



**Department of Transportation Services
Bus Driver & Attendant
Handbook**

Revised May 2019

Welcome to Spotsylvania County Public Schools!

Mission:

Together – we prepare our students for their future.

Vision:

Spotsylvania County Public Schools is a leading school division that inspires and empowers all students to become CREATIVE THINKERS, PROBLEM SOLVERS, and EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS by ensuring an engaging and supportive learning environment, providing a broad spectrum of innovative opportunities, and building lasting partnerships with the community to educate our students.

Office of Transportation Services Focus:

The focus of the Transportation Department, while conforming to the mission and vision of Spotsylvania County Public Schools, is to transport students, as safely and efficiently as possible, to and from school and school activities; and, while doing so, to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and caring among all those individuals involved. We recognize that by doing so we can contribute to the continuity of learning because students arrive at school in a frame of mind better suited to learning, and return home with a more positive attitude.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome!

Our industry, Pupil Transportation, is a dynamic one. The laws, rules, and regulations that guide us are perpetually changing. We also have daily changes in stops, passengers, roads, and conditions. In addition to these changes, we must deal, on a daily basis, with children, parents, school staff, motorists, and pedestrians; to name only a few.

For these reasons, and many others, the school bus driver is an important part of Spotsylvania County Public School's educational team. We are very glad you have chosen to become a part of our school and transportation family. Though we may not always say it, your contribution is a vital service and we greatly appreciate it.

It takes a very special individual to become a well-trained, professional and qualified school bus driver. As such, a lot is expected from a bus driver. In return, he or she will receive the kind of intrinsic reward that can only be appreciated by one so special.

The purpose of this manual is to help guide the bus driver or attendant in the performance of his or her duties. It contains many rules, regulations and proven methods that will enable the bus driver or attendant to successfully contribute to safe, reliable and efficient school bus service.

Each employee must meet and maintain the requirements outlined in this manual to effectively fulfill the requirements of his or her position.

As student transportation professionals, we are here to provide a service. A requisite part of that is good customer service. The students, parents and schools of this county are our customers and, as such, are deserving of our best efforts to meet their needs while remaining kind, attentive and respectful.

Remember, many people depend on the school bus driver's and/or attendant's professional service on a daily basis. Therefore, it is imperative that he or she read this handbook and become familiar with it. If there are any questions about its content, please contact the appropriate transportation staff member.

We are here to help you if you need us. Do not hesitate to call. But always remember, as a trained professional, it is your responsibility to know. Good luck.

Kenny Forrest
Director of Transportation

WHAT IS A SCHOOL BUS DRIVER?

★ A bus driver is an individual who smiles in the morning, smiles in the afternoon and eats Roloids® in between.

★ A bus driver gets there when nobody else can; she finds houses which do not exist and children with no names.

★ She dries tears, dispels fears, and finds lost notebooks.

★ A bus driver has eyes in the back of her head and hears every word that is said, even in sign language.

★ She separates the meek from the mighty, the timid from the bold, and gives reassuring nods to anxious “mamas” standing at the end of their lanes.

★ A bus driver leaves home before daylight and returns after dark (in the wintertime) and communes with the elements. She has a grudging friendship with the glaring sun, the beating rain, and the driving snow. And, she knows all about dust and the geological formation of gravel.

★ She is immune to noise.

★ A bus driver’s favorite words, besides “Good morning” and “Good evening,” are “Sit down!”

★ Her favorite color is yellow.

★ A bus driver’s worst apprehension involves five-year-olds with motion sickness – especially in the winter when the windows are closed and the heater is on.

★ A bus driver knows all the school songs and pep cheers. Her vocabulary is always up-to-date.

★ To be a school bus driver, an individual must be able to memorize the number of the bus garage, the school, the Superintendent and parents of particularly troublesome students.

★ She can read a map.

★ Sometimes a bus driver gets tired but seldom mad and always, most faithfully, she gets there. Many people set their clocks by a bus driver’s schedule; many mothers set out for a second cup of coffee.

★ A bus driver sits at the helm and safely operates a six to twelve ton, \$100,000 machine loaded with 9 to 97 units of the most precious cargo on earth.

Author Unknown

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this manual is to help direct transportation personnel in their daily tasks and to assist them in finding answers to questions or concerns they may have with reference to their duties. This is a work in progress and may change during the course of its evolution.

In the event of a conflict with the policies, procedures or regulations of Spotsylvania County Public Schools, Virginia Department of Education, the Code of Virginia, or any other local, state or federal regulation or law, the conflicting part of this manual shall be deemed invalid.

The information contained in this manual has been assembled from many sources with the hope; that it will help to clarify what is expected from employees and what they may expect from Spotsylvania County Schools.

Some informational sources are listed below:

- *Spotsylvania County Schools Policy Manual*, <http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/scs/Board.nsf/Public>
- *Spotsylvania County Schools Student Code of Conduct*, [http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/scs/Board.nsf/files/8JLL2M53D865/\\$file/JFC%20approved.clean.06272011.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/scs/Board.nsf/files/8JLL2M53D865/$file/JFC%20approved.clean.06272011.pdf)
- *Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation*, VDOE, 2012
- *National School Transportation, Specifications and Procedures*, Safety Institute, Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, MO, 2010
- *Motor Vehicle Code of Virginia*
- *Virginia Administrative Code*
- *Code of Federal Regulations*

Information, recommendations, newsletters and position papers released by state and national organizations and government entities such as:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Pupil Transportation Safety Association (PTSA)
- National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation (NASDPT)
- National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT)
- Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)
- Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation (VAPT)

Ideas were also borrowed from:

1. *Bus Driver's Handbook*, Orange County Public Schools
2. *School Bus Driver and Bus Assistant Handbook*, Norfolk City Public Schools
3. *Pupil Transportation Manual*, Fairfax County Public Schools
4. *Powhatan County Schools Bus Driver Handbook*, Powhatan County Public Schools
5. Information attained at various area, state, regional and national meetings and conferences

BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

Section 22.1-178 of the Code of Virginia requires drivers of school and activity buses to:

1. Have a physical examination of a scope prescribed by the Board of education with the advice of the Medical Society of Virginia and furnished on a form prescribed by the Board of Education showing the results of such examination.
 - a. No person shall drive a school bus unless that person is physically qualified to do so and has submitted a School Bus Driver’s Application For Physician’s Certificate signed by the applicant and the doctor or a licensed nurse practitioner for the applicable employment period.
 - b. The physical form describes the basic physical qualifications for school bus drivers; however, the examining physician or licensed nurse practitioner shall make the final determination of the individual’s physical capacity to operate a school bus based upon their assessment of the individual’s overall physical condition.
2. Consent to the release of a copy of records from the Department of Motor Vehicles showing that the person, within the preceding five years, has not been convicted of a charge of driving under the influence of intoxicating liquors or drugs, convicted of a charge of refusing to take a blood or breath test, convicted of a felony, or assigned to any alcohol safety action program or driver alcohol rehabilitation program pursuant to §18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia or, within the preceding 12 months, has not been required to attend a driver improvement clinic by the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to §46.2-498 of the Code of Virginia.
3. Furnish a statement signed by two reputable persons who reside in the school division or in the applicant’s community that the person is of good moral character.
4. Exhibit a license showing the person has successfully undertaken the examination prescribed by §46.2-339 of the Code of Virginia.
5. Submit to testing for alcohol and controlled substances that is in compliance with the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-143, Title V) as amended and that is in compliance with 49CFR parts 40 and 382.

In addition to these qualifications, Spotsylvania County school bus drivers must:

1. Be at least 21 years old.
2. Obtain a TB screening.
3. Be able to read and write, to understand verbal instructions, and to communicate in English with fellow transportation department employees, students, and faculty and staff of Spotsylvania County Schools.
4. Maintain a 0 or positive point balance on his/her driving record and, if necessary, attend a Department of Motor Vehicles approved driver improvement class that will raise the point balance to a minimum of 0.
5. Have a reasonable amount of experience in driving motor vehicles and must pass a special examination indicating the ability to operate a school bus without endangering the safety of student passengers and motorists using the highways. **If a bus driver is convicted of reckless driving in any vehicle once employed, he/she will be recommended for dismissal. Drivers who are convicted of any moving violation while operating a school vehicle will have to attend an in-service on defensive driving techniques. A second conviction will mean automatic recommendation for dismissal.**

6. Receive classroom, demonstration, and behind-the-wheel instruction in accordance with the minimum provisions of the *Virginia School Bus Driver Training Curriculum Guide* and the requirements of Spotsylvania County Public Schools prior to beginning his/her duties including a minimum of twenty-four (24) classroom hours and twenty-four (24) hours of behind-the-wheel. Ten (10) of the behind-the-wheel training hours shall involve the operation of a bus with students on board while under the supervision of a certified bus driver trainer.
7. Be able to pass a Virginia Commercial Driver's License examination test given by the Division of Motor Vehicles and/or the Spotsylvania County School examiner. The Virginia Commercial Driver's License, Class (B) with endorsement PS is required of all drivers.

DRIVER REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT

In addition, all drivers must sign a release for the Office of Transportation Services to obtain a copy of that driver's DMV record on an as needed basis.

Any question as to a driver's physical fitness for duty will be referred to the Supervisor of Health Services for resolution. This decision, in conjunction with a physician as appropriate, shall be deemed final.

Any driver who has a change in health involving broken bones, surgery, hospitalization or long-term treatment and/or therapy must notify the Supervisor of Health Services and obtain a clearance for duty prior to driving the bus. Also, any driver taking a prescription or non-prescription drug labeled "may cause drowsiness" or similar warning must be approved to drive by the Supervisor of Health Services prior to driving the bus.

- All drivers must hold a valid card in Standard First Aid and CPR.
- In addition, all drivers must receive in-service training as required and provided by the Transportation Department.
- All drivers must meet minimum established "Fitness for Duty" criteria.
- All drivers must submit to random controlled substance and alcohol testing.

PERSONAL HABITS

A driver shall not use or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty. If drugs that may impair driving ability are prescribed, the driver should refrain from driving a school vehicle. Smoking is prohibited while on duty on any School Board property, which includes school owned buses or other vehicles.

A driver shall be neatly dressed in regular or conservative type street clothes with no gang affiliation or morally offensive print or images in accordance with the student and faculty code of conduct and wear low-heeled, non-skid shoes. Shoes should have closed toes and be of the type that fastens securely around the heel. Platform, wooden soled shoes, high heels or flip-flops are not acceptable. A driver may be asked to return home to change clothes if he/she is found to be dressed inappropriately and will not be paid for time missed while doing so.

BUS ATTENDANT QUALIFICATIONS

Prior to boarding a school bus, all individuals must be approved by the School Board and/or have received permission from the Transportation Director or designee.

1. Each applicant must submit to a TB test and meet physical qualifications.
2. The applicant must be 18 years or older.

3. The applicant must be able to read and write, to understand verbal instructions, and to communicate in English with fellow transportation department employees, students, and faculty and staff of Spotsylvania County Public Schools.
4. The applicant shall furnish a statement signed by three (3) reputable residents of the school division that the person is of good moral character.
5. The applicant must be able to work together with exceptional students and with school staff.
6. The applicant must have completed all training as required by federal, state and local laws, Department of Education regulations and by Spotsylvania County Public Schools Student Transportation Services.

CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT

REQUIREMENTS

Bus attendants are required to hold a valid card in Standard First Aid and CPR including the skills portion. In addition, all bus attendants must receive in-service training as required and provided by the Office of Transportation Services.

All bus attendants must meet minimum established “Fitness for Duty” criteria.

