

TRITON SCHOOL CORPORATION

TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK



This handbook contains information specific to bus drivers and is designed to be a supplement to the Triton School Corporation Classified Employee Handbook. As classified employees, bus drivers will find additional information regarding their employment in the Classified Employee Handbook.

This manual contains transportation policies and procedures for the school corporation, and is intended to be used by school bus drivers. It is essential that all bus drivers thoroughly understand the contents of this manual. Other personnel who are periodically involved in transportation related issues may use this manual as an informational resource.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 - GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

- Certification
- Minimum Standards
- Duties and Responsibilities
- Selection and Hiring
- Licensure Reimbursement
- Sign-on Bonus for New Drivers
- Employee Referral Bonus
- Dress Code
- Use of Drugs and Alcohol
- Drug and Alcohol Testing
- Confidentiality
- Use of Tobacco
- Driver Availability During the Day
- Physicals and Performance Standard Test
- Annual Safety Meeting
- Extended Absence for Sick Leave
- Policy on Progressive Discipline
- Chain of Command

Section 2 - GENERAL USE AND CARE OF THE SCHOOL BUS

- Use of School Buses
- Bus Cleanliness
- Parking and Storage of Buses
- Maintenance
- Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspections
- Equipment

Section 3 - BUS OPERATION - DRIVING

- Compliance With Traffic Laws
- Speed
- Railroad Crossings
- Loading and Unloading on Highways
- Use of Arm Signal Device
- Special Purpose Buses
- Backing
- Stopping in Traffic
- Aid to Other Vehicles
- Use of Bus Radios
- Use of Commercial Radios on Buses
- Use of Cellular Phones
- Use of Strobe Lights
- Use of Seat Belts
- Aisles
- Forward Area Off Limits
- Use of Mirrors

Section 4 - TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

- Supervision
- Driver Conduct When Interacting With Students
- Setting the Tone for Student Conduct
- Expected Conduct of Students
- Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct
- Involving Parents in Student Safety and Disciplinary Matters
- Student Health Concerns
- Student Illness and Injury
- Student Medication
- Transporting Large Materials
- Transporting Live Animals
- Transporting Dangerous Materials Forbidden
- Video/Audio Surveillance on School Buses
- Transporting Students With Special Needs
- Transporting Preschool Children

Section 5 - ROUTES

- Eligible Passengers
- Disembarking at a Different Location
- Routing
- Road Hazards on Routes
- Substitute Drivers
- Timeliness
- Extra Trip Eligibility and Selection
- Transportation for Field Trips and Other School-Related Activities

Section 6 - SAFETY PROCEDURES AND EMERGENCIES

- Prevention of Mechanical Failure
- Driving in Adverse Weather Conditions
- Tornadoes
- Bus Fires
- Evacuating the Bus
- Evacuation Drills
- Student Assistants
- Accidents – Safety Procedures
- Policy on Progressive Discipline for Accidents
- Responding to Conflict and Acts of Violence on the Bus
- Emergency Code Protocol – “Code One”
- Driver Illness
- Student Illness or Injury
- Delays and Cancellations
- Unsafe Conditions

Section 7 - SECURITY AND THREAT AWARENESS

- Security Readiness
- Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection Security Checklist
- Suspicious Persons and Activities
- Reporting and Responding to Suspicious Persons and Activities
- Suspicious Vehicles
- Reporting and Responding to Suspicious Vehicles
- Suspicious Packages and Objects
- Reporting and Responding to Suspicious Packages and Objects
- Commandeering a Bus

Section 8 - REFERENCE

- Pre-Trip Checklist Items
- Pre-Trip Inspection Quick Reference for Exterior of Bus
- The Danger Zone
- Mirror Adjustment Guide and Placement of Cones for Proper Mirror Adjustment
- Bus Evacuation Procedures
- Triton Substance Abuse Policy for CDL Holders
- FMCSA/DOT Employee Education Information

Section 9 - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- Classified Staff Handbook
- Bus Driver Conditions of Employment

SECTION 1 - GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Certification

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

- Pass a DOT CDL physical examination from a certified physician, who must complete the DOT CDL physical form.
- Pass the written DOT CDL general examination and passenger endorsement at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to obtain a CDL permit. Manuals to prepare for this exam are available on the BMV website.
- Pass a pre-employment drug screen.
- Successfully complete the three (3) day pre-service school bus driver safety education training. The transportation director must register you for the class.
- Pass the DOT CDL skills test at a certified CDL testing site. A trainee may use a corporation school bus as long as a driver currently employed by the school corporation accompanies the trainee to the test site.
- Obtain a CDL with required endorsements from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.
- Observe a properly licensed school bus driver for four (4) hours and drive a school bus under the supervision of a properly licensed school bus driver for eight (8) hours.

Minimum Standards

Drivers of school buses in the State of Indiana must meet the following minimum standards.

- Must be of good moral character.
- May not use liquor during school hours.
- May not use 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 hold a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) issued by the State of Indiana.

Must possess the following physical characteristics:

- 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 the 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.

Duties and Responsibilities

The driver agrees to abide by the provisions of all Indiana statutes, and the rules and regulations of the State School Bus Committee pertaining to safety in the operation of school buses and school transportation. Failure of a driver to comply with the corporation's policies or guidelines, or any local, state or federal regulations shall be deemed cause for dismissal at the option of the school corporation. In the event of such breach by a driver, the school corporation may suspend a driver with or without pay, immediately, for any conduct or omission constituting cause for dismissal, pending actual dismissal.

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 mistreated while in their charge, and shall use every care for the safety of the children.

The school bus shall be kept clean both inside and out by the driver, who shall also be responsible for reporting to the bus mechanic when his/her bus is not in sound operating condition.

