus is designated, all bus drivers should assume that it's their bus which is threatened. The following steps need to be taken if the Department is notified that a bomb is on a bus:

1. Dispatcher will notify the specific driver if the bus number is known. If no specific bus is mentioned, all drivers will be notified via the radio.
2. Stop at a safe secluded location if possible; do not get to the side of the road and stop.
3. Evacuate students; try to keep order and keep the students calm. All students should be at least 100 feet from the bus at all times.
4. Advise dispatcher of your location.
5. Leave radio on at the highest volume and listen for instructions.
6. Look from a distance for anything out of the ordinary and report it to base.
7. Wait for clearance to proceed with your route.

BAND INSTRUMENTS

Every effort will be made to transport band instruments on our school buses. However, because of space restraints and safety issues, it may be very difficult at times. Here are some guidelines to follow:

1. As a safety regulation, we ask that no band instruments be placed in the aisles or in front of the bus.
2. The band instruments which are relatively small should be placed on the student's lap.
3. When trying to transport the larger band instruments, the following criteria should be used in making a good decision:
 - a. If there is a small number of students riding the bus (less than 45), the band instrument may be put on the seat next to them.
 - b. If the bus has more than 45 students, the band instrument should be transported to and from school by the parent or some other person.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

A professionally trained driver and one (1) trained paraprofessional monitors/aides will drive all Special Needs buses. Special training will be given to all Special Needs drivers and monitors/aides with instructions given to them by the Manager of Special Education every year. Buses designated to transport the Special Needs population will be air conditioned, equipped with a lift, spaces for wheelchairs and special restraints.

Adjustments in travel time will be made for those students whose Individualized Educational Program (I.E.P.) indicates he or she can spend only a certain amount of time on the bus. The Transportation Department will make every effort to work with the Special Education Department and the Manager or his assistant will attend Admission, Review and Dismissal (A.R.D.) committee meeting whenever scheduled.

All students will be picked up and transported directly and as closely as possible to their homes. An effort has been made to limit the early pick up at school to ten (10) minutes or less in order to give the Special Education student as much academic time as possible. Students will be taken directly to the school and received by Special Education personnel on campus. Students will not be released to anyone other than personnel designated by the Special Education Department. The students will be delivered to their parents or their designated guardians in the afternoon. Parents are expected to be at home to receive their children; if parents are not home, the student will be taken back to their home campus. Students **WILL NOT** be returned to the Transportation Department. The driver will finish his route before returning the student to his home campus.

Drivers and/or monitors/aides are required to report all unusual bruises or marks on students before leaving the home campus. Campus personnel are required to inform the driver and/or monitors/aides of any unusual circumstances or occurrences.

**Forms will be available for you to document if a parent is not home to receive their child.

Only the drivers are to operate the lift on the Special Education bus. The monitors/aides are to monitor the students; one monitor is placed in the front and the other monitor in the back of the bus. If only one monitor is present they should be seated in the middle of the bus. Referrals on bus conduct will be filled out on all students who do not follow the bus rules/regulations.

** Follow your scheduled route drop offs.

***Do not feed the students.

DO NOT LOAD STUDENTS IF ANY SAFETY EQUIPMENT IS MISSING OR DEFECTIVE.

EMPLOYEE INJURY – ON THE JOB

Employees injured while on the job will report the incident to their supervisor along with any witness present at the time of the incident. The proper documentation **MUST** be filled out. The employee will be taken to the Risk Management Office and then to the doctor and/or hospital if necessary. The employee will see a doctor designated by the District and the Risk Management Office. If you have an accident or incident you must report it **IMMEDIATELY** to your supervisor.

TRIPS – (Note: 8 hour personnel do not do trips unless a situation may arise)

All 6 hour employees will be assigned, alphabetically, to the trip sheet. Trips will be assigned on a daily basis. Saturday School will follow where the trip rotation ended, this does not disqualify the driver from his trip rotation unless they deny Saturday School.

If an individual refuses an assigned trip, no make-up trip will be available for him. The rotation will continue and the trip will be assigned to the person next on the list. Should the individual next on the list not be able to attend, the trip will be assigned to the next person. The rotation will continue and individuals denying trips will have to wait until it is their turn again.