Any question as to an attendant’s physical fitness for duty will be referred to the Supervisor of Health Services for resolution. The Director’s decision, in conjunction with a physician as appropriate, shall be deemed final.

Any attendant who has a change in health involving broken bones, surgery, hospitalization or long-term treatment and/or therapy must notify the Supervisor of Health Services and obtain a clearance for duty prior to boarding the bus. Also, any attendant taking a prescription or non-prescription drug labeled “may cause drowsiness” or similar warning must be approved to work by the Supervisor of Health Services prior to boarding the bus.

Bus attendants are not normally included in random controlled substance testing. Any reasonable suspicion, however, will result in administration of a test. When circumstances call for an attendant to be tested it will be conducted following the procedures for a school bus driver.

PERSONAL HABITS

A bus attendant shall not use or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty. Smoking is prohibited while on duty on any School Board property, which includes school owned buses or other vehicles.

A bus attendant shall be neatly dressed in regular or conservative type street clothes with no gang affiliation or morally offensive print or images in accordance with the student and faculty code of conduct and wear low-heeled, non-skid shoes. Shoes should have closed toes and be of the type that fastens securely around the heel. Platform, wooden soled shoes or flip-flops are not acceptable. Attention should be made to the type of jewelry worn. (i.e. long dangling earrings and necklaces). An attendant may be asked to return home to change clothes if he/she is found to be dressed inappropriately and will not be paid for time missed while doing so.

PERSONNEL POLICIES

EVALUATIONS

At least once per year the performance of each bus driver and attendant shall be evaluated by the Director of Transportation or designee (usually lead drivers) with input from the principal(s). The results of the evaluation shall be discussed with the driver and included in the driver's personnel file.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Verbal Warning: A school transportation driver or attendant may be given a verbal warning by transportation administration for a violation of the rules. A record of this warning shall be kept in the driver's personnel file in the Human Resources Department, with a copy sent to the driver. Continued violation of the rules will result in further disciplinary action, which may include a recommendation for dismissal from employment.

Written Warning: A school transportation driver or attendant may be given a written warning for a violation of the rules. The Director of Transportation or designee will confer with the driver or assistant about the written warning to stress that continued violations will result in further disciplinary action. The written warning, with a copy to the driver or assistant, will be made a part of the driver's or assistant's personnel file in the Human Resources Department.

Probation: A school transportation driver or attendant may be placed on probation for a specific length of time for a violation of the rules. The Director of Transportation, other transportation supervisor and/or a representative of the Human Resources Department will confer with the driver or attendant as to the length and reason for probation. Also, the driver or attendant will be informed that continued violations will result in further disciplinary action. A notice of probation, with a copy to the driver or attendant, will be made a part of the driver's or attendant's personnel file in the Human Resources Department.

Suspension: Upon the recommendation of the Director of Transportation or designee, with the approval of the Superintendent or designee, a driver or attendant may be suspended for a specified length of time with pay for a violation of the rules. A suspension without pay may be imposed by the School Board. The Director of Transportation, or other designated administrator, will confer with the driver or attendant as to the reason for the suspension, stating clearly that continued violations will result in further disciplinary action. A notice of suspension, with a copy to the driver or attendant, will be made a part of the driver's or attendant's personnel file in the Human Resources Department.

Dismissal: A driver or attendant is subject to dismissal under the provisions of School Board Policy GDP (see Appendix). By School Board policy, a driver or attendant may be dismissed by the School Board for a violation of the policies or rules.

Grounds for Probation, Suspension, or Dismissal:

- a. Insubordination to duly constituted authority (to include school administrators, transportation supervisors, Supervisor of Health Services and other division supervisory staff - probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal. (Note: Rude or adversarial behavior directed at any staff member will not be tolerated)
- b. Refusing to submit to random controlled substance and alcohol testing within two (2) hours of being called will result in a recommendation for dismissal. (Note: Failure to report for random controlled substance and alcohol testing is considered a positive result. Any positive result requires a recommendation for dismissal.)
- c. Using a school vehicle for other than official school business –probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal.
- d. Receiving a conviction for reckless driving or for two or more moving violations within one (1) year, whether driving a school vehicle or a private vehicle – recommendation for dismissal.
- e. Being convicted of one (1) moving violation in a school bus may result in disciplinary action.

- f. Failure to properly report an accident to transportation administration or to the Police Department or leaving the scene of a crash or incident, including breaking mirrors or hitting a mailbox, before being instructed to do so by transportation administration or appropriate authority – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- g. Driving a school bus or any vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and/or schedule 1 drugs - recommendation for dismissal.
- h. Having a preventable crash or incident as determined by the Incident Review Committee – appropriate training, probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal.
- i. Failure to attend meetings called by school authorities, to submit written reports, including stop schedules, accurately and on time, and to have scheduled maintenance service performed on the date assigned and to maintain a current and correct route schedule and seating chart (High, Middle and Elementary as assigned) on the bus at all times – training, warning, probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal.
- j. Failure to access Employee Self Service or GAPPS e-mail accounts regularly – probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal. **It is mandatory that these accounts be checked a minimum of once weekly or as directed by transportation administration.**
- k. Failure to complete and maintain training as required by federal, state and local policies and regulations – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal. (No driver will be permitted to drive unless his/her training is current. Missed training may be made-up during a later training session or may be obtained from an outside source.)
- l. Leaving the school bus unattended without first securing it to prevent it from moving or while children or students are on board - probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal. This applies to all children including the driver’s and/or attendant’s, and all locations including schools, bus compounds and fueling areas.
- m. Unauthorized or misuse of sick leave. **Transportation supervision may request school bus drivers or attendants to present verification of illness by signed statement of a physician to substantiate illness** - probation, suspension, or recommendation for dismissal.
- n. Other acts of behavior which are disruptive or in any way present a threat to the health and safety of others – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- o. Leaving a student on the bus after parking the bus – recommendation for dismissal.
- p. Crossing any railroad track without strictly adhering to the proper procedures will result in a recommendation for dismissal.
- q. Failure to personally perform and properly document a pre-trip inspection – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- r. Knowingly permitting a student to exit the bus at any unauthorized location – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- s. Failure to follow end-of-year bus turn-in procedures or to maintain bus in a clean and sanitary condition – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- t. Using a cell phone while driving a school bus is against the law. Using a cell phone on the school bus - probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- u. **Failure to notify Health Services of an applicable change in health or of taking drugs that may affect the employee’s ability to stay alert and satisfactorily perform his/her duties – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.**
- v. **Engaging in distracted driving or any activity that is unnecessary to or that may impair the safe operation of the bus or that may potentially put any person at undue risk – probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal**
- w. Failure to follow the established policy for student accountability – training, probation, suspension or recommendation for dismissal.

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE TESTING PROGRAM

- The temperature of your specimen will be taken within four minutes. Please provide the specimen to the collector as soon as possible so that an accurate temperature can be attained.
- If the collector has reason to believe that a specimen was altered or substituted, he/she must collect a second specimen under direct observation by a same gender collector. This will be reported to a collection supervisor and to your designated employer representative as soon as possible.
- You must initial the identification label on the specimen bottle to certify it is your specimen.
- Each specimen will be tested for: Cannabinoid, Cocaine, Amphetamines, Opiates, and Phencyclidine (PCP) for DOT tests. Non-DOT tests may allow for testing for additional substances.
- If the laboratory analysis indicates the presence of any drugs of abuse, the results will be disclosed only to your company's Medical Review Officer (MRO). Prior to making a final decision to verify a positive test result, the MRO shall give you an opportunity to discuss the test result and submit the medical documentation of legally prescribed medication.
- Records concerning your collection and testing are covered under the Privacy Act 5 USC 522a. Employee records shall be maintained and used with the highest regard for the employee's privacy.

Note: Any employee, upon written request, has access to any records relating to his or her drug tests. The results of a test may not be disclosed, without the employee's prior written consent, except to:

- *The Medical Review Officer*
- *The administrator of any Employee Assistance Program in which the employee is receiving counseling or treatment or is otherwise participating.*
- *A management official with authority to address employee actions.*
- *An individual employed to defend the US government against any challenge to adverse personnel action.*

Any questions or concerns regarding the collection process should be immediately brought to the attention of a supervisor, on-site collection coordinator or company drug program coordinator.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.dot.gov/odapc/faq#Is-there-a-list-of-prohibited-drugs-for-being-medically-qualified-to-drive-a-commercial-motor-vehicle>

INCIDENT AND CRASH REVIEW COMMITTEE (ICRC)

Virginia State Police and the Department of Education categorize traffic mishaps resulting in less than \$1,500 in damages where no injuries occur that require transport or professional treatment as an incident. Those resulting in \$1,500 or more in damages or where an injury resulting in transport or professional treatment is sustained are categorized as crashes.

All crashes involving school buses will be reviewed by the Incident and Crash Review Committee (ICRC). Incidents may also be reviewed if recommended by a transportation supervisor. The following will serve to help you understand this process.

The Incident and Crash Review Committee (ICRC) shall include the following individuals:

- Accident Investigator(s)
- Two Certified Trainers
- Two Lead Drivers (other than the Accident Investigator)
- Transportation Safety Officer/Coordinator of Training

The ICRC shall consider all data pertinent to the incident or crash including but not limited to the following:

Damages – Dollar amount of damage to all vehicles and property.

Injuries – Number and severity of injuries to: occupants of each vehicle and pedestrians.

Conditions – Weather and Highway

Driver actions – Was driver following assigned route? Was driver acting negligently? Was driver adhering to training and following proper procedures?

Charges – Was driver charged? Was another driver or individual charged?

Mitigating or extenuating circumstances.

All previous incidents and/or crashes involving the driver will be reviewed to help determine if a pattern exists. Any previous warnings, reprimands, and/or remedial training for negligence or driver error will also be reviewed. The committee will meet right away for any driver that is already on probation and has had another incident/and or crash.

The driver may request to be present and heard at the committee meeting. Should the driver do so, he/she will be given no more than 5 minutes to present or explain. Committee members may also ask questions at this time. The driver may not be present during deliberation or discussion. (The driver is not required to attend this meeting. Should the driver choose to attend he/she is doing so of his/her own volition and is therefore off the clock and unpaid.)

The Incident and Crash Review Committee (ICRC) will determine:

- Was the bus driver at fault?
- Will training benefit the driver, if so, how much training is necessary?
- Does this accident need to be referred to the Director for disciplinary action?

The driver will be notified within five (5) business days of the committee's decision. If the driver does not agree with the decision he/she may appeal it to an Appeal Board. The Appeal Board will meet as needed and will consist of personnel from the same agencies that comprise the review committee plus a representative from Human Resources.

A driver involved in a crash or incident may be immediately placed on probation pending review by the ICRC. Any driver who undergoes post-accident alcohol or controlled substance testing will be placed on administrative leave with pay until the test results are received.

PAY DAY

Pay day is on the last banking day of the month except during the month of December, in which employees may be paid earlier at the discretion of the School Board.

WORK-RELATED INJURIES

It is the responsibility of every employee to become familiar with and follow the proper procedures for work-related injuries. Unless immediate emergency medical attention (i.e. rescue squad) is required, all reports of workplace injuries must be reported to and handled through the office of Health Services.

CONTRACT TIME

All contracts are based upon a 20-hour or 25-hour work week. Drivers and attendants working less hours per week than what is specified in their contract may be assigned extra duties and may be required to report to assigned locations for a duty assignment. **Any driver or attendant who is unable or unwilling to fulfill duties assigned within the 20-hour or 25-hour work week will be paid actual time worked.** Paid leave can only be used in half-day increments. Assignment of additional duties that exceed the 20-hour or 25-hour work week will be paid at the hourly rate of the driver/attendant.

