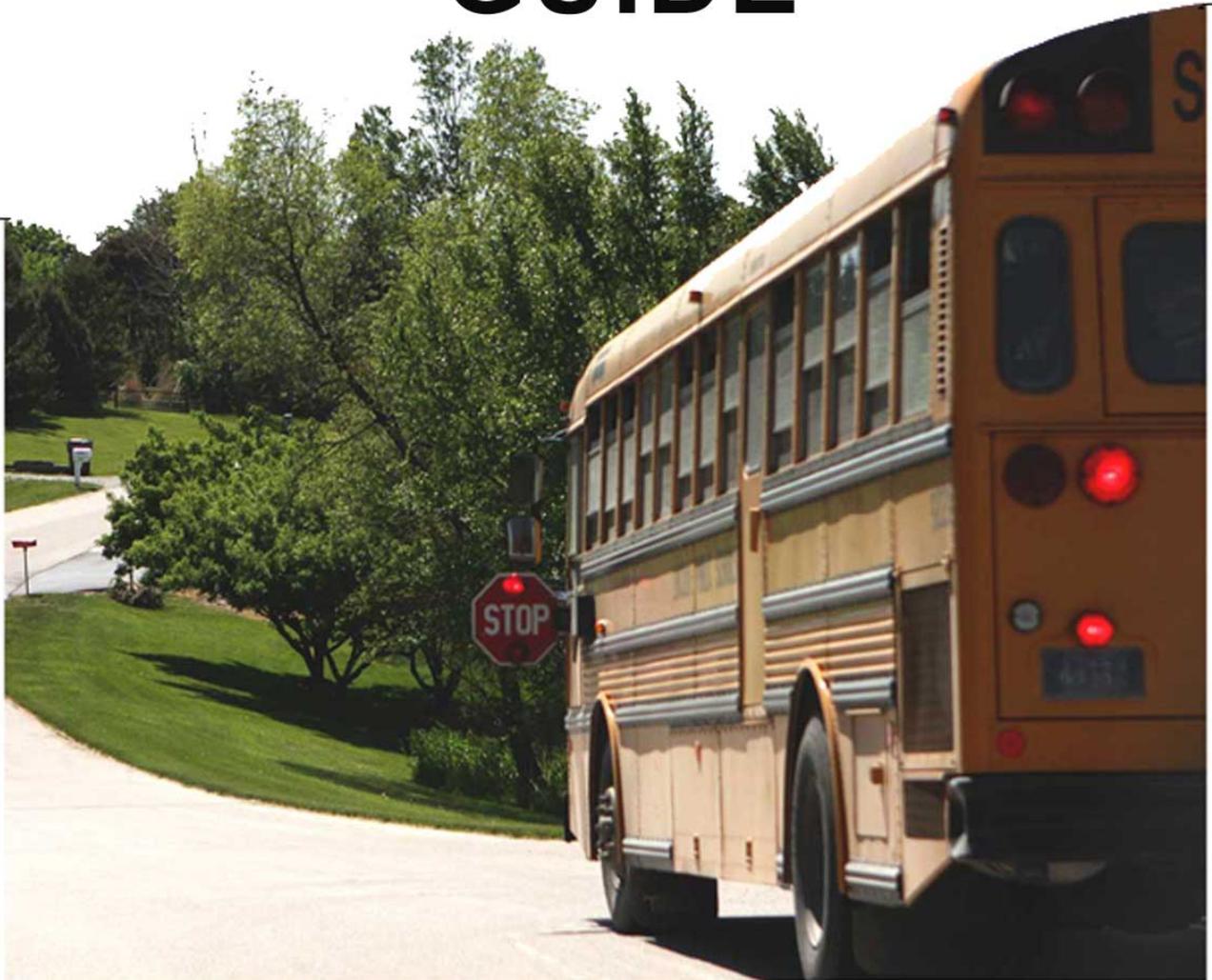


PUPIL TRANSPORTATION GUIDE



**Nebraska Department of
Education**

Revised September 1, 2009



Nebraska Department of **EDUCATION**

• 301 Centennial Mall South • Lincoln, NE 68509 • 402/471-2299

Approximately 65,000 Nebraska school children are transported each day between home and school in pupil transportation vehicles. These vehicles could be school buses, vans or cars. Pupil transportation vehicles annually travel almost 50,000,000 miles carrying Nebraska students to and from school and for activity trips. Since school children are transported so many miles each year, their safety depends on the dedicated men and women who accept the important responsibility of driving pupil transportation vehicles.

The primary role of the pupil transportation driver is ensuring the safe transportation of children to and from school and school-related activities. Drivers have many roles and responsibilities during the school year. Some of which include the following:

- Knowledge of the Department of Motor Vehicles' "Rules of the Road,"
- Keen awareness of student welfare and safety,
- Full understanding of the proper use and care for a vehicle.

