



**TRITON SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

**The purpose of this policy is to provide safe transportation for students and to educate students on safety issues for the responsibilities of school bus ridership.**

**II. PLAN FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION TRAINING**

**A. SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK**

The School district may designate a school bus safety week. The National School Bus Safety Week is the third week of October.

**B. STUDENT TRAINING**

1. The school district may provide students enrolled in grades Preschool through 10 with age appropriate school bus safety training. The training shall be results oriented and shall consists of both class room instruction and practical training using a school bus. Student training shall fulfill all statutory requirements.
  - a. transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right;
  - b. school district policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
  - c. appropriate conduct while on the bus;
  - d. the danger zones surrounding a school bus;
  - e. procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
  - f. procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing; and
  - g. school bus evacuation and other emergency procedures
  
2. All students Preschool through 6 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must demonstrate achievement of the school bus safety training by the end of the fourth week of school. All students in grades 7-10 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive school bus safety training or receive bus safety instruction materials by the end of the sixth week of school if they have not previously received school bus training. Students in grades 7 through 10 must demonstrate achievement of the competencies by the end of the sixth week of school. Students in grades Preschool – 10<sup>th</sup> grade who enroll in a school after the second week of school and are transported by school bus, and have not received training the their previous school district shall undergo school bus safety training or

receive bus safety instructional materials and demonstrate achievement of the school bus safety competencies within four weeks of the first day of attendance.

3. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must provide students enrolled in grades K through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade school bus safety training twice during the school year.
4. Students taking driver's training instructional classes must receive training in the laws and proper procedures for operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of a school bus as required by Indiana Code.
5. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must conduct an age appropriate school bus evacuation drill at least twice during the school year.
6. The school district will make reasonable accommodations in training for students known to speak English as a second language and students with disabilities.
7. The school district may provide preschool and kindergarten students with school bus safety training before the first day of school.
8. The school district may provide safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in grades preschool through grade 5.
9. The school district may adopt and make available for public review a curriculum for transportation safety education.
10. Nonpublic school students transported by the school district will receive school bus safety training by their nonpublic school. The nonpublic schools may use the school district school transportation safety education curriculum. Upon request by the school district superintendent the nonpublic school must certify to the school district's school transportation safety director that all students in grades preschool through grade 10 have received the appropriate training.

### **III. CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR**

- A. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school district's general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses, and at school bus stops including nonpublic and other students.

- B. Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school district under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district's transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.
1. School Bus and Bus Stop Rules. The school district school bus safety rules are to be posted on every bus. If these rules are broken, the school district's discipline procedures are to be followed. In most circumstances, consequences are progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges. It is the school bus driver's responsibility to report unacceptable behavior to the school district's Transportation Office.
  2. Rules at the Bus Stop.
    - a. Get to your bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick-up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
    - b. Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.
    - c. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
    - d. Use appropriate language.
    - e. Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus.
    - f. Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.
    - g. After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
    - h. If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. **WAIT FOR THE DRIVER TO SIGNAL TO YOU BEFORE CROSSING THE STREET.**
    - i. No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.
    - j. No use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizers or drugs.
  3. Rules on the Bus
    - a. Immediately follow the directions of the driver.
    - b. Sit in your seat facing forward.
    - c. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
    - d. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
    - e. Keep your arm, legs and belongings to yourself.
    - f. No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.
    - g. Do not throw any object.
    - h. No eating, drinking, or use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizers or drugs.
    - i. Do not bring any weapons or dangerous objects on the school bus.
    - j. Do not damage the school bus.
  4. Consequences

- a. Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will apply to all regular and late routes. Decision regarding a student's ability to ride the bus in connection with co-curricular and extracurricular events (for example, field trips or competitions) will be in the sole discretion of the school district. Parents or guardians will be notified of any suspension of bus privileges:

(1) Elementary (P-6)

1<sup>st</sup> Offense – warning

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – 1-3 school day suspension from riding the bus

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – 5-10 school day suspension from riding the bus

4<sup>th</sup> Offense – 5-10 school day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent.

Further offenses – individually considered. Students may be suspended for longer periods of time, including the remainder of the school year.

(2) Secondary (7-12)

1<sup>st</sup> Offense – warning

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – 3-5 school day suspension from riding the bus

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – 5-10 school day suspension from riding the bus

4<sup>th</sup> Offense – 10-20 school day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent

5<sup>th</sup> Offense – suspended from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.

NOTE: When any student goes 60 transportation days without a report, the student's consequences may start over at the first offense. A principal or their designee has the discretion to revise an individual Bus Conduct Report, to give lesser punishment, to increase the school bus suspension and/or to include suspension, after review each student's Bus Conduct Report.

(3) Other Discipline

Based on the severity of a student's conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school also may result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.