Required Duties for a Regular Work Week

The annual rate of pay for bus drivers and bus attendants is based on a 20-hour or 25-hour work week. In the assignment of duties as described in this handbook, a 20-hour or 25-hour work week includes the actual assigned times of the bus route (including dead-head time), and the performance of the following duties:

1. Pre-tripping bus
2. Washing and cleaning (with proper approval)
3. Fueling
4. Driving time to and from regularly scheduled maintenance
5. Completion and submission of paperwork

Additional Duties

Beyond regularly assigned duties, bus drivers and attendants receive additional compensation for any time exceeding a 20-hour or 25-hour work week. Time expended in the performance of these duties will be submitted to the transportation bookkeeper with weekly time sheets. Additional duties include:

1. Required meetings scheduled by administrators (i.e., Office of Transportation Services supervisory staff, Principals, Central Office Administration)
2. Non-routine maintenance
3. Job-related court appearances

Assignment of Runs That Exceed Contracted Time Each Day

Drivers and attendants are paid at their hourly rate for all hours worked above their contracts. Time is recorded on the weekly time sheet. Any driver/attendant whose work week exceeds 40 hours will be paid at an overtime rate as regulated by the *Fair Labor Standards Act*. A work week is defined as time worked from 12:00 a.m. Sunday to 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

DISCIPLINE

The principal or designee of each school is responsible to take disciplinary action with any student that violates the rules of conduct set forth by the School Board. An acceptable classroom standard of conduct is expected of bus passengers. There shall be no smoking, yelling, screaming, swearing, fighting, or taking advantage of smaller students by other persons who are larger and/or older. Students are not permitted to extend hands, arms, or heads from the bus windows. Students shall not carry water pistols, reptiles, insects, animals of any description, etc., on the bus. Students are prohibited from carrying oversized items that would block an aisle, cause loss of passenger space, obstruct the driver's view, or create a safety hazard. Any object brought on the bus must fit on the student's lap without obscuring his/her face.

Serious disciplinary problems involving injury to students or staff, disruptions which involve parents, other motorists, or others not authorized to ride on school buses should be reported immediately to the school principal and the Office of Transportation Services.

In case of improper conduct, the driver should remember the following:

- a. Drivers should be sure of the facts and report the student or students to the principal or the person assigned for that day. Bus Conduct Report forms are available for this purpose and shall be used. All copies are to be completed and given to the school principal who will investigate, note action, and distribute the copies.
- b. Drivers shall not use physical restraint, name calling, or harassment to discipline students. A driver may use reasonable physical restraint in self-defense.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND RESTRICTIONS

The general rules and procedures for discipline outlined in this handbook also apply to exceptional students. However, every effort must be made to accommodate each student's specific needs and provide for his/her safe transportation. Following are guidelines for dealing with these situations:

- a. Only approved first-aid techniques and procedures will be used in the case of emergencies.
- b. The bus driver and attendant transport the child between the bus stop and school. They **DO NOT** take the student into or bring him/her out of the home or perform any other requests unless specifically required to do so by the IEP. It is the responsibility of the parents to get the student to and from the bus for transport. The bus driver and attendant ensure the safe loading and transportation for the student.
- c. Parents must coordinate an alternate drop-off point through Special Services and Transportation.
- d. Parents must ensure safe entry and exit points for school vehicles that must enter their property to load and unload their children. The driver is responsible for notifying the transportation office immediately if unsafe situations exist.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS ON GOOD DISCIPLINE

- Be sure that the students see that you take your responsibility seriously.
- Be friendly, but don't try to be a buddy! Show the students that you have a good and positive attitude about your work. Take an interest in those riding your bus. Learn their names and pay honest compliments. Look for good qualities -- everyone has them.
- Keep yourself and your vehicle neat.
- Be yourself! Keep within your personality.
- Keep the rules within the minimum standards set forth by the School Board. Tell the students early what you expect and be sure they understand. Don't start off trying to be easy and then expect to "crack down" later. It is always easier to "let up" than it is to "crack down".

- Be fair and consistent in your dealings with students, both in corrective measures and in positive things that you do. You may have favorites, but don't play favorites.
- Interact with students according to their ages.
- If you have disagreements with parents, other drivers or school officials, do not allow these to show in your relationships with the students. Never argue with others or make derogatory comments while in the presence of students.
- Respect the students as people. Expect them to respect you in the same way.
- Leave your personal problems at home.
- Try to understand your moods and compensate for them. Remember the students have moods also. Be aware that the students may have other problems.
- Learn to identify what is important enough to make an issue over and then be willing to see the problem to a conclusion. Pick your battles.
- Don't argue with the students over a violation of rules or whether or not the rules are justified. The situation will only become worse by an argument. Document and report the situation to the principal.
- Be able to laugh at funny situations even if a funny situation happens to be you.
- Be willing to admit you are wrong.
- In case of serious trouble en route to school that cannot be handled by the driver, call for assistance on your radio to the Office of Transportation Services.
- Drivers are not to put any student off the bus for misbehavior en route to or from school. Students may be left in the care of the principal of any school, supervisory transportation staff, or a police officer. Always obtain the officer's name and badge number, along with the student's name, and the date and time of the incident.
- The driver should always be polite to the parents and answer their questions. Do not argue with parents. Refer them to the principal or the Office of Transportation Services.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Spotsylvania County School Board to maintain a working and learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is deemed unacceptable conduct in the employment and educational environment and will not be tolerated. It shall be a violation of School Board policy for any student, employee, or agent of the school division to harass another student, employee, or agent of the division through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

It is the responsibility of all drivers and bus attendants to report instances of sexual harassment experienced or observed to appropriate school officials. The School Board policy on sexual harassment is available at the Office of Transportation Services. Please contact the Director of Transportation with any questions you might have on sexual harassment.

BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT

Recent changes in Federal and State laws and regulations and school board policy make it imperative that any instances of possible bullying and/or harassment based on race, religion, ethnicity, etc., be addressed by the appropriate school authority. It is, therefore, incumbent upon bus drivers and/or attendants to report any and all instances to the school. To help protect the employee, we are requiring a report to be made in writing to the school the child(ren) attends and also to the transportation office.

BUS PARKING

School vehicles will only be parked at approved locations. A written request will be submitted to transportation administration for any location **OTHER** than secure school property. Each parking location will be reviewed annually. Changes in parking location that occur due to routing, change in assignment or driver relocation may alter the parking location.

Buses with automatic transmissions should be parked in neutral and the parking brake set at all times.

For standard shift buses, the gearshift is placed in low gear and the parking brake set. Turn off the ignition and always remove the key. When parking on upgrades, put the gearshift in low and turn the wheels away from the curb. On downgrades, put the gearshift in reverse and turn the wheels toward the curb.

To accommodate a change in routing techniques and to address unfairness, information security and other issues created by parking buses at home, exclusive buses will be parked at transportation or satellite lots for the upcoming school year. This will give us greater accountability of student information; allow us to better serve the student because the bus equipped for that student should always be available; and, should eliminate feelings among drivers that there is partiality. It also should relieve some of the commuting hardship put on attendants, our lowest paid employees. **For these reasons, SPED buses will not be approved to park at the driver's home or any location away from school satellite lots.**

SOME REMINDERS FOR THE DRIVER

- a. The driver's safety is just as important as that of his/her passengers. The driver is required to properly wear a seat belt at all times when driving a school bus, with or without students on board.
- b. Parents or spouses may not ride in school vehicles unless special permission is granted by the Director of Transportation.
- c. Parent concerns should be discussed in the school principal's office and not at bus stops. If a parent persists, the driver should be polite and inform the parent that he/she is carrying out the rules and regulations set by the Department of Motor Vehicles, the State Board of Education, and the Spotsylvania County School Board. Refer the parent to the principal or to the transportation office for consideration of the problem. No unauthorized person shall be permitted to board the bus. If a parent boards the bus, promptly inform the parent that he or she is in violation of Virginia state law and school board policy and ask the parent to leave. If the parent refuses, call transportation on the bus radio for assistance.
- d. **The bus driver should show that he/she cares for the school vehicle and the passengers by providing a clean and sanitary vehicle with good ventilation.**
- e. School buses follow assigned routes. **NO CHANGES** will be made to the routes without authorization from the Director of Transportation or designee. Violation of this directive may result in suspension or recommendation for dismissal.
- f. **When approaching a stop, the driver must slow the bus and activate the amber traffic warning lights. If no child(ren) is/are present, the driver may cancel the warning lights and proceed to the next stop.**
 - a. **NOTE:** It is not appropriate to resort to honking the horn
 - b. or yelling at a student to entice the student to be prompt.
 - c. If it is clear the student's actions are intentional to delay
 - d. the bus, document the behavior on a Bus Conduct Report.
- g. No unauthorized person may drive or operate equipment on a school vehicle.

- h. The driver or attendant shall not use a cell phone while students are on board or while the bus is in motion. **Exception:** The attendant may use a cell phone in an emergency, to report an accident or to contact the school or the parent of a student on board the bus if doing so becomes necessary.
- i. The driver and attendant are an important part of the total educational program. By their habits and conduct, they are setting an example to influence the lives and futures of the students who come in contact with them each day.

OFFICIAL USE OF SCHOOL BUSES

School buses will be used to transport students to and from school, and school sponsored events only. School buses will not be used for any purpose other than student transportation, unless authorized by the Superintendent. The following are examples of unauthorized uses of school vehicles that could result in suspension or recommendation for dismissal:

- a. Using a school vehicle to run personal errands. A driver is not allowed to use a school vehicle to go by the local store, bank, laundry, post office, drug store, or doctor’s office just to name a few. This policy applies during normal school hours, after school hours, weekends, and holidays.
- b. Using a school vehicle to transport children (the driver’s or others) to other schools outside the district. A driver may transport his/her own children on assigned routes only with prior approval from the Director of Transportation. A driver may not use a school vehicle to transport a spouse either to or from work or other locations. Transporting any child not enrolled in a Spotsylvania School program or not approved by the Director of Transportation in a Spotsylvania County Public School BUS is in violation of School Board policy.
- c. It is not permissible to take a school vehicle to any location off the assigned route while waiting for the next run.

NOTE: If there are any questions as to whether the use of a school BUS is permissible, call the Director of Transportation **“BEFORE”** using the vehicle to avoid any unnecessary misunderstandings.

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE BUS OPERATION

- a. The door must be closed when the bus is in motion, whether or not students are on board.
- b. The warning lights shall be in operation for a distance of not less than one hundred (100) feet before the bus stops if the lawful speed limit is less than thirty-five (35) mph; for a distance of at least two hundred (200) feet before the bus stops if the lawful speed limit is thirty-five (35) mph or higher. The warning sign and crossing control arm shall be extended only when the bus is stopped to load or discharge students.
- c. Strobe lights shall be operated when the bus transports students during periods of reduced visibility caused by conditions other than darkness. *The warning lights may also be lighted at other times while the bus is transporting passengers.*
- d. The red traffic warning lights are to be used by a driver approaching or following another bus that is loading or unloading. When following or approaching another bus that is backing, activate the four-way hazard lights.