The driver shall attend the ASM (Annual Safety Meeting) and other meetings for administration and safety instruction, as required by the school corporation.

Routes and areas to be covered shall be established by the school corporation and are subject to change from time to time. Additional stops may be added to any route, or changes made in driving responsibilities without change in compensation unless warranted.

All drivers are to be parked at the school building and in their bus five (5) minutes prior to dismissal at the end of the school day.

In addition, drivers are to:

- Establish favorable working relationships with other drivers, students, and all school staff.
- Exhibit a positive image as representatives of the school corporation.
- Know the transportation policy as it pertains to the school corporation.
- Have knowledge of administrative guidelines as made by local, state, and federal authorities.

Selection and Hiring

Any person interested in becoming a school bus driver must submit a completed application for employment and hold a valid Class B CDL through the State of Indiana, or be eligible to obtain a valid Indiana Class B CDL. Employment applications may be obtained at the administration office. Criminal history checks and driving record checks must be completed for those who successfully complete the interview process.

Any intentional misstatement of fact regarding qualifications for employment shall be grounds for dismissal. Relatives of staff members may be employed provided the staff member being employed is not placed in a position under direct supervision by the related staff member.

Licensure Reimbursement

All costs incurred in the process of becoming a licensed school bus driver for Triton School Corporation are the responsibility of the potential employee. The school corporation will reimburse drivers for the following expenses incurred in the process of obtaining a CDL with school bus endorsement:

- CDL Physical: Up to \$100
- CDL Permit
- Preservice Safety Course: Roundtrip mileage from home address to class address
- CDL Skills Test
- CDL
- Pre-Employment Drug Screen: If Applicable

Background Check: All Triton employees are not responsible for the cost incurred.

Reimbursement will be made to the employee once they have completed one (1) full year of employment with Triton and have driven at least five (5) times for the school corporation. Driving time may consist of any regular, substitute, or extra-curricular routes.

Sign On Bonus for New Drivers

A one-time \$500 sign-on bonus will be paid to the employee once they have completed driving five (5) times after they have been approved for hire by the school board. Driving time may consist of any regular, substitute, or extra-curricular routes.

Employee Referral Bonus

Any Triton staff member who recommends a person who successfully completes the requirements and becomes a fully licensed bus driver will receive a \$250 stipend once the new driver has been hired by the school board and has completed six (6) months of school year employment.

Dress Code

School bus drivers are highly visible to students, staff, and the public; therefore, they are expected to be dressed appropriately and groomed in a manner appropriate for the school environment when performing their assigned duties. Footwear must enable a driver to operate a bus safely and allow for rapid movement in emergency situations. Use discretion and common sense to avoid any extremes in dress or footwear that would become a distraction or impact the safety of the job function.

Use of Drugs and Alcohol

The operation of a school bus is considered to be a safety-sensitive function. A driver is considered to be performing a safety sensitive function during any period in which he/she is actually performing such a function, preparing to do so, and periods during which a driver is immediately available to perform safety-sensitive functions. Substances that interfere with a driver's ability to safely operate a school bus may not be used during a time before or during assigned duties. No employee may perform a safety-sensitive function or operate a school vehicle within four (4) hours of consuming alcohol. Consumption of any alcoholic beverage during a period of time prior to operating a school bus, where the effects of such consumption will result in impaired job performance is prohibited. The same standard applies to controlled substances and any over-the-counter medication that will or may impair mental or motor function.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

Any person who holds a CDL and operates a school bus is subject to school corporation 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 U.S. DOT-approved procedures. Employees selected for random testing will be notified by the transportation director and advised where to report for testing. Failure to report for, pass, or submit to such testing is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Confidentiality

Information derived through driver drug testing is confidential medical information and may not be made part of the employee's personnel file or 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 transportation director.

Use of Tobacco

Triton School Corporation prohibits the use of any form of tobacco 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.

Driver Availability During the Day

The unexpected early dismissal of students from one or all schools in the corporation may be necessary, particularly during adverse weather. Other reasons for early dismissal include electrical or mechanical problems with a building, or a crisis situation such as a fire or a bomb threat. School bus drivers provide a critical service in the safe evacuation of students at these times. Accordingly, the transportation department must have a way to reach drivers during the day when early dismissal is necessary.

Physicals and Performance Standard Tests

Every two (2) years (or sooner if medically required) bus drivers with a CDL are required to undergo a physical examination from a certified medical examiner and submit the completed DOT CDL physical form to the transportation director, who will submit a copy to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles. The original forms will be filed in the employee's personnel file. The Performance Standard Test must also be completed every two (2) years with a copy to be filed in the employee's personnel file.

CDL physicals expire at midnight of the expiration date listed on the Medical Examiner's Certificate. No driver may drive once the physical has expired. Drivers have 30 days to renew before their CDL is suspended, and one (1) year before their CDL is revoked. Once a CDL is revoked, the driver must start the entire CDL certification process over.

Special purpose bus drivers (non-CDL holders) must have a Physical Fitness Certificate completed every two (2) years (or sooner if medically required), along with the Performance Standard Test. The original forms will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

Annual Safety Meeting

School bus drivers are required to attend the annual safety meeting, sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education. This meeting is a mandatory requirement to keep the driver certification (yellow card) current. Any driver unable to attend the meeting must make alternate arrangements with the transportation director to complete the training. All training must be completed before December 31st of the current year to be certified to drive for the upcoming year.

Extended Absence for Sick Leave

Sick leave resulting in an employee missing three (3) consecutive days may require a doctor's note to return to work. Notification of extended absences must be communicated to the transportation director.

Policy on Progressive Discipline

When a driver's behavior or actions warrant discipline, he/she will be subject to the following progressive discipline.