If a driver is absent during the week, the driver will be skipped until the whole week has passed before being put back on the rotation. (Example: If you are absent on Thursday, trips will not be available to you until the following Friday.)

Drivers are responsible for their buses at all times.

If your bus does not start please contact a supervisor immediately. No one is to get off the bus or walk to their destination.

Exceptions on trip denial will be made for funerals, veterans or other special situations that may arise. Approval will be granted at the discretion of the Upper Management.

*** For Trip Rotation Purposes- Drivers will be allowed (1) one excused medical absence per month. Medical absences are not counted as consecutive days but counted as individual days off. Each additional unexcused day out is considered 1 week rotation without a trip.

Drivers are responsible for cleaning the bus after their field trip.

TRIP PREPARATIONS

1. Drivers must know directions to and from the school field trip.
2. Prior to leaving on a field trip driver must know where they are going to and how to get to the destination.
 1. Drivers must take the bus assigned to them when going on the field trip.
 2. If any doubts should come up, driver must ask the front office prior to leaving the Transportation Dept.
 3. *Pre-check vehicle.*

EMERGENCY TRIPS/ROUTE

Emergency trips will be assigned to the first available person. The Transportation Department will work with campuses in an effort to avoid any emergency trips.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Overnight trips will be raffled off as these trips occur. A trip raffle will occur the day prior to the trip. If you sign up for the raffle you must be reliable and wanting to do the trip. If you are chosen for the trip and cancel you will be excluded from doing overnight trips with the exception of emergency cancellations. The person wanting to be part of the raffle must meet the following requirements:

1. Must have one year experience as a Bus Driver
2. Must not have had at fault accidents during the year
3. Clear of any absences week of the trip
4. Manager will make the final decision on the person that trip will be assigned to
5. A Citation on a school vehicle is an immediate disqualification for out of town trips

If you are on an overnight trip and your turn comes up on the trip rotation you will be skipped and there will be no makeup trip.

**Use multiple trip cards for different days, especially if you are working thru Sunday.

TRIP DENIAL SCHEDULE

Denial of trips will affect you trip rotation in the following way:

1. 1st Denial – First Warning
2. 2nd Denial – No Trips for (1) One week
3. 3rd Denial – No Trips for (2) Two weeks
4. 4th Denial – No Trips for (3) Three weeks
5. 5th Denial – Your name will be removed from the trip rotation.

Denial of trips are per semester.

** Leeway will be provided under extenuating circumstances

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS – LOCAL AREA

The following procedures will be followed in case of an accident:

1. Turn off ignition and set brake.
2. Activate emergency hazard flasher.
3. Remain calm and reassure the students.
4. Notify Transportation office, give dispatcher your location, seriousness of accident and let him know if you need emergency services. After hours, call person on stand-by or supervisor through cell phone or radio.
5. The campus principal will send a nurse to the scene of the accident to check the students. The campus principal will also notify the parents. Any student needing medical attention will be taken to the emergency room or family doctor depending on the emergency.
6. Make a list of all students on the bus with grade, campus name and their seating locations. (Forms)

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS – OUT OF TOWN

The following procedures will be followed in case of an accident:

1. Please follow the same procedures as if it was a local area accident.
2. The sponsor will have a list of the students and their phone numbers.

3. The sponsor is in charge of the trip and students.
4. The insurance policy number is attached to every bus and is in the glove compartment.
5. Stay with the bus and look after the safety of the students.
6. Keep students on the bus unless safety hazards warrant their evacuation.
7. Do not discuss facts of the accident with anyone, only school officials. You are required to give and get the name, address, license number and vehicle information of parties involved in the accident. If possible, get names and addresses of any witnesses to the accident.
8. Do not continue your route until a W.I.S.D. school official has authorized you.
9. Complete an accident report form with the Transportation Department.
10. Meet with the Manager of Transportation to review the details of the accident.

POST ACCIDENT DRUG SCREENING

All drivers involved in accidents, will be subject to post accident drug screening.

ACCIDENTS INSIDE THE TRANSPORTATION DEPT.

If you are involved in an accident inside a transportation facility, parking lot, side street, gas pump, etc., immediately report it to the Transportation Manager. Be sure an accident report form is completed for any type of incident small or big.