- e. The school bus driver shall open and close the entrance door and keep it securely closed while the bus is in motion. The proper use of these devices and the responsibility for safety shall not be delegated to any other person.
- f. Headlights on all student-carrying vehicles are to be used at all times. Never drive with only clearance (parking) lights.
- g. The driver must be in the bus while loading or unloading students.
- h. Safe driving practices, the Code of Virginia, and School Board Regulations require that all drivers properly wear a seat belt at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
- i. **No object (trash cans, boxes, athletic supplies, student projects or other) shall be placed in the bus by any person if the object will restrict the passage to the entrance and/or emergency doors and windows.**
- j. A school bus shall not be placed in motion unless all passengers (students) are seated.
- k. The driver of an activity or extra-curricular trip shall advise the students and sponsors of the location of all emergency equipment prior to the beginning of any such trip. The driver must notify the garage in the case of a breakdown. Drivers are to keep the students on the bus, unless it is unsafe to remain aboard, until it is repaired or until the students are transferred to another bus. Drivers are responsible to take all necessary precautions to alert oncoming traffic. Drivers must take the key out of the ignition and put out triangular reflectors.
- l. When loading or discharging students on the highway, stops shall be made in the right-hand travel lane and shall be made only at designated points where the bus can be seen for a safe distance from all directions. While stopped, the driver shall keep the school bus warning devices in operation to warn approaching traffic to stop and allow students to cross the highway safely.
- m. In cases where the driver must leave the seat, the bus will be secured by turning the engine off, setting the brake, and removing the key from the ignition.

VANDALISM

All acts of vandalism or theft must be reported to the Office of Transportation Services prior to moving the bus. Exception: Buses vandalized during the transport of students should be reported immediately following the run.

LOADING AND UNLOADING STUDENTS

Every school bus operated at public expense for the purpose of transporting school students shall be equipped with traffic warning devices of the type prescribed in the standards and specifications of the Board of Education.

One of the greatest single factors in prevention of injury to students riding school buses is the proper use of the warning lights. The following are general guidelines for the use of warning and emergency lights and general safety precautions:

When loading or unloading students on a highway, stops shall be made only at designated points where the bus can clearly be seen for a safe distance from all directions. While stopped, the driver shall keep the school bus warning devices in operation to warn approaching traffic to stop and allow students to cross the highway safely. Students who must cross the road shall be required to cross in front of the bus. They shall be required to walk to a point ten (10) feet or more in front of the bus and wait for a signal from the bus driver before starting across the highway.

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

Use the following procedure from the Virginia School Bus Driver's Manual:

- Tap the brake lightly as you approach a railroad crossing to warn other drivers the bus is about to stop.
- Turn on four-way hazard lights. Do not activate traffic warning lights.
- Come to a complete stop fifteen (15) to fifty (50) feet from the nearest rail.
- Open the entrance door and driver's window.
- Turn off all fans, heaters, defrosters, windshield wipers and other noise producing devices inside the bus. (Newer buses have a noise kill switch that will disable all these devices with one control.)
- Listen and look carefully in both directions.
- When it is safe to cross, close the entrance door and turn off the four-way hazard lights.

- Cross the railroad tracks in a gear which allows you to cross the rails completely without changing gears.
- NOTE: If it can be verified by the transportation administrator that a driver failed to stop at a railroad crossing a recommendation for dismissal will be made to the Human Resources Office.

*****OBJECTS PROHIBITED ON SCHOOL BUSES*****

The driver must make sure that bottles, boxes, musical instruments, or other loose objects are not on the floor or in the aisle of the bus. **THIS IS STATE LAW.** Only objects that can be held safely in the student's lap may be transported. Items that cannot be safely held in the pupil's lap or are large enough to interfere with the comfort of other students must be transported some other way. Items such as book bags, school projects, musical instruments, etc., shall not be placed in any aisle, emergency window seat or other pathway leading to an emergency exit. No trash containers are to obstruct any entrance, exit, or aisle. No aerosol cans, glass bottles or glass objects are allowed on any school bus.

BACKING THE BUS

It is not recommended that students be used to help drivers while backing. The driver must not back the bus unless there is no other safe way to move the vehicle. Driving around the block is preferable to backing. If it is necessary to back the bus, the driver should activate four-way hazard lights and sound the horn. Look around before you back, locating all possible hazards first and constantly check all mirrors while backing. Always back after students are loaded or before they are unloaded. Always back from a main road into a side road. It is illegal to back from a side street or driveway into a highway.

FOLLOWING OTHER VEHICLES

Tailgating is one of the most frequent causes of accidents. The driver shall not follow a vehicle closer than three (3) bus lengths. It should be remembered that it is the driver's fault when he/she runs into the rear of another vehicle. Virginia law requires that buses driving outside cities and towns must keep a distance of at least two-hundred (200) feet when following other buses and trucks.

HOURS OF OPERATION – REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

| | <u>Beginning</u> | <u>End</u> | <u>Length of Day</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Elementary | 8:45 | 3:30 | 6 hrs., 45 min. |
| Middle | 8:00 | 2:45 | 6 hrs., 45 min. |
| High | 7:35 | 2:20 | 6 hrs., 45 min. |

The bus must be at the school no more than five (5) minutes earlier than the time specified by the routing department. If the bus cannot be on time transportation administration should be notified. It is then the responsibility of the Office of Transportation Services to notify the school of late arrivals.

NOTE: The accuracy of stop schedules is CRUCIAL to maintain the integrity of the automated routing system, and to provide substitute drivers accurate information in the event of a driver’s absence.

IN-SERVICE MEETINGS

All drivers and attendants must attend in-service meetings scheduled by the Director of Transportation each school year. *These meetings are mandatory.* Anyone not able to attend must notify the Director of Transportation in writing requesting to be excused. If a driver or assistant is excused from the meeting, he/she must make up the in-service hours at the discretion of the Director of Transportation.

(NOTE: Children are not allowed at any in-service meeting.)

STATE BUS REGULATIONS

A copy of Virginia regulations pertaining to school buses may be found in the appendices section. If regulations are changed or new regulations introduced during the time this manual is effective, the new regulations will supersede those included herein.

CELL PHONE USAGE

Code of Virginia 46.2-919.1: "No person shall use any wireless telecommunications device, whether handheld or otherwise, while driving a school bus, except in case of an emergency, or when the vehicle is lawfully parked and for the purposes of dispatching. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the use of two-way radio devices authorized by the owner of the school bus."

LOCAL GUIDELINES

- Obey the Law: Traffic laws are the rules of the road. Obey all laws - to the letter! If a sign says “Stop”, then STOP - ALL THE WAY!

- Drive Defensively: Even though you as a driver obey the law -- do not count on others to do the same. Be constantly alert for motorists who are angry, under the influence, half asleep, daydreaming, or ill. Be prepared for them to do the wrong thing.
- Driving on Hills: The safest way to travel downhill is to rely on the natural braking effect of the engine and transmission. Never coast downhill with the engine off.
- Practice Courtesy: Practicing “The Golden Rule” is both safe and sensible. Be considerate of other drivers and they will be considerate of you. Watch for other buses, especially in school parking areas, to ensure you are not blocking traffic.
- Reckless Driving, DUI, DWI: If a driver gets a reckless driving, a DUI, or a DWI ticket while driving any vehicle -- the driver will be suspended without pay immediately and shall remain suspended until the court date. If the driver is found guilty, he/she will be recommended for dismissal.
- Moving Violations: If a driver is convicted of two or more violations in a twelve (12) month period, the driver will be recommended for dismissal. (8 VAC 20-70-280)
- Right Turn on Red: Spotsylvania County bus drivers may make a right turn on red after coming to a complete stop. Before turning right on red, the driver must come to a complete stop and check traffic in all directions.
- Parking Buses/Cars at the Garage: When conducting business at the Fleet Maintenance Facility, an individual should ensure his/her bus or personal vehicle is properly parked and secured. Please do not park any vehicle in a fire zone or handicapped parking area. A parking area for drivers’ personal vehicles is provided behind the transportation office and adjacent to the bus parking area. This parking lot, and the staff parking lot in the front of the office are not designed for heavy vehicle traffic. Buses must not be driven or parked in these lots. Likewise, drivers should never take their personal vehicles into the bus parking area. Doing so creates a safety hazard. If a personal car is damaged while in the bus parking area, the operator will be responsible for its repair and may also be subject to disciplinary action.
- Driving of Buses to Second Job: A driver may drive the bus to his/her second job if it is closer than going to the assigned parking location and if there is a safe place to park the bus. Permission must be granted from the place of employment and from transportation supervision.
- Pre-school Children: Bus drivers and attendants will be permitted to transport their own preschool children or grandchildren while transporting elementary or secondary students provided the following criteria are met:
 - Adequate seating must be available without displacing a Spotsylvania County Student.
 - Written approval must be obtained from the Director of Transportation or designee before a child may ride, and a form for the current school year must be on file.
 - The driver or attendant shall provide Spotsylvania County Schools with a written release for any injuries sustained by the child as a result of riding the school bus.
 - All children or grandchildren must be at least one (1) year of age.
 - No more than two (2) children will be permitted to ride at the same time.
 - All restraints required by regulation or to insure the individual child’s safety and well-being are present and used.

- The parent or guardian must provide all additional special equipment, such as car seats, at no cost to the Division. All equipment must meet the same standards as equipment issued by Transportation for the transport of pre-school age students.
- The parent or guardian must be responsible for the behavior of the child(ren). Unruly or disruptive behavior will be grounds to revoke a child's permission to ride.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

In case of an accident involving the bus, the safety of the students comes first.

- a. Notify Dispatch.
- b. Do not move the vehicle until directed by the law enforcement personnel or school officials.
- c. Check bus for injured students.
- d. Protect the accident scene by setting out reflectors. **(It is illegal for a bus to stop alongside a street or highway without setting triangles.)**
- e. Do not leave students unattended. Use the radio to call the Office of Transportation Services. If the radio does not work, ask a pedestrian or passing motorist to notify the authorities.
- f. Have students remain on the bus unless there is extensive damage, danger of further harm, or fire.
- g. Cooperate fully with the police conducting the investigation.
- h. If statements at the scene are necessary, only give the officer your statement -- do not admit guilt.
- i. Write down, in your own words, what happened at the scene and take it to an administrator at the Office of Transportation Services as soon as possible after the crash or incident.
- j. Have your seating chart available. List the names, age, grade level and seating locations of all students on the bus at the time of the accident.
- k. Administrators from Transportation or the school may release students, after their physical well-being has been ascertained, to their parents or guardians. Bus drivers may never dismiss or release students except at their regular stop.
- l. All accidents are to be immediately reported to the transportation office.

BREAKDOWN PROCEDURES

The driver must ensure that the bus is in good operating condition **BEFORE** transporting students. (Pre-trip inspection) The driver must contact dispatch by telephone or radio for instructions anytime a problem is encountered during the pre-trip or while on the road. The driver **SHOULD NEVER** proceed with faulty equipment unless Fleet Services has verified that it is safe to do so.

In case of a breakdown, use the following guidelines:

- Secure vehicle and set parking brake.
- Turn on emergency four-way hazard lights.
- Radio the Dispatch office and follow instructions.
- Set out triangles. **(It is illegal to park alongside a street or highway without setting triangles.)**
- Have students remain on the bus until other transportation arrives unless doing so places them in eminent danger.

- f. After the last passenger has exited, the driver should carefully check to make sure no one is left on the bus.
- g. The driver should then stand with the students and, if this is an actual emergency, provide further instructions. If this is a drill, the driver should tell the students they did a good job or let them know where they need to improve. The driver should dismiss the students or re-load and continue the run.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Always radio the Office of Transportation Services in the case of an accident, breakdown, or an emergency. (DisTac Channel on the bus radio will connect the driver directly to the Spotsylvania County Sheriff’s office. The following are emergency telephone numbers:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT | 911 |
| VIRGINIA STATE POLICE | 1-800-572-2260 |
| FLEET SERVICES | 582-5125 ext 1875 |
| OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES | 582-5125 ext 1882 |

GENERAL INFORMATION

MAINTENANCE

- The driver is responsible for bringing his or her vehicle for maintenance and regular inspection as required by law and regulations. All equipment must be kept in good operational order or the vehicle must go to Fleet Services for repair. As part of your pre-trip inspection, check the state inspection sticker located on the windshield to make sure it is valid.
- Fleet Services will schedule all routine maintenance and notify drivers prior to the service due date. Upon arrival, please park in the approved area and bring bus number, parking slot number, current mileage (no tenths) and problem or symptoms to the service writer.
- Once a defect is identified, contact Fleet immediately to schedule service for repair.