- First Incident: Verbal Warning
- Second Incident: Written Warning
- Third Incident: 3-day Suspension
- Fourth Incident: Termination

If a driver's misconduct is determined to warrant immediate action, termination may occur at any point in the steps of progressive discipline.

Chain of Command

School bus drivers report to, and are under the direct supervision of the transportation director who, in turn, reports to the superintendent. Building administrators will work cooperatively with the transportation department, and are responsible for:

- Supervision at school loading and unloading zones
- Addressing student conduct issues
- Communication with parents and students regarding student behavior, safety, and schedules.

In matters related to student behavior, parental communication, student supervision, and site management, school bus drivers will report to the building administrator.

SECTION 2 - GENERAL USE AND CARE OF SCHOOL BUSES

Use of School Buses

A person may not operate or permit the operation of a school bus on a highway in Indiana for a private purpose or a purpose other than transportation of eligible students to and from school, except when the school board permits use for:

- Adults at least sixty-five (65) years of age.
- Eligible students and necessary adult chaperones, or eligible adults to and from an activity sponsored, controlled, supervised, or participated in by the school corporation.
- Students and necessary adult chaperones to and from an educational or recreational activity approved or sponsored by a school within the corporation.
- Preschool children who attend preschool offered by the school corporation or under a contract entered into by the school corporation to and from the preschool facility site.
- School employees to and from a meeting that is authorized or required for the employees either locally or by the state.
- Developmentally disabled persons who are at least two (2) years of age and live within the boundaries of the special education cooperative or school corporation, may be transported to and from programs for the developmentally disabled.
- Agricultural workers engaged in cultivating, producing, or harvesting crops.
- Transportation needs of a fair or festival operated by or affiliated with a nonprofit organization exempt from federal taxation.
- A local, state, or national emergency when requested by any governmental authority.
- Travel to or from a garage or repair area for maintenance or repair.

Only properly licensed route drivers and mechanics, employed by Triton School Corporation, 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, as specified above, with proper authorization from the transportation director.

Bus Cleanliness

Drivers are responsible for keeping their assigned buses clean at all times. 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 transportation director.

Parking and Storage of Buses

School buses are to be housed at the bus garage when not in use. When preparing to leave a bus in the garage, drivers must:

- Put the bus in Park or Neutral;
- Set the parking brake;
- Turn off the engine

When preparing to leave a bus in any location other than inside the bus garage, drivers must:

- Put the bus in Park or Neutral;
- Set the parking brake;
- Turn off the engine;
- Remove the keys - keys must be taken from the bus whenever it is parked and unattended;
- Completely close the service door.

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 contact the bus mechanic to schedule routine service. Drivers are to notify the bus mechanic anytime a malfunction or potential mechanical problems is noticed. Maintenance request forms must be filled out and given to the bus mechanic to address any issues.

Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspections (see Section 8 for additional information on pre-trip inspections)

Drivers are required to perform pre-trip and post-trip inspections every time they operate a school bus. Pre-trip inspections are intended to identify potential mechanical or functional hazards prior to putting a bus into service with passengers. Drivers are given pre-trip sheets to fill out each month. It is each driver's responsibility to perform the checks, mark the checklists, and turn them in to the transportation department each month. During post-trip inspections drivers should look for vandalism, excess litter, personal items left by passengers, and for individuals who failed to disembark.

Operators of a school bus or special purpose bus are to visually inspect each seat within the bus at the end of each trip to determine that no passengers remain on the bus. The driver of a school bus or special purpose bus is required to report each incident in which a passenger is left on the bus to the transportation director. The transportation director is required by law to report each incident in which a passenger is left on the bus to the Indiana Department of Education. Violation of these provisions is a Class C infraction.

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.

SECTION 3 - BUS OPERATION - DRIVING

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.

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 transportation director. The school corporation annually receives from the State of Indiana a driving record for each driver wherein any moving violations are listed.

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.

Railroad Crossings

All school corporation buses, regardless of size, must stop at railroad crossings. Before crossing at railroad tracks, 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:

- Listen through an open window or door.
- Look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train.
- Not proceed until he/she can do so safely.
- Proceed slowly so there is no necessity for changing gears while crossing the tracks. The driver may not shift gears while crossing the tracks.

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

This regulation does not pertain to an abandoned or unused railroad grade 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 in accordance with the instructions of the police officer or traffic control signal.

Loading and Unloading on Highways

When a school bus is operated on a highway, the driver shall load and unload a student as close as practical to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.

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.

Special Purpose Buses

A special purpose bus must stop before crossing railroad tracks and may not be operated at a speed greater than sixty (60) miles per hour. A school bus or special purpose bus may not be operated with passengers on board if an exit or emergency exit window is obstructed.

Backing

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

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 one hundred (100) feet before stopping. After stopping, the arm signal device (stop arm) must 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.

Aid to Other Vehicles

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

Use of Bus Radios

For safety and security, drivers must maintain the capacity for communication with the school corporation and the transportation department 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.

Use of Commercial Radios on Buses

The use of commercial radios is allowed on school buses. Drivers must ensure that the volume does not interfere with their ability to safely operate the bus or supervise their students. Care must be exercised to avoid broadcasting questionable or undesirable content.

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 only after the bus is parked in a safe location and all attempts to use the bus radio have failed.

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 transportation director.

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.

Aisles

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

Forward Area - Off Limits

When a school bus is in motion, no student shall be permitted to occupy the space forward of the white 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.

Use of Mirrors

For bus drivers, exterior mirrors are critical tools for safely maneuvering their vehicle. 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. (See Section 8 for additional information on proper mirror adjustment)

SECTION 4 - TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

For many students, bus drivers are the first school employee encountered each day. While transporting children safely 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 maintain a safe environment. As school employees, drivers are charged with the responsibility of maintaining discipline on their buses and ensuring that all of the students under their supervision are safe and afforded a reasonable standard of care.