The construction and the safety equipment of pupil transportation vehicles are critical to providing safety to school bus occupants when an accident occurs. However, it is the pupil transportation vehicle driver who often prevents these incidents each school day by their knowledge and driving skills.

For more information:
Nebraska Department of Education
Finance & Organization Services
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln NE 68509
402/471-2248



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This document and related forms can be downloaded at
<http://ess.nde.state.ne.us/OrgServices/PupilTrans/>

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Nebraska Department of Education

Pupil Transportation Guide

Pupil transportation is an integral part of today's educational system. The pupil transportation vehicle driver is expected to present a strong role model for children, as well as to represent the school district before the public.

These drivers set an example of good driving practices and an attitude of professional responsibility that encourages the development of social responsibility among students. Good driving practices promote public confidence in school personnel and programs.

The safety of every student depends on the judgment and skill of the pupil transportation vehicle driver. Each time the driver sits behind the wheel, he or she has accepted the

responsibility for the lives of many young people. A good pupil transportation vehicle driver must also be well informed. Teaching the driver to deal with all possible situations is a primary objective of a pupil transportation educational program.

The purpose of the Pupil Transportation Guide is to provide each pupil transportation driver in Nebraska with the basic information needed to develop the skills, attitudes, and knowledge for safe and efficient driving. It should be used as an educational tool and reference manual. It is not intended to take the place of any official publication.

For reference purposes, it is suggested that this guide be carried in each pupil transportation vehicle.



QUALIFICATIONS AND LICENSING

All pupil transportation vehicle drivers must meet the specific qualifications established by the employing district and requirements set by the Nebraska Department of Education and the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). These statutory requirements must be met to ensure safe and effective operation of pupil transportation vehicles.

This guide has been developed based on rules and regulations found in Nebraska Department of Education *Rule 91, Regulations Governing Driver Qualifications and Operational Procedures for Pupil Transportation Vehicles* and *Rule 92, Minimum Equipment Standards and Safety Inspection Criteria for Pupil Transportation Vehicles*. These Rules have been adopted pursuant to Section 79-318(13) of the Revised Statutes of Nebraska (R.R.S.). The issuance of permits to operate pupil transportation vehicles is also subject to the regulations and procedures of the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles.

A school bus permit issued by DMV is required for the driver of all vehicles used to transport one or more school children provided that such transportation service is sponsored and approved by a school's governing board. This regulation does not include small vehicles used exclusively to carry members of the vehicle owner's household, or the operation of small vehicles (cars and vans) in emergency situations when approved by a school official as designated by the governing board. A school bus permit is not required for a person driving a small vehicle used only for activity purposes.

Pupil transportation vehicle drivers must always carry the following documentation when operating a pupil transportation vehicle:

- Appropriate and valid DMV school bus permit
 - Appropriate and valid operator's license (Class O or CDL)
 - Valid medical exam certificate
- (For drivers holding an Operator's License from a state other than Nebraska, a valid Level I or II Instructional Course Card must be included among the documentation listed above.)



Driver's Eligibility

The following requirements shall be met prior to applying for an *initial* school bus permit:

- Possess an appropriate valid operator's license (Class O or CDL)
- Be able to read and comprehend driving regulations and written test questions
- Be a minimum of 18 years of age
- Shall be of good moral character
- Pass a medical examination
- Complete all requirements of the 11 hour Level I Instructional Course

Additionally, schools must meet the following requirements:

- Before the employment of the individual, the school (or employing agency) must obtain a record of satisfactory driving through the Department of Motor Vehicles as determined by the local board of education policy. A copy of the individual's driving record must be on file with the employing agency before employment as a pupil transportation vehicle operator.
- The school or employing agency must also obtain a criminal record of driver applicants through the Nebraska State Patrol and local law enforcement agency before employment as a pupil transportation vehicle operator.
- The school or employing agency is required to update the DMV driving record annually and update their criminal history record with the Nebraska State patrol every five years to assure the most current information is on file.



DMV School Bus Permit

The following requirements must be met prior to the issuance of a school bus permit if an applicant has never held such a permit:

- Complete a 11-hour Level I Instructional Course for driving pupil transportation vehicles. An applicant may waive the Level I requirement for 60 days if the applicant receives the minimum score on the Level I waiver exam. (The waiver exam may be taken online through the Nebraska Safety Center.) Within 60 days of the waiver exam, the applicant must complete the Level I class. DMV is notified upon completion of this course.