CARE OF THE BUS

A pre-trip inspection is required to be conducted each day prior to driving the bus. Each driver must perform his or her own pre-trip and document it on the proper form.

Keep all mirrors cleared and well adjusted in order to allow a clear view of other vehicles or students beside, behind, or in front of the bus. The convex mirror will enable the driver to see even the smallest student crossing in front of the bus.

Allow the bus to warm up long enough to clear windows and windshield of frost. Do not leave the engine running when not on the bus. . **The maximum idle time for all buses, including a/c equipped buses, is 5 minutes. Idling on school grounds is prohibited.** Please refer to the idling policy on page #44.

RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

The two-way radio is governed by the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) Rules and Regulations (copy of FCC Operating Procedures form in Forms section).

The purpose of the radios is:

1. To provide communications between the Office of Transportation Services, drivers and attendants serving the children of Spotsylvania County.
2. To provide Transportation Administration and Local Emergency Facilities a fast and efficient method to dispatch support personnel and vehicles to drivers having mechanical difficulties, accidents or emergencies.
3. To provide a channel for emergency messages and assignments to drivers and attendants, to support emergency communications, to notify drivers of severe or inclement weather conditions and to serve as an emergency communication source in the event of telephone disruption or catastrophe.

Users of radio equipment shall obey all rules and regulations governing the use of this radio system as required by the Federal Communications Commission.

KNOW YOUR RADIO EQUIPMENT

The radio is part of the bus. Each driver bears the same responsibility for the care of the radio that he/she does for the bus. Familiarity with the radio equipment is as important as with the bus itself. Know how the radio operates and check each of the controls. Report any irregularities to the Fleet Services Customer Service Writer.

**RELATIONSHIP OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
AND
OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The school principal will assist the Office of Transportation Services in the following manner:

- a. By monitoring school buses for adherence to an approved schedule.
- b.
- c. By arranging orderly parking and systematic movement of buses on school grounds without backing, or by assisting transportation supervision in doing so.
- d.
- c. By reporting a bus driver, to the Office of Transportation Services, for:
 - Endangering the safety of the students
 - Major infractions of driver regulations
 - Disorderly conduct
 - Frequent deviation from time schedule
 - Reasonable and just complaints from parents
 - Abuse of equipment
 - Falsifying a stop schedule
 - Failure to follow directives from the principal
 -

- d. By investigating disciplinary cases reported by the driver concerning students enrolled in his/her school.
- e. By acting on Bus Conduct Reports and documenting actions taken. Copies of the Bus Conduct Report shall be forwarded to the Office of Transportation Services and the driver.
- f. By insuring the timely dismissal of students from school.
- g. By being responsible for the supervision of loading and unloading of students on school grounds.
- h. By insuring that no students sit in buses parked on the school grounds at any time throughout the school day.
- i. By conducting three elementary and two secondary school bus emergency drills each year; once during the first thirty (30) calendar days of school, and once during the second semester.
- j. By assisting transportation administration in the personnel evaluations of bus drivers and attendants.

SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

SCHOOL BUS IDLING POLICY

Purpose:

To eliminate all unnecessary idling by Spotsylvania County Public School buses such that idling time is minimized in all aspects of school bus operation.

Applicability:

Applies to all district-owned school buses.

Rationale:

Diesel exhaust from idling school buses can accumulate in and around the bus and pose a health risk to children, drivers and the community at large. Exposure to diesel exhaust can cause lung damage and respiratory problems. Diesel exhaust also exacerbates asthma and existing allergies, and long-term exposure is thought to increase the risk of lung cancer. Idling buses also waste fuel and financial resources.

Guidance:

1. When school bus drivers arrive at schools or other such loading areas to pick up passengers, they should turn off their bus engines as soon as possible to eliminate idling time and reduce harmful emissions. The buses should not be restarted until ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pickup area. Exceptions include conditions that would compromise passenger safety, such as:
 - a. Extreme weather conditions
 - b. Idling in traffic or at bus stops
 - c. Maintaining a suitable temperature range for fragile children
2. Limit bus warm-up idling time at the bus parking location (garage, satellite lot, driver’s home, etc.) to that recommended by the vehicle manufacturer (generally 3-5 minutes) in all but the coldest weather or unless otherwise directed.
3. Buses should not idle while waiting for students during field trips, extracurricular activities or other events where students are transported off school grounds.
4. In cold weather, drivers who arrive at school early should find a warm area in the school to wait.
5. If necessary, during periods of cold weather when the warmth of the bus is an issue, permission may be granted for the bus to idle an extended period of time provided idling is kept to a very minimum and occurs off school property. To maintain warmth, the “warmed” bus is to enter the school zone as close to pick-up time as possible and shut down until ready to depart.

c. Know each individual transportation need including:

1. Appliances such as:
 - a. Wheel chair,
 - b. Auxiliary seats,
 - c. Harnesses, and/or
 - d. Special restraints.
2. Environmental considerations such as:
 - a. Restrictions on time of ride, and
 - b. Inability to tolerate extreme temperature or light conditions.

- d. Know what special procedures to use to insure the safety and comfort of their passengers in case of an accident or break down.
- e. Make certain that all passengers are received by a responsible person at school **and** upon return to the designated bus stop. (If the student is to be dropped off without a responsible adult present, a letter from the parent or guardian must be on file authorizing the action.)
- f. Assist the Coordinator of Special Needs in establishing a safe, efficient route taking into consideration the pick-up and drop-off locations as well as the unique requirements of the students on the bus. A copy of this route description, along with all alterations and/or changes, should be kept on the bus and on file with the dispatcher.
- g. Maintain reasonable pick-up times for each stop. Allow for extra time required to load and secure passengers and their required appliances and equipment.
- h. Maintain reasonable return times for each individual and ensure that the responsible adult is aware of any changes or deviations.
- i. Discharge students at designated or approved stops only.
- j. Attempt to reinforce desirable behavior and discourage undesirable behavior on the part of the student.
- k. Drivers are responsible to follow the behavior intervention plan, if one exists.
- l. Make the dispatcher aware of any planned absence and notify him/her of any sudden or unexpected absence in a timely manner so that he/she will be able to obtain a satisfactory replacement. Due to the special circumstances of each child and their inability to readily accept change, excessive absences may result in a change of assignment.
- m. Maintain a current roster of children on the bus and ensure each child is accounted for (unless absent from the bus) and disembarks at the correct location.

In addition, attendants must:

- Be available to assist the driver in loading or unloading passengers. (See Section 8 on lifting.)
- Deal with student behavior during transportation so that the driver will be free to focus on the safe operation of the vehicle.
- Assist the driver in the care and cleanliness of the vehicle.
- Assist with emergency evacuation drills.
- Be aware of the stops, procedures and unique nuances of each route the bus travels, and able to assist a substitute driver if needed.

ROUTES

Special education drivers are required to:

1. Be completely familiar with their route as well as with alternative routes that can be followed in an emergency.

- 2. Recommend necessary route adjustments to the SpEd coordinator.
- 3. Keep parents advised of current pick-up and drop-off times.
- 4. Notify SpEd coordinator of student absences of five consecutive days.

★LOADING AND UNLOADING STUDENTS

- a. State law requires the use of red traffic warning lights and stop/crossing arms when loading or unloading students. Four-way hazard flashers are not to be used. All students and their appliances must be properly secured before the bus is moved.
- b. Lift safety - - The most important rule when it comes to the operation of the lift is to become thoroughly familiar with its safety rules and precautions before operating it and to follow them. Some universally accepted safety rules are:
 - 1. Be certain the bus parking brake is applied.
 - 2. The driver and attendant should divide responsibilities. (The driver should assist from inside the bus and the attendant from outside.)
 - 3. Always load and unload in as level an area as possible.
 - 4. Always inspect the lift as part of the pre-trip inspection and before each operation cycle.
 - 5. Be familiar with the lift before operating it.
 - 6. Keep operator and bystander clear of moving parts.
 - 7. Do not overload or abuse the lift.
 - 8. Never load or unload standees. (If a passenger who is not confined to a wheel chair must be loaded or unloaded using the lift, have a wheel chair he or she can use during the operation.)
 - 9. Make sure the wheelchair brakes are locked when the lift is in operation.
 - 10. Never remove any guards from the lift.

★COURTESY WAIT

★As with other students, those with special needs should be ready to board the bus when it approaches at the designated time of arrival. However, when dealing with exceptional children, last minute emergencies or unusual circumstances may arise. As a courtesy, when circumstances dictate, the driver may need to allow a few minutes extra for his or her passenger to reach the bus. If students are habitually late, the Special Needs Coordinator should be notified.

★SEIZURES

★A written report should be completed after any such episode.

★EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS

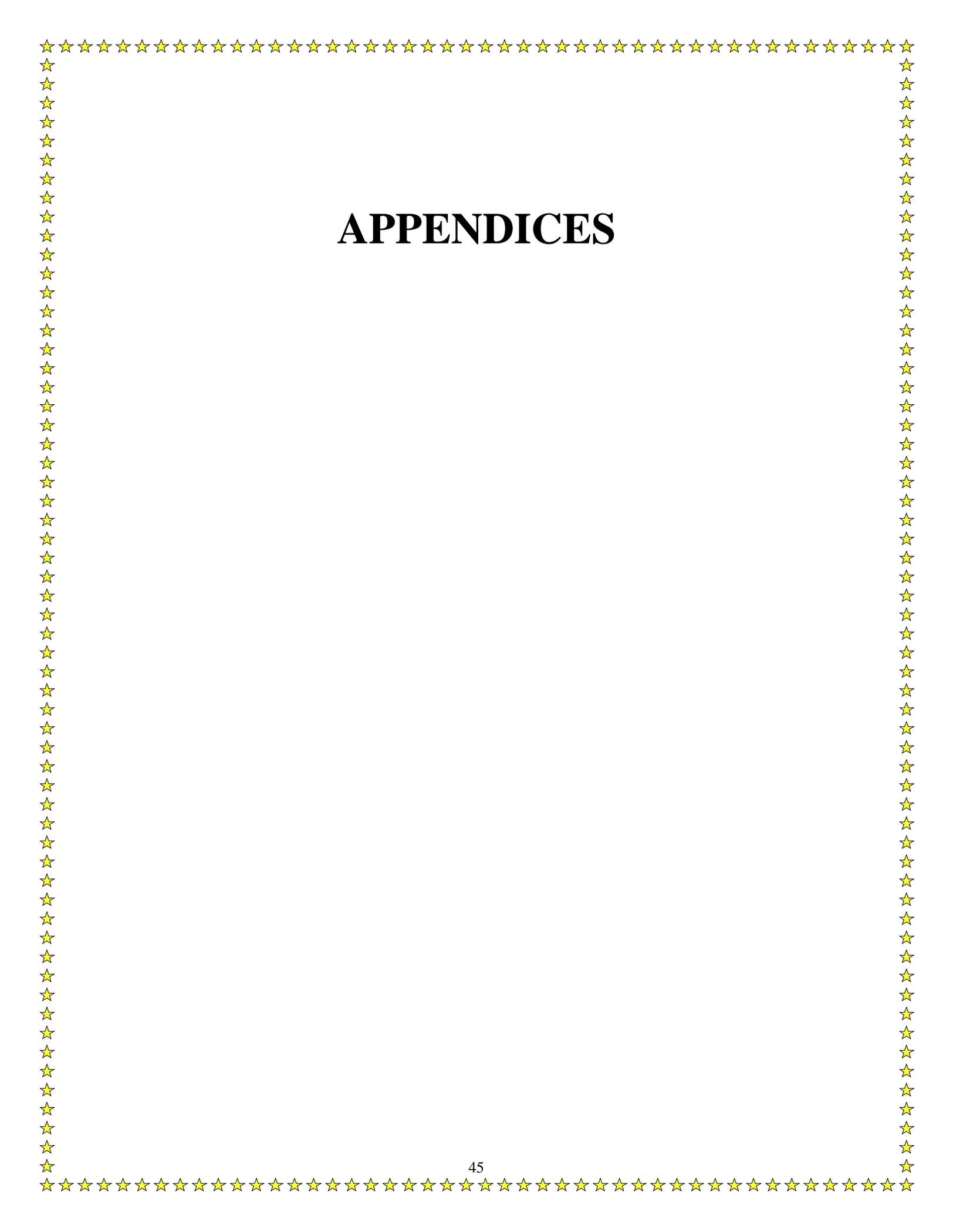
★The Code of Virginia and Spotsylvania County Public Schools regulations require that emergency evacuation "...drills shall be practiced by all pupil riders at least twice a year, the first occurring during the first 30 instructional days." The regulations do not exempt special needs students or buses. Neither does it provide special instructions for them. Therefore, Spotsylvania County Public School bus drivers who operate special needs buses shall prepare for emergency evacuation drills as prescribed in this section.