Supervision

During regular routes, drivers are responsible to supervise students assigned to them at all times. This includes the time during which students are on the bus and during exchanges between buses. 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 at their bus doors or 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. Drivers are to ensure that traffic is stopped and that students stay clear of the Danger Zone and off of the roadway.

Driver Conduct When Interacting With Students

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

- Treat all students with respect, regardless of past behavior, socio-economic status, hygiene, race, religious beliefs, etc.
- Periodically review behavioral expectations and safety procedures with all students.
- Support other school personnel by showing discretion as to what is discussed with students regarding 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.
- Not argue or engage in debates with students at any time. As noted above, drivers should give direct commands using an unemotional tone.
- Speak with students away from their peers when a discussion about misbehavior is necessary.

Set the Tone for Student Conduct

Drivers are expected to "set the tone" for student conduct on the very first day of school. Good disciplinarians on the bus take charge before the behavior gets out of control. The more effectively a driver addresses issues immediately, the less time he/she has to spend on issues in the future. Drivers should immediately report severe disruptions like fighting or excessively foul language to school administrators. School administrators will decide the disciplinary consequences once students are referred for misconduct. Driver should:

- Set expectations on the first day.
- Establish a seating chart the first week.
- Enforce seating chart and all other bus conduct rules.
- Adjust seating chart if necessary.
- Discuss concerns with students privately.
- Contact parents personally as necessary.
- Contact administrators for ongoing issues.

Expected Conduct of 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 seats, facing forward, while riding.
- Use voices that are respectful and not disruptive.
- Keep windows closed unless given permission to open them by their bus driver.
- 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.
- Not throw objects of any kind, within the bus or from the bus.
- Put trash in waste baskets and not leave litter 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.
- Not damage or deface any part of school buses or the property of others.
- Not use profane, indecent, or lewd language or gestures.
- Keep all parts of their bodies within their school buses.
- Use electronic games and radios only with the permission of their drivers. These are to be played with the sound off and portable stereos are to be used with headphones, so as not to disturb the driver or other passengers.
- Act respectfully toward their driver and obey the driver's instructions.
- Not to be in possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons of any kind.

Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct

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

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 and may also include extra-curricular activities. Determination as to whether the suspension will include field and/or sports trips is to be made by the student's school administrator. Students are expected to attend school throughout the suspension period, with parents providing alternative transportation. Days absent during a period of suspension do not count toward the suspension.

Involving Parents in Student Safety and Disciplinary Matters

Highly effective 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, they are much more likely to cooperate in disciplinary matters involving their children. The following are suggestions for 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 speaking with parents, first convey positive traits about their children, such as promptness or honesty.
- Address behaviors and issues, not people, with a focus on positive solutions.
- When 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.

Student Health Concerns

Bus drivers must be aware of health conditions of the students for which they are responsible. At the beginning of the year, and when new students enroll in the school corporation, bus drivers will distribute and collect Student Health Information forms. On these forms, parents will list any health conditions for their children that may require care by the school bus driver. Drivers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding students' health concerns. If necessary, drivers should contact students' parents/guardians to obtain any additional information, including clarification on proper procedures for providing care in the event of an emergency. Bus drivers are to carry these forms, and any additional information provided by students' parents, in their school buses.

Student Illness and Injury

Schools should not send ill students home on school buses unless the driver agrees to transport the child. If a child becomes ill on the bus, the driver should notify the 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 complete a Student Accident Form as soon as possible.

Student Medication

Parents may authorize designated school personnel to dispense physician-prescribed or over-the-counter medication to children at school. Medication may be transported to school at parents' request, provided it is in the possession of bus drivers. Medication may not be sent to school in the possession of students.

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.

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. Bus drivers have the right to make a determination as to what items may be transported.

Transporting Live Animals

Students may transport live animals or insects only with prior approval from their school bus drivers. Before such permission is granted, students must ensure that the animals/insects being transported are contained in such a way that they will not escape or present a safety risk to other riders. It is suggested that animals and insects be taken to and from school in private vehicles.

Transporting Dangerous Materials is 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. If a student, upon boarding a bus, notifies the driver that he/she is unintentionally in possession of an object which is forbidden on the bus or at school, the driver, if practical, will take possession of the object and give it to the principal upon arriving at school. Consequences, if any, shall be at the discretion of the principal.

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. Only school corporation-approved and installed equipment shall be used for this purpose. Included on 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. School bus surveillance systems will be used for no purpose other than those described in this section.

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 ensure that the rights of all are protected, the following guidelines shall apply regarding the use of school bus surveillance systems.

- One or more highly visible signs shall be posted on the bus stating that surveillance is being used.
- Students and parents shall be informed at the beginning of the year (or upon enrollment in school) that the school corporation uses audio/video taping equipment in school buses.
- Video recordings of actions by student passengers may be used by administrators as evidence in any disciplinary proceedings against students, where the students' 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.
- Video/audio surveillance may be used to detect criminal offenses that occur in view of school bus cameras.
- Any individuals who are the subject of video surveillance may request to view the recordings on which their actions were captured. Parents of students may request to see recordings on which their children's actions were recorded. In no case will parents be granted permission to view the actions of other students. The school may deny such requests if the release of the recording would reasonably violate other students' right to privacy under FERPA. School personnel may not view surveillance videos without authorization from the transportation director or school administration.
- Videotapes are to be handled as confidential material.

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 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 and 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 expected conduct. For some students with special needs, it may be necessary to modify and repeat this instruction.

When a Behavior Intervention Plan is developed for a student, the student's bus driver must be advised of any procedures that pertain to transportation. In many cases, working with the student's parents or implementing components of the Behavior Intervention Plan will be sufficient to stop misbehavior. Examples of interventions that may be used to resolve reoccurring misbehaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Moving child to assigned seat with other children.
- Moving child to 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 portable stereo 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. In cases where a child is removed from his/her regular bus, alternate means of transportation must be arranged by the transportation department.