- If preparing to drive a school bus, complete the Pre-Service Evaluation and Road Test which is a “behind the wheel” training and evaluation conducted by a school bus driver that holds a current school bus permit and Commercial Driver’s License (CDL). The form for this evaluation (Pre-Service Evaluation & Road Test Form) is available on the Department of Education’s Pupil Transportation website.
- If the vehicle requires the driver to hold a CDL, the applicant must hold a Learner’s Permit for Commercial Vehicles (LPC) prior to the Pre-Service Evaluation and Road Test. In order to obtain an LPC, the applicant must pass a general knowledge written test based on the information contained in the CDL Manual. The LPC is valid for six months. (The CDL Manual is available online at the Department of Motor Vehicles website.)
- Pass a medical exam within 90 days of application for a license. The physician documents this examination by completing a form prescribed by the Department of Transportation. This form (Medical Examination Report) is available on the Department of Education Pupil Transportation Website. For purposes of obtaining a permit, the medical exam is valid for 90 days from date of examination.
- Pass the vision, written and driving tests administered by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Substitute pupil transportation vehicle drivers must meet the same requirements as a regular pupil transportation vehicle driver.

Documentation of Medical Exams

Schools or employing agencies must retain a copy of the valid Medical Examiner’s Certificate for each driver for which it employs or contracts his/her services. A driver must provide the school with a copy of the valid Medical Examiner’s Certificate each year or be subject to the recall of his/her permit.

If a school learns a driver's Medical Examiner's Certificate has expired or becomes invalid due to health reasons, the school must notify the Department of Motor Vehicles. The permit becomes subject to recall upon notification of the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Renewal Requirements

School bus permits expire on the applicant's birthday in the year after issuance. The individual makes an application to renew their school bus permit at a DMV Examining site. The applicant must provide the following documentation:

- Provide an original Medical Exam Report as prescribed by the Department of Transportation. The DMV will retain the

original of this report for their records. For purposes of obtaining a permit, the medical exam is valid for 90 days from date of examination.

- Provide documentation of valid current Level I or Level II Instructional Course completion.
- After five years of completing a Level I Program and each subsequent five-year period, the driver must attend the Level II Instructional Course administered by an instructor approved by NDE.
- Each year pass the vision test administered by the Department of Motor Vehicles.



Types of Permits

The Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles test for and issues the following school bus permits and commercial driver's licenses:

School Bus Permit Class	Type	Vehicle Capacity/Activity <i>Passengers only</i> <i>This count does not include drivers</i>	License Type Required
A	Small Vehicle/Van	1 to 10 passengers	Class O
B	School Bus	Up to 14 passengers	Class O
C	School/Activity/Multifunction Activity Bus	Up to 14 passengers – activity only	Class O
D	School Bus	15 or more passengers	CDL
E	School/Activity/Multifunction Activity Bus, Coach Bus	15 or more passengers – activity only	CDL

At a minimum, all applicants for a school bus permit must hold a valid Class O Operator's License. A Class O License authorizes a person to operate any motor vehicle except a commercial motor vehicle or a motorcycle.

School Bus - Class A Permit

(Small Vehicle or Van)

- The applicant is subject to the regulations and testing procedures administered by the DMV.
- The applicant must pass a written test for a small vehicle and a driving test. The driving

test must be taken in a vehicle that is representative of the class of vehicle the applicant will drive.

- The holder of this permit can only operate a small vehicle such as a car or van as a pupil transportation vehicle.

School Bus - Class B Permit

- The applicant is subject to the regulations and testing procedures administered by the DMV.
- The applicant must pass a written test for a school bus driver and driving test, **including** the process of controlling traffic and loading/unloading pupils on a highway. The driving test must be taken in a vehicle that is representative of the class of vehicle the applicant will drive.
- The holder of this permit can operate a school bus/activity bus (designed to carry 14 passengers or less) and a small vehicle.

School Bus Permit - Class C

(Activity/Multifunction School Activity Bus)

- The applicant is subject to the regulations and testing procedures administered by the DMV.
- The applicant must pass a written test for a school bus driver and driving test **excluding** the process of controlling traffic and loading/unloading pupils on a highway. The driving test will be taken in a vehicle that is representative of the class of vehicle the applicant will drive.
- The holder of this permit may operate an activity bus (designed to carry 14 passengers or less) and a small vehicle.

School Bus Permit - Class D

- The applicant is subject to the regulations and testing procedures administered by the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- The applicant must pass a written test for a school bus driver and a driving test, **including** the process of controlling traffic and loading/unloading pupils on a highway. The driving test must be taken in a vehicle that is representative of the class of vehicle the applicant will drive.
- A Commercial Driver's License is required for this permit. The applicant should prepare for the examinations by reviewing this manual and the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Manual available at the Department of Motor Vehicles Website.