- Be patient, calm, and persistent at all times. When a child knows he or she can expect this behavior from you, he or she will be much more cooperative.
- Encourage self-control. Even though these students have not developed total control, it may be helpful if they know they are responsible for their behavior.
- Avoid arguments and, whenever possible, punishment. Special education students may be easily excited and often react with uncontrolled emotions.
- Be aware of “bad days.” The behavior of a special needs student may vary from day to day or week to week. Behavior that may be disobedience on a good day may not be on a bad day. Remember, a child may not always have control over his or her behavior - - respond accordingly.
- Special Needs personnel, including case managers, teachers, drivers and attendants have an extra responsibility to learn and share behavior management and modification strategies that work for each individual student.
- If necessary, report misbehavior to the appropriate authority.
- If a child’s behavior is too distracting, it is dangerous to everyone on the bus.
- Report any change in behavior or any behavior that is unusual for a particular child. Your observations may reveal new information about the child’s condition and development, as well as prevent a future catastrophe.
- If possible, introduce a substitute driver to the children in advance. This may prevent some children from acting adversely to a change in routine. Insure that the new driver has detailed, written instructions including route descriptions, pick-up and drop-off times and locations, and special route or student considerations.
- When you ask a student to do something, have a reason for the request and take the time to explain it to him or her. Help the student to realize the point of the request.
- Never use your level of annoyance to judge the misconduct of the student. (Never take a child’s actions or behaviors personally.)
- Always look for a student’s good qualities. All children have them.
- Become a good listener. Listen to what a student is saying and for what he or she is feeling.
- Finally, develop warm and friendly relations with all passengers. Keep your sense of humor. It can be very valuable.

Confidentiality

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that all school employees, including bus drivers, observe strict confidentiality rules to protect students with disabilities. The law states that no personally identifiable information can be released verbally or in writing without the consent of the parent. Bus drivers are entitled to have access to information that is deemed necessary for the safe transportation of their students. Bus drivers and attendants should not discuss information about any student they transport with anyone except those persons directly involved with the student’s education.

Avoid discussing students by name when in public or with parents of other students. Drivers should take care to avoid unnecessary discussion of students or their names over the two-way radios. Citizens who listen to scanners may be able to pick up the conversations. The use of the radio is permitted when it is necessary for the safe transportation of the student.



APPENDICES

Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation

Revised – September, 2012

Part I – Definitions

8VAC20-70-10. Definitions - The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Classroom instruction” means training provided by a qualified driver instructor through lectures, demonstrations, audio-visual presentation, computer-based instruction, driving simulation devices, or similar means. Instruction occurring outside a classroom is included if it does not involve actual operation of a school bus and its components by the student.

"Color-black" means federal standard No. 595, black.

"Color-yellow" means national school bus yellow School Bus Manufactures Technical Council (SBMTC) color standard 008.

“Multifunction School Activity Bus (MFSAB)” means a school bus whose purposes do not include transporting students to and from home or school bus stops as defined in 49 CFR 571.3. This subcategory of school bus meets all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) for school buses and meets all regulations for school buses, except the traffic control devices, color, use of cruise control, and seating requirements.

"Nonconforming bus" means any vehicle designed to carry more than 10 passengers that is used to transport children to or from school or school-related activities that does not meet the federal standards, 49 CFR Part 571, specific to school buses or multifunction school activity buses. These vehicles are not approved for transporting students to and from school or school-related activities.

"School bus" means any motor vehicle other than a station wagon, automobile, truck, or commercial bus that is (i) designed and used primarily for the transportation of pupils to and from public, private, or religious schools, or for the transportation of pupils who are physically handicapped to and from a sheltered workshop; (ii) painted yellow with the words “School Bus” in black letters of a specified size on the front and rear; and (iii) equipped with warning devices prescribed in § 46.2-1090 of the Code of Virginia. A yellow school bus may have a white roof provided such vehicle is painted in accordance with regulations and specifications of the Department of Education.

"Specially equipped bus" means a school bus designed, equipped, or modified to accommodate students with special needs.

"Type A school bus" means a van conversion bus constructed utilizing a cutaway front-section vehicle with a left side driver’s door. This definition includes two classifications. Type A1, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 14,500 pounds or less; and Type A2, with a GVWR greater than 14,500 pounds but less than or equal to 21,500 pounds.

"Type B school bus" means a bus constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. This definition includes two classifications: Type B1, with a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or less; and Type B2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.



Maintenance and service personnel shall be encouraged to attend approved workshops or training institutes and shall receive all necessary service and maintenance publications for equipment serviced.

8 VAC 20-70-140. Crash/incident reporting - A report, on forms or in a format furnished by the Department of Education, of any crashes involving school buses, pupils, and personnel who ride school or activity buses (including injury or death while crossing the road, waiting at bus stops, etc.) shall be sent to the Pupil Transportation Service, Department of Education by the division superintendent or designee at least once a month. The report shall give the apparent cause of the crash and the extent of injuries to pupils or others. The division superintendent or designee shall notify the Pupil Transportation Service of any school bus crash involving serious injuries, requiring professional medical treatment, or death within the next working day from the date of the crash.

A vehicle crash occurs when property damage is \$1,500 or more or when persons are injured. The Department of Education shall publish on its website an annual report of the number of crashes involving school buses, pupils, and personnel who ride school or activity buses (including incidents of injury or death while crossing the road, waiting at bus stops, etc.) in each division.

8 VAC 20-70-150. Route schedule - All school buses in operation shall be scheduled to maximize safety and efficiency. The schedule shall show the time the bus starts in the morning, the time it leaves each point at which pupils are picked up, the time of arrival at school, and the time of drop off at home in the afternoon. One copy of such schedule shall be kept in the bus, and one copy shall be kept in the office of the division superintendent or designee and shall meet student records and information security requirements as stated in federal, state, and local policy.

8 VAC 20-70-160. Review of routes - School bus routes, school sites, and safety of pupils at designated school bus stops shall be reviewed at least once each year and as changes occur. Routes shall be reviewed for safety hazards, fuel conservation, and to assure the most efficient use of buses. Local school administrators shall evaluate the safety of pupils at bus stops periodically and shall at the request of the local school board report the results annually to the school board. Hazardous or unusual situations, to include railway crossings, shall be marked on the route sheet and made available to drivers and substitutes.

A written vehicular and pedestrian traffic control plan for each existing school site shall be reviewed annually for safety hazards. All new school site plans shall include provisions that promote vehicular and pedestrian safety.

8 VAC 20-70-170. Railway crossings - School buses shall stop, as required by law, at railway grade crossings. School buses equipped with a nonsequential lighting system must have these lighting systems deactivated when approaching a railroad grade crossing and the 4-way hazard lights shall be activated when approaching the railway grade crossing and shall be deactivated before crossing the track. The bus driver shall turn off all noisy equipment, open the entrance door of the bus and determine when it is safe for the vehicle to cross the railroad tracks. The entrance door shall be closed when the bus is in motion. No stop need be made at any grade crossing where traffic is directed by a police officer or a traffic-control signal as stated in Section 46.2-886 of the Code of Virginia.

8 VAC 20-70-180. Driver reports - School boards shall require that a report on the number of pupils transported and miles traveled be submitted to designated school officials.

8 VAC 20-70-190. Policies - Local school boards shall adopt policies, consistent with provisions of the Code of Virginia before establishing a practice of collecting transportation fees from pupils or receiving contributions from other sources for activities sponsored by schools under their authority. No pupil whose parent or guardian



pursuant to § 18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia or, within the preceding 12 months, has not been convicted of two or more moving traffic violations or has not been required to attend a driver improvement clinic by the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to § 46.2-497498 of the Code of Virginia.

- Furnish a statement signed by two reputable persons who reside in the school division or in the applicant's community that the person is of good moral character.
- Exhibit a license showing the person has successfully undertaken the examination prescribed by § 46.2-339 of the Code of Virginia.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Submit to testing for alcohol and controlled substances that is in compliance with the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-143, Title V) as amended and is in compliance with 49 CFR Parts 40 and 382.

8 VAC 20-70-290. First aid course - Any school board may require successful completion of the American Red Cross first aid course or its equivalent as a condition to employment to operate a school bus transporting pupils as required by § 22.1-178 of the Code of Virginia.

8 VAC 20-70-300. Required documents - The documents required pursuant to 8 VAC 20-70-280 shall be furnished annually prior to the anniversary date of the employment to operate a school bus.

8 VAC 20-70-320. Forms for applicants - The Department of Education shall furnish to the division superintendents the necessary forms for applicants to use to provide the information required by this section. Insofar as practicable, such forms shall be designed to limit paperwork, avoid the possibility of mistakes, and furnish all parties involved with a complete and accurate record of the information required.

8 VAC 20-70-330. Health certificate - As a condition to employment, every school and activity bus driver shall submit a certificate signed by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner stating that the employee appears free of communicable tuberculosis. The school board may require the submission of such certificates annually, or at such intervals as it deems appropriate, as a condition to continued employment.

8 VAC 20-70-340. Highway driving - No person shall drive a school or activity bus upon a highway in the Commonwealth unless such person has had a reasonable amount of experience in driving motor vehicles, and shall have passed a special examination indicating the ability to operate a school bus without endangering the safety of pupil passengers and persons using the highway as stated in Section 46.2-339 of the Code of Virginia. To prepare for the examination required by this section, any person holding a valid operator's license and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Instruction Permit issued under the provisions of § 46.2-325 of the Code of Virginia, may operate, under the direct supervision of a person holding a valid school bus license endorsement, a school bus that contains no pupil passengers. The Department of Motor Vehicles is required to adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary to provide for the examination of persons desiring to qualify to drive such buses in this Commonwealth and for the granting of permits to qualified applicants.

