

**5044**  
**Safe Pupil Transportation Plan**  
**and**  
**Pupil Transportation Vehicle Driver Satisfactory Driving Criteria**

It is the goal of the school district to provide safe, comfortable and reliable transportation for bus-riding school children.

**1. Emergency Procedures**

**a) Mechanical breakdown**

In the event of a mechanical breakdown, the driver will:

- 1)** Stop the vehicle in a safe location
- 2)** Keep passengers in the vehicle, if it is safe to do so
- 3)** Take steps to warn motorists, by activating hazard lights and placing emergency triangles
- 4)** Radio or call for assistance

**b) Injuries/Medical Emergencies**

If a student is seriously injured or suffers from a medical emergency, the driver will stop the vehicle at the first safe opportunity. The driver will provide emergency medical assistance in accordance with the driver's first aid training. The driver will notify the school district of the emergency using the radio or other communication equipment. The district will then summon emergency medical services by immediately calling 911 and notify administrative personnel.

**c) Severe Weather**

**1) Tornadoes.**

If the driver determines that there is likelihood that a tornado will hit the vehicle, and there is not an escape route available or time to drive to a safe location, the driver will evacuate the vehicle, taking only the first aid kit. The driver will take the students to the basement of a nearby building or to the nearest depression or ditch upwind (toward the storm) of the vehicle far enough away from the vehicle so that it will not roll over on the students. The driver should instruct students to cover their heads with their arms. If the students are wearing coats or jackets, they can be used to provide additional protection for their heads and bodies. If there is no time

to evacuate the students after stopping the vehicle, the driver should have the students remain in their seats and assume a protective position with their heads below window level.

## **2) Winter Weather**

If the school district or driver determines that a trip is too dangerous to drive due to winter weather conditions, the district will cancel the trip.

Parents should ensure that students are appropriately dressed for winter conditions.

## **3) Floods or Standing Water**

It is generally appropriate to drive through a small or regular amount of water that has accumulated from a normal or typical rainfall. However, drivers should not drive through water on the road if: the water is moving or has a current; there is dangerous debris in the water; the driver cannot determine the depth of the water or there is a known dip in the road which would create a deeper section of water; or if there is any other water condition that the driver determines is unsafe to drive through.

## **d) Weapons, Hazardous Materials and Dangerous Contraband**

If a driver discovers that a passenger may have a weapon, hazardous materials or other dangerous contraband on the vehicle, he or she should remain calm and call for assistance. The driver should not inform passengers of the presence of the weapon or other contraband.

## **e) Unattended Items on or Near Pupil Transportation Vehicle**

The driver shall check for unattended items on or near the vehicle as part of the exterior and interior pre-trip inspections. If circumstances make an item suspicious (because it is out of context, makes a noise, has visible wires, placement was witnessed, was hidden, has unidentified powders or putty-like substances, etc.), the driver shall not inspect, move, or otherwise touch the item. School staff will evacuate the area, then immediately report the item to the staff member's direct supervisor, a principal, or the superintendent. If the unattended item is not suspicious (it has the characteristics of lost or

misplaced property or of discarded trash, etc.), the driver may examine the item more closely. This may include looking inside the item, attempting to identify the owner, reviewing security camera footage, or talking to those nearby, and then taking appropriate action.

**f) Terroristic Threat**

If a driver receives a terroristic threat that he or she deems credible, he or she will notify the school district of the threat using the radio or other communication equipment. After consulting with school officials, the driver will determine whether the threat requires evacuation of the bus. The school will promptly notify the authorities of the threat.

For purposes of this policy, a terroristic threat is a threat to commit any crime of violence or to burn or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another or of causing the evacuation of the bus or in reckless disregard of causing such terror or inconvenience

**g) Emergency Incident Reports**

Drivers will provide written documentation of any of the emergency events specified in this policy by completing the incident form attached hereto. This documentation must be submitted to the school administration within 24 hours of the event.

**2. Drop-off**

Drivers will drop students off at a location pre-determined through communication between the school district and parents/guardians. In the event the drop-off location is uncertain or appears to be unsafe, the driver will communicate with school staff in the building to seek additional guidance.

In no event will a driver drop a student off in a location which in the reasonable judgment of the driver appears to be unsafe. Drivers who believe the drop-off location to be unsafe shall release students directly into the custody of a parent/guardian or shall return students to their school building.