(4) Records

Records of school bus/bus stop misconduct will be forwarded to the individual school building and will be retained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of student misbehavior

on a school bus or in a bus-loading or unloading area that causes an immediate and substantial danger to the student or surrounding persons or property will be provided by the school district the Department of Public Safety in accordance with state and federal law.

(5) Vandalism/Bus Damage

Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages (or making arrangements to pay) within two (2) weeks may result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid.

(6) Notice

School bus and bus stop rules and consequences for violations of these rules will be reviewed with students annually and copies of these rules will be made available to students. School bus rules are to be posted on each school bus.

(7) Criminal Conduct

In cases involving criminal conduct (for example, assault, weapons, drug possession, or vandalism), the appropriate school district personnel and local law enforcement officials will be informed.

#### **IV PARENT AND GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

A. Parent and Guardian Notification

The School district school bus and bus stop rules will be provided to each family. Parents and guardians are asked to review the rules with their children.

B. Parents/Guardians Responsibility for Transportation Safety

Parents/Guardians are responsible to:

1. Monitor bus stops; if possible
2. Have their children to the bus stop five (5) minutes before the bus arrives;
3. Become familiar with the school district rules, policies, regulations, and principles of school bus safety, and thoroughly review them with their children;
4. Support safe riding and walking practices, and recognize that students are responsible for their actions;

5. Communicate safety concerns to their school administrators;
6. Children properly dressed for the weather; and
7. Have a plan in case the bus is late.

**V. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following topics shall be outlined in a driver handbook that is annual approved and reviewed by the board.

- A. School bus drivers shall have a valid Class A, B or C Indiana driver's license with a school bus endorsement. A person possessing a valid driver's license, without a school bus endorsement, may operate a "type A-1" school bus as set forth in Section VII. D., below.
- B. The school district shall conduct mandatory drug and alcohol testing of all school district bus drivers and bus driver applicants in accordance with state and federal law and school district policy.
- C. A school bus driver, with the exception of a driver operating a type A-1 school bus, who has a commercial driver's license and who is convicted of a criminal offense, a serious traffic violation, or of violating any other state or local law relating to motor vehicle in a state jurisdiction other than Indiana, shall notify the district Transportation Director of the conviction within 30 days of the conviction. For purposes of this paragraph, a "serious traffic violation" means conviction of any of the following offenses:
  1. excessive speeding, involving any single offense for any speed of 15 MPH or more above the posted speed limit;
  2. reckless driving;
  3. improper or erratic traffic lane changes;
  4. following the vehicle ahead too closely;
  5. a violation of state or local law, relating to motor vehicle traffic control, arising in connection with a fatal accident
  6. driving a commercial vehicle without obtaining a commercial driver's license or without having a commercial driver's license in the driver's possession.

D. A school bus driver, with the exception of a driver operation a type A-1 school bus, who has a commercial driver's license and who is convicted of violating, in any type of motor vehicle, a Indiana state or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control, other than parking violation, shall notify the person's employer of the conviction within 30 days of the conviction.

E. A School bus driver, with the exception of a driver operating a type A-1 school bus, who has a Indiana commercial driver's license suspended, revoked, or cancelled by the state of Indiana or any other state or jurisdiction and who loses the right to operate a commercial motor vehicle for any period or who is disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle for any period shall notify the person's employer of the suspension, revocation, cancellation, loss of privilege, or disqualification. The notification shall be in writing and shall contain all the information set forth in Attachment B accompanying this policy.

## **VI. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING**

The following topics shall be outlined in a driver handbook that is annually approved and reviewed by the school board.

### **A. Training.**

1. All new school bus drivers shall be provided with pre-service training, including in-vehicle (actual driving) instruction, before transporting students and shall meet the competency testing specified in the Indiana Department of Motor Vehicle Driver Training Manual. All school bus drivers shall receive in-service training annually. For the purposes of this Section, "annually means at least every 380 days from the initial or previous license verification. The school district shall retain on file an annual individual school bus driver "evaluation certification" form for each school district driver.

### **B. Evaluation.**

School bus drivers with a CDL license will be evaluated annually and all other bus drivers will be assessed periodically for the following competencies:

1. Safely operate the type of school bus the driver will be driving;
2. Understand student behavior, including issues relating to students with disabilities;
3. Ensure orderly conduct of students on the bus and handling incidents of misconduct appropriately;
4. Know and understand relevant laws, rules of the road, and local school bus safety policy;
5. Handle emergency situations; and

6. Safely load and unload students.

## **VII. OPERATING RULES AND PROCEDURES**

The following topics shall be outlined in a transportation handbook that is annually approved and reviewed by the School Board.