Transporting Preschool Children

Preschool-age children must be transported in a Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) when being transported on school buses. Such systems should be suitable for the child's weight, meet applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard guidelines, and be properly secured in the school bus seat. Personnel responsible for installing the CSRS are to follow manufacturers' directions and use designated hardware. Periodic inspection of the systems should be done by those who installed them to ensure they remain safe and intact.

The transportation director will ensure that buses with such systems are equipped with safety belt cutters and that bus drivers are properly trained in their use. A plan for the evacuation of preschool-age children must be developed and practiced. In addition, preschool-age children must be taught how to board and disembark from the bus safely. Safety instruction (danger zone, use of handrail) should be reviewed periodically throughout the year.

SECTION 5 - ROUTES AND EXTRA TRIPS

Eligible Passengers

Only students who are enrolled in the school corporation and personnel employed by the school corporation are authorized to ride school bus routes. Homeless students have the right to be transported to the schools in which they were enrolled before becoming homeless. Each student must ride the bus to which he/she has been assigned, unless arrangements have been made to ride as a guest on another bus. To ride as a guest, a student must present to the bus driver a note from his/her parent that has been validated by his/her school's principal or designee. In the event of a family emergency, students may be permitted to ride on another bus. When this occurs, the driver of the bus on which the student is to ride will be contacted by the school's principal or designee to arrange transportation.

Disembarking at a Different Location

Students are to be delivered only to the locations established as the delivery point on their bus route. A student may not disembark at another location, unless the driver has in his or her possession a signed bus pass indicating the date and alternate destination for their child from the child's school building. In emergency cases, a student may be delivered to an alternate destination if the driver is contacted by the child's school and/or the Director of Transportation instructed to do so. All passes requesting an alternate destination to disembark the bus must be approved by the Director of Transportation.

Routing

Routes and the assignment of drivers to particular routes are the responsibility of the transportation director. With student safety as the primary criteria in establishing routes, cost efficiency and the length of time students must ride are considered as well.

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 student 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 of their assigned students to introduce themselves and convey the estimated times for pick-up and delivery.

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 director.

Substitute Drivers

When a regular route driver will be absent, it is their responsibility to obtain a substitute to cover their route. When requesting to be absent, the driver must fill out a Leave Request Form prior to the date requested and include the substitute's name. The form should be turned in to the transportation office as soon as possible. Regular drivers must maintain current route maps in their buses and make those maps available for substitute drivers in advance.

Timeliness

Drivers are expected to execute their designated routes as scheduled. Students and parents should know, within a five (5) minute window, the time their buses will arrive. When weather conditions necessitate driving at a slower speed and a bus is delayed, drivers are to contact the school buildings to alert them of a late arrival.

Extra Trip Eligibility and Selection

All drivers are eligible to drive field trips, athletic activities and extra-curricular trips unless otherwise determined by the transportation director. First priority is given to full-time drivers who have a family member participating in the event. Other spots are on a "first come, first served" basis. Substitute drivers are eligible to sign up to drive trips after a 48 hour period in which no full-time driver has requested the trip. For specific shuttles or summer school routes, a rotation will be established for all interested drivers.

Transportation for Field Trips and Other School-Related Activities

School bus drivers, in cooperation with trip leaders (teachers, coaches) are expected to provide safe transport to and from such activities. 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 Section 4.
- Report any discipline problems to the appropriate building principal as soon as feasible.
- Review the destination and routes with the bus driver prior to departure.
- Exchange contact information with the bus driver.
- Ensure that emergency medical information is on hand and secured.
- Introduce chaperones to the driver prior to the trip and review the school corporation 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 prior to leaving each stop.
- Ensure that all students have transportation home upon completion of the trip.
- Report any cases of a driver's poor judgment or improper behavior to the transportation director.
- In planning the event, trip leaders must allow for reasonable travel time to and from the destination.
- Trip leaders are expected to see that the interior of the school bus is reasonably clean (i.e. free of litter) and that no vandalism has occurred before students disembark at the conclusion of the trip.

SECTION 6 - SAFETY PROCEDURES & EMERGENCIES

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 safety through preparedness. During an emergency the driver must take charge of the situation, establish order, and do that which is necessary to assure passenger well-being.

Prevention of Mechanical Failure

A pre-trip inspection is absolutely necessary before a driver begins the any route or ECA trip of the day. 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, so as to sense when something is amiss. Any malfunctions are to be reported to the bus mechanic immediately.

Driving in Adverse Weather Conditions

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

Drivers should:

- Remind students as they enter the bus 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 for better visibility.
- Avoid roadways with rising water. Use an alternate route.

Tornadoes

Tornado watches are issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are ideal for the formation of tornadoes. When watches are issued, school personnel are to be alert for 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.

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 out 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—away from the bus (at least 200 feet if possible) 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 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.

Bus Fires

Fires on school buses can be caused by mechanical failure, accidents, or riders. In all cases, rapid response by drivers to exit 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 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.
- Remain calm and focused.

Evacuating the Bus

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 enables better supervision. There are times, however, when passengers must evacuate. These 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 at least 100' from the bus, if feasible. After students have exited the bus, continued supervision is required.

Evacuation should NOT occur when:

- Power lines are down on or near the bus
- Hazardous chemicals are on the ground outside the bus
- Dangerous lightning or hail is in the immediate vicinity
- A person off the bus intends to harm one or all of the passengers
- Temperatures are below freezing and no immediate danger exists

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). 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 engine, set emergency brake, activate 4-way flashers, and take the key.
- Determine if evacuation is necessary and which exit(s) to use.
- Direct students to evacuate using the safest exit(s).
- Have the first students off of the bus assist others who are evacuating by standing on one or both sides of the exit.
- Take the first aid kit and reflective triangles.
- Ensure that all students are off the bus after evacuating.
- Place reflective triangles per CDL training.
- Account for all students and keep them together.