8 VAC 20-70-350. Training - No person shall operate a school or activity bus transporting pupils unless the person has:

1. Received classroom, demonstration, and behind-the-wheel instruction in accordance with a program developed by the Department of Education pursuant to § 22.1-181 of the Code of Virginia.
2. Completed a minimum of 24 classroom hours and 24 hours of behind-the-wheel training. A minimum of 10 hours of the 24 hours of behind-the-wheel time shall involve the operation of a bus with pupils on board while under the direct on-board supervision of a designated bus driver trainer. All drivers shall receive training in the operation of buses representative of the type used in the school division in which they are employed and in the transportation of students with special needs. Classroom instruction means

training provided by a qualified driver instructor through lectures, demonstrations, audio-visual presentations, computer-based instruction, driving simulation devices, or similar means. Instruction occurring outside a classroom qualifies as classroom instruction if it does not involve actual operation of a school bus and its components by the trainee. Behind-the-wheel training does not include time spent riding in a school bus or observing the operation of a school bus when the trainee is not in control of the vehicle.

3. The superintendent or his designee shall maintain a record showing that the applicant has completed the training and has been approved to operate a school or activity bus.
4. New transportation directors/supervisors employed by school divisions shall complete the "Train the Trainer" class conducted by the Department of Education within a year after being employed in this position.

8 VAC 20-70-360. In-service training - In-service training (at least two hours before opening of the school year and at least two hours during the second half of the school year) devoted to improving the skills, attitudes, and knowledge including orientation to maximize benefits of using safety programs and safety components shall be provided to all school or activity bus drivers. In-service training should include, but is not limited to, the following topics: basic motor vehicle laws, related administrative codes, pre-trip inspection procedures, student discipline and conduct, drug and alcohol testing procedures and policies, fuel conservation, safety, emergency procedures, student information and confidentiality, and local policies and procedures as required by the division's transportation department. A copy of the agenda for each in-service training event shall be on file in the school division.

8 VAC 20-70-370. Supervision - The drivers of school and activity buses shall be under the general direction and control of the superintendent or designee, and shall also be accountable to the principal of the school to which pupil transportation is provided.

8 VAC 20-70-380. Pre-trip safety inspection - Prior to the initial transporting of children each day, the drivers of school and activity buses shall perform a daily pre-trip safety inspection of the vehicle. The items checked and recorded shall be at least equal to the pre-trip inspection procedure in the Preventive Maintenance Manual for Virginia School Buses (September 2012) issued by the Department of Education.

8 VAC 20-70-400. Evaluation - Each school and activity bus driver shall be evaluated by the transportation director or designee at least once each year. The results of the evaluation shall be discussed with the driver and included in the driver's personnel file.

8 VAC 20-70-410. Emergency equipment - The driver of activity or extracurricular trip buses shall advise the pupils and/or sponsors of the location of the required emergency equipment and exits prior to the beginning of any such trip.

8 VAC 20-70-411. Driver trainers - Behind-the-wheel driver trainers must meet the requirements of 8VAC20-70-350 and must have maintained a Class B license for two years prior to functioning as a behind-the-wheel driver trainer.

8 VAC 20-70-420. Instructor course certificate - Local school bus driver training instructors shall hold a certificate for completion of an instructor course conducted or approved by the Department of Education and shall attend a recertification course every five years. Certification expires at the end of calendar year five.

8 VAC 20-70-430. Driver data - The names and driver license numbers of persons operating school and activity buses and other vehicles used to transport pupils shall be submitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles annually as required by § 46.2-340 of the Code of Virginia.



considered for future runs.) The director or his designee shall assign extra runs, from among those drivers who applied, using the following criteria:

- Extra runs will be assigned first to drivers who are not meeting their minimum contracted hour requirements.
- For Governor’s School and Vocational School AM takeover or PM return runs, the driver must serve the high school where the run originates.

FIELD TRIPS

- **Field trips will not be scheduled during regular transport times.** Trips will be scheduled mid-days (departures after 9:00 a.m. and return times before 2:00 pm), evenings (after 4:00 p.m.) or on weekends/student holidays.
- Field trip drivers will receive assignments first. If field trip drivers are not available, trips will be assigned using a rotational system where all interested drivers will receive a trip based on request and eligibility.
- Schools, that have qualified drivers on staff, may request a member of their staff as the trip driver in lieu of one assigned by the Office of Transportation Services.
- A driver who refuses a trip will forfeit his/her turn and will not be assigned to a trip until his/her next turn. A third refusal will result in removal from the field trip list.
- So that a driver may accompany his/her child on a field trip, or for other good reason, a driver may request and receive a particular trip, if it has not already been assigned. (If practical, this request will supersede field trip driver assignment.)
- A driver may not be assigned a field trip if it will result in over thirty-seven and one-half (37.5) hours worked for that week. Drivers who accept trips that result in over time, without the knowledge of supervision, may have their names removed from the field trip list.
- All Field Trips transporting one or more wheelchairs must have either trained school personnel or a paid Bus Attendant on duty for the duration of the trip; Drivers are not expected to operate the wheelchair lift.

ASSIGNMENT OF DRIVER ATTENDANTS

Permanent Assignments

Permanent assignments are those assignments made for the duration of the school year or until parameters used to make the assignment change.

At the beginning of each school year or whenever it becomes necessary to make permanent assignments of attendants, the following procedures will be followed:

- The primary criteria used for making assignments shall be proximity of the attendant’s home to the bus parking location and the beginning of the route.
- Every reasonable effort shall be made to meet the attendant at a location convenient to him or her.
- When this is not possible, however, it will be the attendant’s responsibility to get to and from the meeting location.
- No assignment shall be made, or meeting location approved, that result in additional deadhead mileage for the bus.
- The original meeting place is not part of the route. Therefore, when a route changes due to a change in parking location or first stop the meeting place may also change and may require the attendant to meet the bus at another location.



- Drivers and attendants who are related shall not be assigned to the same bus.

Temporary Assignments

Temporary assignments are short-term assignments made in order to insure we operate in compliance with IEP and Special Needs policy on a daily basis and to efficiently utilize those attendants who have been temporarily displaced due to driver absence. Temporary assignments of attendants present a special challenge to transportation for two reasons. First, regular drivers may pass by a meeting location on the way to the first stop while the substitute driver may not. Second, when a driver is absent, his or her route is often broken-up by placing the students on several different buses. When this happens, the attendant is displaced because the students are assigned to buses where other attendants are already assigned.

When temporary driver attendant assignments are made, the following procedures will be followed:

- The attendant will be picked up at the regular meeting place if:
 1. A special needs bus without an attendant can do so without adding additional deadhead mileage.
 2. A regular bus temporarily needing assistance with discipline can do so without adding additional deadhead mileage.
 3. In some cases the school division must provide an attendant or be out of compliance with IEP or special needs policy. When this happens, transportation will make an extraordinary effort to provide an attendant including sending a bus off the route to pick him or her up.
- If the above parameters are not met, the attendant must report to the transportation office for standby or to another location assigned by transportation.
- An attendant who does not report in for an assignment, when the driver they team with is absent, will receive leave without pay.
- An attendant who cannot report to the work location assigned, will receive leave without pay.
- Attendants who knowingly falsify their timesheets by reporting time worked when they did not report will be recommended for disciplinary action including possible termination.
- An attendant who reports to the transportation office for standby:
 1. Will report to dispatch and start his or her time at the designated arrival time assigned.
 2. May be asked to travel to a school or other location away from transportation to meet a bus.
 3. In the event an attendant is asked to travel, time will continue during the travel time and the time spent on the route until the assistant arrives back at the location from which he or she met the bus.
 4. An attendant who reports to the transportation office and is then asked to travel will be eligible for mileage from the transportation office to the location where the bus is met.
- Except for the above situation, no mileage or time for travel will be paid.

PART VI - FITNESS FOR DUTY

Our first and utmost concern must be the safety and well-being of the students entrusted to our care each day. Employees must be physically capable of assisting students, themselves, and others to safety in the event of an emergency situation. As noted in the Qualifications for School Bus Drivers in Virginia, employees must not have an impairment of extremities in physical executions of safety procedures and/or routine driving. Listed below are examples of daily duties that require the use of hands, arms, shoulders, back, and leg, muscles.

Fitness for Duty Procedure for Commercial Driver's License Holders -

- Ability to open a school bus hood (an estimated force of lifting fifty (50) pounds).

- Ability to stoop to visually inspect under the vehicle; the drive shaft, exhaust system, frame, springs, air brake chambers and hoses, springs, spring mounts, etc.
- Ability to climb twice and descend once the front steps of a school bus without pausing and without significant shortness of breath.
- Ability to operate emergency exits (door, roof hatches and/or emergency windows).
- Ability to open and close a manually operated school bus entrance door without difficulty while belted in the driver’s seat. (requires a pull or push of approximately thirty (30) pounds).
- Ability to activate the brake pedal with the right foot in ¾ of a second or less after removing the right foot from the throttle pedal.
- From a belted position in the driver’s seat of a school bus, the ability to move to the rear of the bus, open the emergency door and exit the bus within 20 seconds or less (based on a 65 passenger school bus).
- Ability to move a fifty (50) pound weight 35 to 40 feet, simulating dragging a child to safety in the event of an emergency.
- Ability to operate wheel chair procedures, including the operation of bus lift systems and stooping/bending to “tie down” chairs for transport.

Fitness for Duty Procedure for Special Needs Bus Attendants –

- Ability to climb twice and descend once the front steps of a school bus without pausing and without significant shortness of breath.
- Ability and know-how to secure the bus in case of emergency.
- Ability to operate emergency exits (door, roof hatches and/or emergency windows).
- Ability to exit via the emergency door in a timely manner.
- Ability to enter and depart the bus with relative ease.
- Ability to lift a 50 lb child (as demonstrated with a rescue manikin) in and out of a car seat.
- Ability to move a fifty (50) pound weight 35 to 40 feet, simulating dragging a child to safety in the event of an emergency.
- Ability to operate wheel chair procedures, including the operation of bus lift systems and stooping/bending to “tie down” chairs for transport.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BUS DRIVERS

The safety and well-being of our students is of utmost importance. To meet the physical requirements of a bus driver, the Code of Virginia and the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education require as a condition of employment that all bus drivers meet the following:

1. Have a physical examination of a scope prescribed by the Board of Education with the advice of the Medical Society of Virginia and furnish on a form prescribed by the Board of Education showing the results of such examination.
2. Submit a School Bus Driver's Application for Physician's Certificate signed by the applicant and the doctor or a licensed nurse practitioner for the applicable employment period. The physical form must describe the basic physical qualifications for school bus drivers. However, the examining physician or licensed nurse practitioner shall make the final determination of the individual's physical capacity to operate a school bus based upon their assessment of the individual's overall physical condition.

To ensure that all bus drivers are physically fit to drive a bus and meet all requirements outlined by the Board of Education and the Code of Virginia, all drivers are required to have their physical examinations performed by staff at the Spotsylvania County Schools Department of Health Services. Any exception to this requirement will

SERVICE STANDARDS FOR BUS ROUTING

Recommended maximum distance from the property line of the house to the bus stop (walking distance to bus stop):

Elementary school (K-5) 1/10 of a mile

Middle/High school (6-12) 5/10 of a mile

Buses will not go into cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets where walk-to-stop distances do not exceed those listed above.

Exception: Safety will be determined by transportation staff using standard stop evaluation criteria.