Report any minor accidents or new dents on your bus on a daily basis.

POST ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION/DISCIPLINE

All accidents will be investigated by the Transportation Manager, Risk Management, and the Safety & Security Department. **Drivers found at fault will be subject to disciplinary action including possible suspension, up to and including termination.**

PROCEDURES FOR STALLED BUSES

If your bus stalls during your route or while on a field trip please follow the following procedures.

1. Activate the Emergency Lights.
2. Call the Transportation Department and inform the office of the situation and give exact location.
3. Keep all students in the bus. Do not allow students to go out of the bus.
4. Turn-off all other lights.
5. **Place your emergency reflectors in the front and back of the bus.**
6. If the engine does not start call the Transportation Office and inform them of your status.

YOUR BUS STALLS DURING HEAVY RAIN

Most of our buses have a tendency to stall during heavy rain or when going through deep water. Sometimes the problem will correct itself if the bus is allowed to sit for five (5) or ten (10) minutes. During that time, the engine heat may dry out the wet wires. If your bus should stall during the above conditions, do the following:

1. Activate the Emergency Lights.
2. Call the Transportation Department and inform the office of the situation and give exact location.
3. Keep all students in the bus. Do not allow students to go out of the bus.
4. Turn-off all other lights.
5. If the engine will not start call the Transportation Office and inform them of your status.

When we get heavy rains, we know some buses are going to have problems. If you do call in and request help, be patient. We will get to you as soon as possible. If you should get the engine started after having called in, please call again and cancel the request for help.

Once the engine is restarted, drive slowly. If you feel the engine starting to miss, stop, shift into neutral and contact the office immediately.

When going through deep water, **GO SLOWLY** it will save time and trouble and will be appreciated by the people in cars. Avoid driving next to the curb in deep water as best as you can.

PROCEDURES FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING STUDENTS

The following is reproduced from the State of Texas School Bus Driver's Recertification Course. It is conducted by Engineering Transportation Training, Revised, 2001.

Introduction

It is very important for drivers to know and follow correct procedures for loading and unloading students according to policies and procedures of the local school district and state law.

Approaching the School Bus Stop

The driver must use extreme caution when approaching a school bus stop. At no other time is the driver in a more demanding situation than when entering these areas.

Suggested procedures included:

1. Be constantly aware of traffic, both ahead of and behind the bus.
2. Approach cautiously and at a very slow rate of speed.
3. Activate amber loading lights at least 300 feet or 5 to 10 seconds before you approach the school bus stop.

4. If required to pull off the roadway, turn on the right turn signal 100-300 feet prior to the stop.
5. Perform a “4 Point Mirror Check” to monitor the Danger Zone.
6. Observe the number of students at the bus stop.
7. Stop the bus at least ten feet away from students at the designated stop.
8. Place transmission in “Neutral” or “Park” and set the parking brake.

MANDATORY NOTE: Repetitive setting of the parking brake **DOES NOT** damage air or hydraulic brake system.

(APPLY BRAKE FIRMLY WHEN SHIFTING INTO PARK, NEUTRAL OR ANY GEAR.)

9. Partially open the Service Door, if bus is equipped with a manually operated door to activate the red loading lights. If the bus is equipped with an automatic door, this is not possible.
10. Check to see that all the traffic has stopped before opening the door completely and signaling students to approach.

Student Loading Procedures:

Loading students on the right side of the roadway is always recommended where possible. Although local district policies may vary, the following general procedures are presented for consideration:

1. Students should be instructed to wait in a designated location for the school bus. The driver should train the students to wait in a single file line and stay in this position until instructed to board the bus.
2. Instruct the students to get on the bus in an orderly fashion and go directly to their assigned seat. Ensure that the number of students boarding the bus is the same as were observed waiting at the bus stop and that each student is securely buckled in with a seat belt.
3. After the last child is seated, and buckled in close the service door.
4. Place the transmission in “Drive.”
5. Perform a “7-Point Mirror Check” to check for students and traffic.
6. If appropriate, turn on left turn signal and re-enter traffic when safe to do so.