**3. Evacuation of Students With Disabilities**

The transportation supervisor, in consultation with bus drivers and members of the administrative team, shall develop a written emergency evacuation plan for each bus route. The plan shall

include an assessment of each student's ability to evacuate himself or herself as well as his or her ability to assist others. Disabled students should practice their evacuation skills as required of their non-disabled peers if possible during evacuation drills. Students or other individuals who will be assisting disabled students evacuate during emergencies should practice this skill during evacuation drills. Drivers or students who will be assisting with the evacuation process should be familiar with any equipment on the bus that would aid in the actual evacuation.

#### **4. Student Behavior on School Vehicles**

Riding school vehicles is a privilege, not a right. Students must comply with the following rules and all school conduct rules and directives while riding in school vehicles. In addition, students must also comply with the student code of conduct while riding in school vehicles.

##### **a) Rules of Conduct on School Vehicles:**

- 1)** Students must obey the driver promptly.
- 2)** Students must wait in a safe place for the bus to arrive, clear of traffic and away from where the vehicle stops.
- 3)** Students are prohibited from fighting, engaging in bullying, harassment or horseplay.
- 4)** Students must enter the bus without crowding or disturbing others and go directly to their assigned seats.
- 5)** Students must remain seated and keep aisles and exits clear while the vehicle is moving.
- 6)** Students are prohibited from throwing or passing objects on, from, or into vehicles.
- 7)** Students may not use profane language, obscene gestures, tobacco, alcohol, drugs or any other controlled substance on the vehicles.
- 8)** Students may not carry weapons, look-a-like weapons, hazardous materials, nuisance items or animals onto the vehicle.
- 9)** Students may carry on conversations in ordinary tones, but may not be loud or boisterous and should avoid talking to the driver while the vehicle is in motion. Students must be absolutely quiet when the

vehicle approaches a railroad crossing and any time the driver calls for quiet.

- 10)** Students may not open windows without permission from the driver. Students may not dangle any item (e.g. legs, arms, backpacks) out of the windows.
- 11)** Students must secure any item or items that could break or produce injury if tossed about the inside of the vehicle if the vehicle were involved in an accident.
- 12)** Students must respect the rights and safety of others at all times.
- 13)** Students must help keep the vehicle clean, sanitary and orderly. Students must remove all personal items and trash upon exiting.
- 14)** Students may not leave or board the vehicle at locations other than the assigned stops at home or school unless approved prior to departure by the superintendent or designee.
- 15)** Video cameras may be placed on buses, at random, to monitor student behavior on the bus.

**b) Consequences**

Drivers must promptly report all student misconduct to the administration. These reports may be oral or written. Students who violate the Rules for Conduct will be referred to their building principal for discipline. Disciplinary consequences may include:

- 1)** Note home to parents
- 2)** Suspension of bus riding privileges
- 3)** Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- 4)** In-school suspension
- 5)** Short term or long term suspension from school
- 6)** Expulsion

These consequences are not progressive or all inclusive, and school officials have discretion to impose punishment they deem appropriate, in accordance with state and federal law and board policy.

**c) Records**

Records of vehicle misconduct will be forwarded to the appropriate building principal and will be maintained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of serious misconduct may be forwarded to law enforcement.

## **5. Functional Capacity of the Driver**

The superintendent or designee shall confirm a pupil transportation driver's functional capacity and ability to conduct the daily tasks and emergency evacuations required of such a driver by:

- Observing the driver complete the required daily tasks and emergency evacuations;
- Observing, questioning, and/or directing the driver to perform tasks in a manner that measures the basic visual, cognitive, and physical abilities to complete the required daily tasks and emergency evacuation; or
- Directing the driver to complete a functional capacity evaluation or assessment conducted by a qualified professional.

The superintendent or designee will remove the driver from duties as a pupil transportation driver if he or she determines that a pupil transportation driver is not functionally capable or able to conduct the daily tasks and emergency evacuations required of such a driver.

## **6. Satisfactory Driving Criteria.**

The superintendent or designee shall annually review every pupil transportation vehicle driver's Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles driving record before such a driver operates a pupil transportation vehicle.