- Recommended maximum number of students at one stop:
Fifteen (15) students
- Students should be at the bus stop five (5) minutes before the stop time:
Having the students at the bus stop five (5) minutes before the arrival of the bus ensures that the bus will not wait for the students and extend the time of the route.
- Maximum loads:

| | 64-65 Passenger Bus | 77-Passenger Bus |
|------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Elementary | 64 | 77 |
| Middle | 50 | 60 |
| High | 44 | 52 |

- Maximum ridership time:
One (1) hour & twenty minutes.
- Maximum number of bus transportation addresses:
A student may have only one (1) alternate transportation address. Each address requires the transportation office to reserve a seat on the bus for that student. By limiting the number of alternate addresses, there is less confusion of where the student is to be transported and increases the ability to maximize the use of bus seats.
- All students must have transportation addresses on file with the school system in order to be eligible to receive school bus transportation:
Students will be transported to and from their home address. An alternate address must be on file at the school the student attends and entered into the student information system prior to receiving transportation to an address other than the home address. Examples of an alternate address are the day care facility or grandparent’s home within the attendance area.
- Assignment to bus stop:
Students will be assigned to the bus stop closest to the designated point of pick-up and drop-off. All stops will be assigned using data from the student information system. Students will not be picked up nor dropped off at a business shopping center (child care providers excluded). Students must board and leave the bus at their regularly scheduled stop unless a written request for a temporary bus pass is made by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal. A temporary bus pass is valid for a period not to exceed five (5) instructional days. Transportation employees will not accept bus passes that are incomplete or that are not on the proper form.

- **Changes in bus stops and/or routes:**
Routes and/or stops may only be changed with the approval of a transportation supervisor or the coordinator for automated routing. Requests for changes in bus stops or routes will require an advance notice of three (3) to five (5) working days. This period of three (3) to five (5) days is required in order to prepare internal records and notify drivers, parents and schools of the proposed changes.

ISSUED: September 11, 2000

REISSUED: June 10, 2002, effective July 1, 2002

REISSUED: March 26, 2007, effective July 1, 2007
June 28, 2010

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The school principal will have the authority to suspend the riding privileges of students and/or take other disciplinary actions for students who are disciplinary problems on the bus. Parents (or guardians) of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses violates the Code of Student Conduct or otherwise endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders shall be notified that their child/children face the loss of school bus riding privileges and/or other disciplinary actions.

In those instances where students have the riding privileges suspended it shall be the responsibility of the parents (or guardians) of the student to see that their child/children get to and from school safely.

The bus driver shall be responsible for maintaining the orderly behavior of students on school buses and shall report misconduct to the student's principal, and provide a copy to the transportation office.

ADOPTED: November 14, 1994

REVISED: June 10, 2002, effective July 1, 2002
March 26, 2007, effective July 1, 2007
June 28, 2011

LEGAL: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Sections 22.1-78, 22.1-181, 22.1-293(B), 22.1-293(D);
8VAC20-70-390

CROSS REF: EEA: Student Transportation Services
JFC: Student Conduct
JFC-R: Standards of Student Conduct

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Student Conduct on School Buses

In the interest of the safety and welfare of school bus passengers, the School Board directs the Superintendent of Schools and his/her designees to establish and enforce strict school bus discipline and safety regulations. Students who do not conform to all regulations and directives concerning discipline, safety and conduct, or whose behavior could be detrimental to the safety or welfare of others or the safe operation of the bus may have their bus riding privileges suspended or revoked in accordance with these regulations.

Transportation of Students

The School Board may furnish transportation to resident students enrolled in the schools of the division who satisfy the following requirements:

1. Reside within the attendance area of the school(s) served;
2. Are present at authorized points for student pick up at the designated time; and
3. Comply with division standards and regulations in their conduct and behavior.

Disciplinary Issues on School Buses

All students, while on any bus operated by Spotsylvania County Public Schools, are governed by the Code of Student Conduct, set forth in Policy JFC.

Rules and Regulations

To assure safe and efficient transportation of students, the following rules and regulations shall apply:

- The number of pupils who may ride a school bus shall be determined by the total number who can be seated on the seat cushion facing forward, safely seated within the seating compartment, and shall not exceed the manufacturer's capacity. Pupils may not be permitted to stand, except under unforeseen temporary emergency conditions and for short distances as identified in policy by the local school board.
- To assure safe and efficient transportation of students, strict school bus discipline and safety regulations must be adhered to. Students who do not conform to all regulations and directives concerning discipline, safety and conduct or whose behavior could be detrimental to the safety or welfare of others or the safe operation of the bus may have their bus riding privileges suspended or revoked.
- The bus driver is the only person who is permitted to open and close the entrance door.
- Posters, stickers and advertising material of any kind are prohibited in or on school buses.
- No object shall be placed in the bus that will restrict passageway to the entrance or emergency door.
- All students are under the jurisdiction of the driver while they are on a school bus. Drivers have the same authority as a teacher in the classroom.
- All students are to get on the bus and take a seat and remain there until they reach their destination.
- Students are to refrain from reaching out of the bus windows at all times.
- Misconduct, such as fighting, yelling, use of profanity, or any conduct that is distracting to the driver, will not be tolerated.
- The possession and/or use of tobacco products is prohibited on the bus.
- Consumption of food or drink is not permitted on the bus. Glass containers on the bus are prohibited.
- No objects are to be thrown from the windows on the bus.

- National best practices expect students to be at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time of the bus. Bus drivers are not permitted to wait for late students.
- Students required to cross the road at a bus stop must always do so in front of the bus. Before crossing, they must wait until the driver directs them and check to make sure all traffic has stopped. Students must remain in the driver's line of sight at all times when the bus is approaching, stopped at, or leaving the bus stop.
- All students are expected to ride the assigned or designated bus that picks up at the stop nearest his or her home. Students are expected to ride back home in the afternoon on the assigned or designated bus that stops nearest his or her home.
- Any student found guilty of destroying any part of a school bus will be required to pay for the damage and be disciplined by the school.
- Any student who does not abide by the rules stated above will be disciplined by the school administrator.

SPECIAL USE OF SCHOOL BUSES

The use of school buses for purposes other than transporting children to and from school for the regular school hours and for extracurricular activities is permitted with prior approval of the superintendent and in accordance with regulations pertaining to field trips. In addition, the School board may enter into agreements with its appropriating body, or any state agency, or any federal agency established or identified pursuant 42 U.S.C. Section 3001 et seq. providing for the use of the school buses of the division by such body or agency for public purposes, including transportation for the elderly. Each such agreement shall provide for reimbursing the School Board in full for the proportionate share of any and all costs, both fixed and variable, of such buses incurred by such School Board attributable to the use of such buses pursuant to such agreement. The Appropriating body, or state or federal agency, shall indemnify and hold harmless the School Board from any and all liability of the School Board by virtue of use of such buses pursuant to an agreement.

School vehicles will not be used to transport any children under the age of two (2) years without prior approval of the superintendent or his/her designee.

Bus drivers will be permitted to transport their own preschool children or grandchildren while transporting elementary or secondary students provided the following criteria are met:

- Adequate seating must be available without displacing a Spotsylvania County student.
- Written approval will be obtained from the Director of Transportation before a child may ride the bus.
- The driver shall provide Spotsylvania County Schools with a written release for any injuries sustained by the child as a result of riding the school bus.
- All children or grandchildren must be at least two (2) years of age.
- No more than two (2) children will be permitted to ride at the same time.
- All restraints required by regulation or to insure the individual child’s safety and well-being are present and used.
- The parent or guardian must provide all additional special equipment, such as car seats, at no cost to the division.
- All equipment must meet the same standards as equipment issued by Transportation for the transport of pre-school age students.
- The parent or guardian must be responsible for the behavior of the child(ren).
- Unruly or disruptive behavior will be grounds to revoke a child’s permission to ride the bus.
- Grandchildren may not ride the bus unless the grandparent has legal custody.

ADOPTED: November 14, 1994

REVISED: August 23, 2004
March 26, 2007, effective July 1, 2007
July 20, 2009

CROSS REF: IICA: Field Trips and Excursions

TORNADO

Tornado Watch: *Tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms.*

Tornado Warning: *A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Warnings are issued for counties and/or communities and include the tornado's location, direction, and speed. If the warning is for your area, follow the safety plan developed by the school district.*

According to the National Weather Service, tornadoes can occur any time of day or night, any time of year.

Guidance:

1. Have shelter options (schools, county buildings, businesses) along various parts of the route should evacuation be necessary and to the extent practical similar options when on activity trips. In emergency situations most people will offer others shelter when asked;
2. School administrators are to routinely monitor weather reports for the prediction of severe weather or announcements of weather advisories. Once in route (daily route or activity trip) the school district should communicate this information to the school bus driver.
3. When a "tornado watch" is issued a school bus driver is to be prepared for a sudden change in weather condition and alert for the appearance of violent wind, rain, hail or a funnel shaped cloud.
4. When a "Tornado Warning" is issued or your current conditions indicate immanent or immediate danger, promptly seek shelter for the passengers.
 - If the warning is announced at or near the dismissal of school, students are to remain in the building in a designated safe area.
 - If caught in the direct path of a tornado or one is sighted and pre-identified shelter is not accessible the school bus driver is to:
 - Stop and evacuate the passengers. Do not attempt to "out run" the tornado. Do not remain on the school bus. If the bus is radio equipped advise the school transportation office of your bus number and location.
 - Seek safety in a below ground level area, such as a ditch, ravine, or depression in a location that is:
 - away from the bus; and
 - where practical on the side of the road without power lines, utility poles etc
 - Do not use above ground locations for shelter(e.g. road or bridge over passes)
 - Instruct passengers to lie flat face down and to protect their head by using a jacket, other clothing, or their hands and arms. Advise passenger to "not sneak a peek" at the tornado.

5. **After the Emergency:**

- Account for all passengers, check for injuries, and provide first aid if needed. Obtain medical attention if needed.
- Before leaving a shelter or the immediate area if out in the open, the bus driver should monitor the local sky for a few minutes in the direction the tornado came from to ensure a second tornado does not follow a similar path.
- Be alert for continued storm activity, downed power lines, ruptured gas lines, or structural damage to trees, buildings, roads and bridges.
- Establish communication with the Transportation office and determine the next steps to take with the children.

Proper Radio Etiquette

1. **Use radio only for necessary communication** – anything that can be done off the airwaves should be done off the airwaves.
2. **Listen to assure airwaves are clear.** Occasionally, there will be necessary transmissions that occur at the same time, but a good way to reduce that chance is to listen for whether a situation is currently being addressed.
3. **Hold Microphone button down momentarily before speaking.** It takes a split second to key the radio for transmission, so waiting will increase the chance that the dispatcher clearly hears the request.
4. **Speak slowly and clearly.** A driver might understand what he/she is saying, but if no one else does, the communication means nothing.
5. **Speak directly into microphone.** A radio is sometimes not positioned advantageously for a driver to use. Still, for effective communication, it's imperative to take the handset off the clip, hold it a few inches away and speak directly into the microphone.
6. **Keep transmission brief.** Driver's need to be direct and brief.
7. **Let dispatcher initially handle requests.** If dispatch needs help from other drivers, they will specifically ask. A third-party interruption often leads to confusion for the base and the initial driver about how that driver should proceed.
8. **Keep off airwaves until emergencies are finished.** Communication between the involved bus and the base might ultimately make the difference in survival. Drivers need to monitor the airwaves, be aware of emergencies and stay offline until the base says it's all right to continue standard transmissions.

9. **Keep transmissions between buses professional.** Radio is for school business only.

Perfect Attendance

All drivers and attendants, between the months of August and December, if you have perfect attendance you will receive a bonus check (\$250) on the December's pay date. Between the months of January and May, if you have perfect attendance you will receive a bonus check (\$250) on the May pay date. If you are absent in December, then you will not receive a bonus check in May, even if you have perfect attendance January through May. Personal days do not count against your perfect attendance.