Safety Tips

1. If students run towards the school bus as it approaches the loading area, the driver should stop safely and quickly. The school bus shall remain stopped until the students are lined up at a safe distance from the loading area.
2. The driver should know the names of students at each stop.
3. Check to make certain a student is not running to catch the bus before pulling away from the stop.
4. If a sibling is on board ask for their brother or sister.

Student Responsibilities During Loading

Drivers are responsible for the safe and orderly manner in which the students board the bus. Drivers must train students regarding safe loading and unloading procedures:

1. Students should remain orderly and follow school policy at the bus stop. Students should not destroy or litter property.
2. It is suggested students arrive at their assigned stop five minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time. This helps to ensure students load from the right side of the roadway where possible.
3. Students should line up single file and not move towards the bus until it has come to a complete stop, the door has been opened and the driver signals it is safe to board.
4. Student should walk slowly towards the bus in an orderly manner, board in single file, and use the handrail.
5. Students should not shove or scuffle while boarding or waiting for the bus.
6. Students should go directly to their assigned seats, face the front of the bus and remain seated while the bus is in motion.
7. Driver will not stop once bus is in motion.

Defective Handrail Safety Procedures

Across the United States, students have been injured or killed when their clothing or accessories were caught in the school bus handrail or door as they exited the bus. In some cases, students fell and were violently dragged by the school bus and run over by its rear wheels. Since 1991, seven students across the United States have been killed in this manner. Closely observe all students exiting the bus to confirm they are in a safe location prior to moving the bus.

Unloading Students Living on the Right Side of the Roadway

Although local district policies may vary, the following procedures are presented for consideration:

1. Instruct students to remain seated until the driver brings the bus to a complete stop.
2. Once the driver gives the okay to unload, the students should exit the bus one seat at a time from front to back of the bus. Stress the importance of not pushing or shoving when unloading.
3. Count all students as they exit the bus.
4. Once the last student has stepped off the bus, **COUNT ALL THE STUDENTS AGAIN**. Make sure you arrive at the same number as when they were unloading.
5. Look to make sure all students are out of the “Danger Zone.”
6. Close the service door.
7. Place the transmission in “Drive.”
8. Release the Parking Brake.
9. Perform a “7-Point Mirror Check” to check for students and traffic.
10. If appropriate, turn on left turn signal and re-enter traffic when safe.

Student Responsibilities During unloading Procedures

Students have the responsibility to follow safety procedures during the unloading to help ensure the school bus is unloaded in the safest manner possible. The students' responsibilities during unloading procedures include:

1. **Student shall remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver instructs the students to exit.**
2. Students must face forward and use the handrail when exiting the bus. Students are not allowed to jump or skip steps.
3. After leaving the bus, students must move completely out of the danger zone before the bus moves away.
4. **If parents are not home, take the student back to school.**

IMPORTANT

Accident statistics reveal the highest frequency of student fatalities associated with school buses occur at the time of loading and unloading. The vast majority of these fatalities are associated with improper loading and unloading procedures. Markings required on school buses and state laws governing the operation of other vehicular traffic near school buses stopped for loading and unloading students are clearly specified. Even with these safety factors, it is still recommended the students and drivers follow the correct procedures for loading and unloading.

(1) Use of alternately flashing lights

The use of alternately flashing lights is **MANDATORY** anytime a school bus is being stopped or is stopped on a public street or highway for the purpose of loading and unloading school children. If the bus is equipped with flashing amber lights, they must be used to warn approaching vehicular traffic of the impending stop. Otherwise, the bus driver should pump the brake pedal to alert those drivers to the rear. The flashing red lights are the uniform signal for stopping traffic and they are not to be activated until after the bus has completely stopped. It is recommended these lights also be used when operating on privately owned and/or controlled property open to other vehicular traffic and where students are permitted to cross the road. Whenever possible, the loading and unloading function of school buses should be performed off of the main traveled portion of the roadway. The alternately flashing lights are not to be used in making turns, when stopping at railroad crossings or during periods when the bus is stopped for reasons other than loading and unloading students. Using these lights properly, as well as avoiding their misuse, can contribute significantly to the safety of the students.

Transportation Handbook Addendum Section

Addendum Number/Date: _____

Print
Name/Signature:

Addendum Number/Date: _____