Individuals who have been convicted of any of the following or who meet any of the following conditions will not be allowed to serve as a pupil vehicle transportation driver:

- If the citation or conviction occurred at any time:
  - Motor vehicle homicide; or
  - Driving under the influence – 3<sup>rd</sup> or subsequent offense.
- If the citation or conviction occurred within the last 10 years:
  - Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol;

- o Refusal to submit to a chemical test;
  - o Failure to render aid in accident the driver was involved in;
  - o Speeding 15 miles per hour or more above the posted speed limit;
  - o Reckless driving (willful or otherwise);
  - o Careless driving;
  - o Negligent driving;
  - o Leaving the scene of an accident; or
  - o Failure to yield to a pedestrian with bodily injury to the pedestrian.
- If the driver has accumulated 5 points or more under an operator's license point system within the last 4 years.

The superintendent designee has the discretion to prohibit school personnel from driving a school vehicle for a citation or arrest for the above offenses or any other offense or reason. The superintendent or designee will make the final determination about the ability of an individual to serve as a pupil vehicle transportation driver.

Pupil vehicle transportation drivers must inform the superintendent or designee of any citation or conviction related to their driving within 24 hours of its occurrence or at the beginning of the next school day, whichever is earlier.

## **7. Emergency Evacuation Drill Procedures for Students Who Ride in Small Vehicles.**

For purposes of this policy, "small vehicle" shall have the same meaning as in Rule 91 from the Nebraska Department of Education.

In a small vehicle accident or emergency situation, the driver must use his other best judgment to decide what action shall be taken. The primary responsibility is pupil safety. In an emergency it may be necessary that the vehicle be evacuated.

Students who are transported in a Small Vehicle shall be instructed in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drills at least twice during each school year. These drills shall be conducted in an appropriate location.

Drills shall be conducted to address each of the following reasons that an emergency evacuation may be required:

- The vehicle is on fire, in danger of catching fire, or is close to an existing fire or highly combustible material. Passengers shall be evacuated at least 100 feet or more upwind from the vehicle.
- The vehicle is stopped at an unsafe location and unable to move. The driver shall use his or her judgment regarding the need to evacuate and the distance of the evacuation.
- The vehicle's final stopping position: is in the path of any train or adjacent to railroad tracks; could change and increase danger; or is such that there is danger of collision. The driver shall evacuate the vehicle and use his or her judgment regarding the distance of the evacuation.

The safety of students is of utmost importance and must be given first consideration. Absent extenuating circumstance, the driver will place the transmission in park, activate the hazard warning lights, set the emergency brake, turn the ignition off, and remove the ignition key prior to evacuation.

If possible, students should exit the vehicle on the side away from any roadway.

During an evacuation, students should generally be led to a safe place at least 100 feet off the road in the direction of oncoming traffic. If there is a risk from spilled hazardous materials, lead the students upwind of the vehicle at least 300 feet.

After evacuation, the driver should address any injured students and call 911, law enforcement, or other authorities or service providers as the situation dictates. The driver shall then promptly inform the school district about the emergency situation.

Drivers shall not leave the scene until appropriate transportation arrangements have been made for all students and he/she has been instructed by a member of the administrative team that he/she may leave.

The school may select, train, and prepare students to assist in evacuation in the event that the driver is incapacitated or



otherwise unable to direct the evacuation. Such training can include, but need not be limited to, turning off ignition switches; setting emergency brakes; summoning help; using windows for evacuation in emergencies; setting flags and reflectors or reflective triangles; directing the evacuation; and training with evacuation equipment.

**Evacuation of Students with Disabilities**

Drivers should assess each student’s ability to evacuate himself or herself from a Small Vehicle as well as his or her ability to assist others. Disabled students should practice their evacuation skills as required of their non-disabled peers if possible during evacuation drills. Students or other individuals who will be assisting disabled students evacuate during emergencies should practice this skill during evacuation drills. Drivers or students who will be assisting with the evacuation process should be familiar with any specialized equipment in the vehicle and used by disabled students that would aid in the actual evacuation.

**Emergency Equipment.** Emergency equipment may include first aid kits, fire extinguishers, reflectors, flags, vehicle hazard lights, and other similar equipment. Drivers and students (as appropriate) should be made familiar with the purpose and use of this equipment during drills.

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