Notify the transportation department via bus radio with the following information:

- Bus number.
- Location of bus (road or street and nearest crossroad/street).
- Type of emergency.
- Form of assistance needed.
- Whether or not the bus will be evacuated.

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 for the front and rear are to be conducted two (2) times during the year on school property. The transportation director shall schedule the drills.

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

- Explain the purpose of evacuation drills.
- Advise them that they are to leave items of the bus.
- Direct them to listen carefully and remain quiet at all times.
- Demonstrate how to evacuate from the front and rear 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 what is being done correctly and what needs to improve.
- Following the drill, the driver should compliment students for what was done well and advise students as to how they can correct errors.

Student Assistants

When evacuation is necessary, rapid and safe movement can mean the difference between life and death. Drivers will find it very difficult to have students evacuate rapidly and safely without assistance. To assist, three (3) 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.

Age-appropriate training for student assistants should include:

- Procedure for steering the bus to a safe area.
- Procedure for shutting off the ignition.
- How to open the front and rear doors.
- Location of the first aid kit.
- Location and use of the hand brake and air brakes.
- Location and use of the fire extinguisher and triangles.
- Procedure for evacuations (front, rear, and both).
- Procedure for using the bus radio.
- Understanding that they are to act only with the consent of the driver or if the driver is incapacitated.

Accidents – Safety Procedures

Although the circumstances for accidents vary, 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.
- 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 department that an accident has occurred and of the location.

NOTE: Other drivers and school offices should avoid radio transmissions and allow the involved driver to communicate with the transportation department.

- Place warning triangles in front of and behind the bus.
- Do not release passengers until cleared to do so by emergency personnel or the transportation director.
- 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:

- Not make any statements regarding fault or blame anyone for the accident.
- Discuss details about the accident only with the transportation director and the police.
- Be able to identify witnesses to the accident.

Following an accident, each driver is 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.

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

Policy on Progressive Discipline for Accidents

When a driver is determined to be at fault in an accident, he/she will be subject to the following progressive discipline.

- First Accident: Written Warning
- Second Accident: Three-day Suspension
- Third Accident: 10-day Suspension
- Fourth Accident: Termination

If a driver's gross negligence is determined to exist in connection with an accident, immediate termination may occur at any point in the steps of progressive discipline. Failure to report an accident that results in property damage (bus and/or other property) may result in immediate termination.

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.
- 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 or physically intervene in a fight or conflict.
- Notify the transportation department immediately if a weapon is involved.
- Not discharge unruly students from the bus at a location other than their designated stops or school, unless law enforcement or school officials take custody of the students from the bus.
- Make a full report to the student's principal upon completion of the route.

EMERGENCY CODE PROTOCOL – "CODE ONE"

An emergency code system is in place and understood by all Triton bus drivers. One of the most critical codes is the use of "CODE ONE".

There is no "CODE ONE" in the radio calling system for Triton School Corporation

This code is used exclusively in high-risk emergencies when a driver cannot safely communicate the situation openly over the radio.

When to use "CODE ONE"

Use "CODE ONE" only in extreme situations where disclosing the emergency could escalate the danger:

- Hostage situation
- Weapons present (gun, knife, etc.)
- Aggressive or dangerous individual
- Any situation where openly asking for help may further endanger you or students

Response to "CODE ONE" Call

Upon hearing "CODE ONE," the following will be immediately dispatched:

- Police
- Fire and EMS
- School administration and emergency response officials

It is vital to give your exact location if possible

If you cannot, your location will be determined by:

- Your scheduled route and time of day

To support this:

- Keep route times and changes updated with the transportation office at all times.

Key reminders for Drivers

- Stay calm. Do not escalate the situation.
- Avoid endangering yourself or students by trying to control the situation alone.
- Do not discuss "CODE ONE" with students or the public. It is confidential code known only to transportation personnel and emergency responders
- Remember students may call or text for help if you are unable to.

Final Judgement

As the driver, you are in the best position to judge the severity of the situation.

Only use "CODE ONE" if you believe open communication would make the situation worse and emergency help is urgently needed.

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.

Student Illness or Injury

During transit 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 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, set the emergency brake, and activate the four-way flashers.
- Notify the transportation department of the situation, including the bus location. Caution should be used when using student 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, especially if a student must be transported from the bus by ambulance.

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 school should be delayed or closed. To the extent possible, this determination will be made prior to 6:00 A.M. When it is determined that it is unsafe to conduct school, drivers will be notified via the corporation's notification system. If school is not delayed, but visibility or road conditions present a hazardous situation on a particular route, the bus driver should notify the transportation department immediately to delay student pick up. If necessary, drivers should pull off of the roadway to a safe location until it is safe to proceed.

Unsafe Conditions

Drivers often become familiar with families' routines and expectations. 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), the driver should notify the child's school immediately. Care should be taken not to transmit the names of students or their families unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. The child's school may be able to contact the child's

parent to determine if it is safe to allow the child off the bus. If the driver determines that it is unsafe to allow the child to disembark, the driver should notify the child's school that the child will be returned to the school.

SECTION 7 - SECURITY AND THREAT AWARENESS

School buses present an inviting target for terrorists, individuals in crisis, and people with mental or emotional disorders. Buses are appealing because they are relatively vulnerable, allow for easy access and escape, and represent an emotional target for the community, state, and nation. For these reasons, school bus drivers should be aware of the condition of their buses and of their surroundings.