### **A. General Operating Rules.**

1. School buses shall be operated in accordance with state traffic and school bus safety laws and the procedures.
2. Only students assigned to the school bus by the school district shall be transported. The number students or other authorized passengers transported in a school bus shall not be more than the legal capacity for the bus. No person shall be allowed to stand when the bus is in motion.
3. The parent/guardian may designate, pursuant to school district policy, a day care facility, respite care facility, the residence of a relative, or a residence of person chosen by the parent or guardian as the address of the student for transportation purposes. The address must be in the attendance area of the assigned school and meet all other eligibility.
4. Bus drivers must minimize, to the extent of practical, the idling of school bus engines and exposure of children to diesel exhaust fumes.
5. To the extent practical, the school district will designate school bus loading/unloading zones at a sufficient distance from school air-intake systems to avoid diesel fumes from being drawn into the systems.
6. A bus driver may not operate a school bus while communicating, or otherwise operating, a cellular phone for personal reasons, whether hand held or hands free, when the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic. For the purposes of the paragraph "school bus" has the meaning given in Indiana Code. In addition "school bus" also includes A-1 buses when driven by employees or agents of the school district. "Cellular phone" means a cellular, analog, wireless, or digital telephone capable of sending or receiving telephone or text messages without an access line for service.

### **B. Type A-1 "Activity" Buses driven by Employees with a Driver's License without a School Bus Endorsement**

1. The holder of a Operator's license, without a school bus endorsement, may operate a type A-1 school bus or a Multifunction School Activity Bus (MFSAB) under the following conditions:
  - a. The operator is an employee of the school district.

- b. The operator drives the school bus only from points of origin to points of destination, not including home-to-school trips to pick up or drop off students.
  - c. The operator is prohibited from using the 8-light system if the vehicle is so equipped.
  - d. The operator has submitted to a background check as required by Indiana Code
  - e. The operator has a valid driver's license and has not sustained a conviction of a disqualifying offense as set for in Indiana Code
  - f. The operator has been trained in the proper use of child safety restraints as set forth in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's "Guidelines for the Safe transportation of Pre-School Age Children in School Buses," if child safety restraints are used by passengers in addition to the training required in Section VI, above.
  - g. The bus has a gross vehicle weight of 14,500 pounds or less and is designed to transport 15 or few passengers, including the driver.
- 2. The district shall maintain annual certification of the requirements listed in this section for each licensed operator.
  - 3. A school bus operated under this section must bear a current certificate of inspection.

### **VIII. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The following topics shall be outlined in a driver handbook that is annually approved and reviewed by the School Board.

- A. If possible, school bus drivers or their supervisors shall call "911" or the local emergency phone number in the event of a serious emergency.
- B. School bus drivers for special education students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition shall be trained in basic first aid procedures, shall within one month after the effective date of assignment participate in a program of in-service training on the proper methods for dealing with the specific needs and problems of students with disabilities, assist students with disabilities on and off the bus when necessary for their safe ingress and egress from the bus; and ensure that protective safety devices are in use and fastened properly.
- C. Emergency Health Information shall be maintained on the school bus for students requiring special transportation because of their handicapping condition. The information shall state:
  - 1. the student's name
  - 2. the nature of the student's disabilities

3. emergency health care information; and
4. the names and telephone numbers of the student's physician, parents, guardians, or custodians, and some person other than the student's parents or custodians who can be contacted in case of an emergency.

#### **IX. SCHOOL DISTRICT VEHICLE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS**

- A. All school vehicles shall be maintained in safe operating conditions through a systematic preventative maintenance and inspection program adopted or approved by the school district.
- B. All school vehicles shall be state inspected in accordance with legal requirements.
- C. A copy of the current daily pre-trip inspection report must be carried in the bus. Daily pre-trip inspections shall be maintained on file in accordance with the school district's record retention schedule. Prompt reports of defects to be immediately corrected will be submitted.
- D. Daily post-trip inspections shall be performed to check for any children or lost items remaining On the bus and for vandalism.

#### **X. School Transportation Safety Director**

The school board has designated an individual to serve as the school district's school transportation safety director. The school transportation safety director shall have day-to-day responsibility for student transportation safety, including transportation of nonpublic schoolchildren when provided by the school district. The school transportation safety director will assure that this policy is periodically reviewed to ensure that it conforms to law. The school transportation safety director shall certify annually to the board that each school bus driver meets the school bus driver training competencies required by Indiana Code. Upon request of the school district superintendent or the superintendent of the school district where nonpublic students are transported, the school transportation safety director also shall certify to the superintendent that students have received school bus safety training in accordance with state law. The name, address and telephone number of the school transportation safety director are on file in the school district office. Any questions regarding student transportation or this policy may be addressed to the school transportation safety director.

#### **IX. STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMITTEE**

The school board may establish a student transportation safety committee. The chair of the transportation safety committee is the school district's school transportation safety director. The school board shall appoint the other members of the student transportation safety committee.

Membership may include parents, school bus drivers, representatives of school bus companies, Local law enforcement officials, other school district staff, and representatives from other units of local government.