Security Readiness

- Be familiar with corporation and state security guidelines.
- Understand and be capable of employing emergency procedures.
- Remove keys from the ignition when the bus is unattended.
- Conduct thorough pre-trip and post-trip inspections.
- Be aware of people and activities in your surroundings, noting any suspicious behavior or unusual activities (e.g. unusual condition of vehicles, unattended vehicles in unusual locations, etc...)

Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection Security Checklist

A driver's conscientious inspection of his/her bus may very well be the difference between tragedy and escape from injury or death. During inspections, drivers should pay attention to the following.

- Overall
 - Marks of noticeable forced entry
 - Unusual items attached to vehicle
 - Opened or disturbed compartments
- Seats
 - Lumps, bulges, damaged upholstery, suspicious packages
- Floor:
 - Modification to material, unusual thickness
- Roof Liner
 - Rips or Bulges
- Cargo Compartments
 - Strange odors, raised floor, unusual welds, excess weight, suspicious items
- Exterior Surface
 - Missing screws, unusual scratches or welds, recently painted surface, other signs of tampering
- Undercarriage
 - Items taped/attached to frame, fresh undercoating
- Tires
 - Unusual odor from air valve, loosened lug nuts
- Fenders
 - Unusual thickness
- Engine Compartment
 - Odd wires, liquids, unusual welds, new tape

Suspicious Persons and Activities

Suspicion of persons should not be based on race, color, ethnicity, age, or gender, but on unusual behaviors that lead a reasonable person to believe that imminent danger exists. Possible suspicious activities include:

- Exhibiting disruptive or distracting behavior.
- Showing unusual interest in employees and/or students.
- Soliciting information about school, facilities, buses, or schedules for no apparent reason.
- Taking photographs/video of people, equipment, facilities, or staging areas.
- Abandoning items and leaving quickly.
- Wearing a uniform but not involved in appropriate activity.
- Repeatedly sighted within school/school bus environment.
- Having the appearance of rehearsing actions.

Individuals who intend to detonate bombs may:

- Wear irregular/disproportionate clothing for body type or weather.
- Carry irregular, inappropriate, or overweight luggage/bags.
- Move about without purpose.
- Sweat or act extremely nervous.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Be non-communicative and/or uncooperative.

Reporting and Responding to Suspicious People and Activities

If you notice a person behaving in a suspicious manner:

- Only approach if you are comfortable doing so.
- Helpfully challenge the person - ask if they need assistance or directions. If their response is refusal to answer or aggressiveness, withdraw immediately. Never be confrontational or attempt to detain them.
- Notify authorities.

When observing a person, note the following characteristics for reporting.

- Eyes/Ears/Mouth/Nose/Cheeks/Chin
- Hair/Facial Hair
- Complexion
- Body Shape/Size
- Jewelry/Accessories
- Shirt/Pants/Dress/Socks/Shoes/Coat/Hat
- Tattoos/Birth Marks
- General Appearance

Suspicious Vehicles

The following are indicators of suspicious vehicles:

- Repeatedly seen in vicinity.
- Following or shadowing school buses.
- Parked in out-of-the-ordinary or unauthorized locations.
- Parked for extended periods in unusual places.
- Riding low on springs, especially in the rear.
- Large containers, such as drums, in rear or back seat.
- Wires, strings, or ropelike material strung from front seat to rear or from small containers on front floorboard.
- Accompanied by unusual odors, such as fertilizer, diesel fuel, nitro methane or other fuel-like odors.
- Occupants show signs of stress, are deceptive/reluctant to answer questions, tell conflicting stories, have no legitimate purpose to be in area.

Reporting and Responding to Suspicious Vehicles

When reporting a suspicious vehicle, the following characteristics should be noted.

- Location, if parked
- Direction, if moving
- Color
- Year/Make/Model
- License plate number and state
- Identifying features (e.g. convertible, damage, excessive rust, etc....)
- Description of occupants
- Contact authorities with the above information
- After reporting, evacuate bus and/or students from location
- **IMPORTANT: DO NOT USE A CELL PHONE WITHIN 300 FEET OF VEHICLE**

Suspicious Packages and Objects

The following are indicators of suspicious packages or objects.

- Abandoned packages or objects left by someone who quickly leaves the scene.
- Packages or objects with tanks, bottles, or bags visible.
- Items accompanied by a suspicious cloud, mist, gas, or vapor.
- Common objects in abnormal locations.
- Uncommon objects in common locations.
- Objects that use batteries to supply power.
- Devices with switches, wires, or timers for no obvious reason.
- Packages placed in out-of-the way locations where not easily seen.
- Objects accompanied by a threatening message.

To avoid injury from dangerous packages or objects...

- **DO NOT** touch, move, or cover suspicious objects or devices.
- **DO NOT** use a radio or cell phone within 300 feet of the object/device.
- **DO NOT** put hands near face if package/object is accidentally touched.
- **DO** wash hands with soap/water if object is touched and report to medical personnel.
- **DO** move as far away from object/device as possible without being in danger from other hazards.
- **DO** stay out of object's line-of-sight.
- **DO** stay away from glass and windows.
- **DO** remain alert for additional/secondary explosive devices in immediate area.

Reporting and Responding to Suspicious Packages and Objects

When a suspicious package or object is noticed, drivers should immediately move as far away from the object/device as possible. Stay out of the line of sight of the object and away from glass. Call authorities immediately with the following information.

- Location of package or object.
- Reason for suspicion.
- Description of the device or package.

Commandeering a Bus

Drivers must keep their buses from being taken over by individuals who seek to harm people or property. To do so, the following should be remembered.

- Survey staging area or pick up/drop off points for suspicious people/activity.
- Report concerns of suspicions.
- Drive out of the area immediately.
- Communicate with individuals through window until you determine seriousness of the situation.
- Do not allow suspicious individuals or individuals carrying weapons to board the bus.

If a bus is commandeered and not moving, the driver should:

- Never confront an individual carrying weapons.
- Stay calm and focused.
- Pretend the bus has mechanical problems, if possible.
- Follow all instructions by individual.
- Open all doors, if possible, to allow escape.
- Ask if students may disembark.
- Never push too hard to end the situation.

If a bus is commandeered and is in motion, the driver should:

- Stay on route but make regular stops. (Disembark only - do **not** stop for new passengers).
- Attempt to alert authorities.
- Take no action to increase the risk of harm to self or others.
- Try to create a relationship with the hijacker by talking to him/her.
- Be patient and assertive.
- Use common sense; follow instructions of the hijacker.

SECTION 8 – REFERENCE

This section contains various resources for driver reference.

- Pre-Trip Checklist Items
- Pre-Trip Inspection Quick Reference for Exterior of Bus
- The Danger Zone
- Mirror Adjustment Guide and Placement of Cones for Proper Mirror Adjustment
- Bus Evacuation Procedures
- Triton Substance Abuse Policy for CDL Holders
- FMCSA/DOT Employee Education Information

Pre-Trip Checklist Items

APPROACH & ENGINE COMPARTMENT

- **Leaks** - oil, coolant, hydraulic, other fluids, air, exhaust (as driver approaches bus, he/she should look for fluids under the bus, listen for escaping air, and watch for exhaust from any location other than the exhaust pipe)
- **Fluid Levels** - oil, coolant, power steering, automatic transmission (may require engine to be running), windshield washer
- **Water Pump** - leaks, play, hoses
- **Belts, Hoses, & Wiring** - loose, excessively tight, cracked & worn belts or hoses, eroded insulation on wiring
- **Battery** - fluid levels, connections, tie-down (battery may be located elsewhere)

DRIVER COMPARTMENT

- **Transmission Control**
- **Driver's Seat** - adjustment, belt, overall condition
- **Steering Wheel** - play, adjustment
- **Gauges** - oil, temperature, ammeter, volt, fuel, air, dash lights (note if there is adequate fuel)
- **Indicator Lights** - turn signal, loading, hazard, dimmer switch, headlights
- **Stop Arm** - fully extends, lights
- **Heater & Defroster** - fans, vents clear
- **Horn**
- **Windshield** - cracks, wipers, washer
- **Two-Way Radio** - on, channel, volume
- **Service Door** - operating device (handle or button), door is operable & secure
- **Mirrors** - Adjusted
- **Safety Equipment** - first aid kit, triangles, fire extinguisher (charged), emergency telephone numbers, strap cutter
- **Entrance** - door glass clean and free of debris, steps clear, free of rust and damage, hand rail secure, step lights

PASSENGER COMPARTMENT

- **Lights** - dome, dash, step
- **Aisle** - clear
- **Seats** - base & backs secure, markings, rips or cuts, free from litter on & below
- **Windows** - cracks or breaks, closed, graffiti
- **Emergency Exit Windows** - unobstructed, operable handle, buzzer
- **Roof Hatches** - operable
- **Special Needs** - wheel chair tie-downs, harnesses
- **Emergency Exit (rear)** - operable, buzzer

EXTERIOR (all lights operable & correct lens color)

- **FRONT**
- **Headlights** - dim, bright
- **Front Hazard (4-way) Lights**
- **Side Marker/Identification Lights**
- **Clearance Lights**
- **Loading (8-way) Lights**
- **Hood** - latched & secure
- **Cross-over Mirrors** - secure, free from dirt, ice, cracks

RIGHT SIDE

- **Right-Front Wheel Well** - tires inflated, no bulges, lugs tight, valve stem, tread, U-bolts, shackles, spring hangers, shocks, brake hoses
- **Clearance Lights** - operable, amber cover undamaged
- **Convex/Flat Mirrors** - secure, free from dirt, ice, cracks
- **Windows** - no cracks
- **Lettering** - intact, not pulled off or missing
- **Fuel Tank** - cap secure, no leaks, caged
- **Reflectors** - secure, not cracked, amber
- **Paint/Body** - scratches, dents
- **Right-Rear Wheel Well** - tires same type & evenly matched, inflated, no bulges, spacer, lugs tight, valve stem, tread, spring hangers, U-bolts, brake hoses, shocks

REAR

- **Clearance Lights** - operable, red lens cover undamaged
- **Turn Signals** - operable, lens cover secure, amber
- **Back-up Lights** - operable, lens cover secure, white
- **Reflectors** - secure, not cracked, red
- **Reflective Tape** - not pulled off or missing
- **Emergency Door** - opens, secure when latched, glass undamaged and clear
- **License Plate** - secure, readable
- **Exhaust Pipe** - not protruding or cracked, secure

LEFT SIDE

- **Left-Rear Wheel Well** - tires same type & evenly matched, inflated, no bulges, spacer, lugs tight, valve stem, tread, spring hangers, U-bolts, brake hoses, shocks
- **Clearance Lights** - operable, amber, cover undamaged
- **Reflectors** - secure, not cracked, amber
- **Windows** - no cracks
- **Lettering** - intact, not pulled or missing
- **Paint/Body** - scratches, dents
- **Stop Arm** - fully extends & closes, lights operable, readable
- **Convex/Flat Mirrors** - secure, free from dirt, ice, cracks
- **Left-Front Wheel Well** - tires inflated, no bulges, lugs tight, valve stem, tread, U-bolts, shackles, spring hangers, shocks, brake hoses

PARKING BRAKE TEST

- Put bus in neutral
 - Set parking brake with engine at an idle
 - Put bus in gear
 - Slowly take foot off the brake
- **The bus should not move.**

Section 9 – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- Classified Staff Handbook
- Bus Driver Conditions of Employment