- The holder of this permit may drive a school bus/activity bus (designed to carry 15 passengers or more), school bus/activity bus (designed to carry 14 passengers or less) and a small vehicle

School Bus Permit - Class E

(School Bus, Activity/Multifunction School Activity Bus, Coach Bus)

- The applicant is subject to the regulations and testing procedures administered by the DMV.
- The applicant must pass written test for a school bus and driving test, **excluding** the process of controlling traffic and loading/unloading pupils on the highway. The driving test must be taken in a vehicle that is representative of the class of vehicle the applicant will drive.
- A Commercial Driver's License is required for this permit. The applicant should prepare for the tests by reviewing this manual and the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Manual available at the Department of Motor Vehicles Website.
- The holder of this permit may operate an activity bus (designed to carry 15 or more passengers), activity bus (designed to carry 14 passengers or less) and a small vehicle.



CDL School Bus Endorsement

Drivers of school buses with a capacity of 16 or more (including the driver) are required to hold a CDL with an S Endorsement. The S Endorsement requires the driver to have knowledge of the following:

- Loading and unloading children, including operation of stop signal devices, external mirror systems, flashing lights, and other warning and passenger safety devices.
- Emergency exits and evacuation procedures
- Safely driving over highway railroad grade crossings



Learner's Permit for Commercial Driver's License (LPC)

While preparing for the CDL examination, the applicant must hold a Learner's Permit for a Commercial Driver's License. This permit allows the applicant to drive a school bus with no passengers on board (or a commercial vehicle) on roadways before he or she completes the requirements for a commercial driver's license.

- The applicant must pass a written test on general driving knowledge administered by the Department of Motor Vehicles. This test is based on the information contained in the CDL Manual.
- When a driver holding an LPC is driving a school bus (or other commercial vehicle), he/she must be accompanied by an individual holding a valid CDL. No other passengers can be on board.
- The LPC is valid for six months.

Drug and Alcohol Use and Testing Requirements

A school bus driver subject to CDL requirements is also subject to the drug and alcohol use and testing requirements found in 49 CFR Part 382 and Part 40 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

The following is a general overview of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) alcohol and drug testing rules for persons required to obtain a CDL. The information is intended to provide a general summary of the rules; it should not be relied upon to fulfill all legal requirements stipulated in the regulations. It does not contain many of the requirements or special circumstances detailed in the FMCSA and DOT rules.

Test Requirements for CDL

The following tests apply to all persons who are required to have a CDL for the type vehicle being operated:

Pre-Employment: This test is required and negative results must be received before a driver is allowed to perform a safety sensitive function. The pre-employment test is only required for controlled substances. Alcohol testing is permitted.

- **Reasonable Suspicion:** This test is required when a trained supervisor/employer has reasonable suspicion to believe that the driver has used alcohol and/or controlled substances.
- **Random:** This unannounced testing is based on a random selection of drivers. The selection must be made by a scientifically valid method and all drivers covered by this rule must have an equal chance of being tested. The names of drivers who are selected for testing must be kept confidential until such time that the carrier notifies the driver to take the test. Once the driver is notified, he/she must immediately proceed to the testing facility

and undergo testing. Every driver's name that is selected for testing must be returned to the selection pool so that all drivers have an equal chance of being selected at any time.

Random alcohol testing is also required by the DOT. However, random alcohol tests can only be administered just prior to a driver performing a safety-sensitive function, while performing a safety-sensitive function, or just after performing a safety-sensitive function. Random controlled substances tests can be conducted at any time the driver is notified. A driver who is selected and refuses to submit to a test must follow the requirements of 49 CFR Part 40, Subpart O.

- **Post Accident:** This test applies to all CDL drivers who are involved in fatal crashes. The test must also be conducted on all CDL drivers who are cited for moving violations arising in a crash that requires a vehicle being towed or an injury requiring medical attention away from the scene. The alcohol test must be conducted within 8 hours and the controlled substances test must be conducted within 32 hours of the crash.

More Information:

For additional research and reading on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Alcohol and Drug Testing Regulations, please visit their web site at

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/drug/drug.htm>.

For the rules and regulations on controlled substances and alcohol use and testing, go to <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/>, click on Rules and Regulations and then on Driver Regulations and Parts 40 and 382.



Training for Drivers of Small Vehicles

Drivers of small vehicles on activity trips shall be provided instruction in emergency evacuation and first aid by the school, agency, or contractor

Van Driving Course

A Van Driving Course is required for drivers of modified 15-passenger vans. These are vans that were originally manufactured as a 15-passenger van but the seating has been modified so no more than 10 passengers and a driver could be transported in the vehicle.

- This course consists of 3 hours instruction time and a 1 hour "hands-on" training and evaluation behind the wheel of a modified 15-passenger van. Beginning June 7, 2009, all drivers of these vehicles are required to complete this Van Driving Course.

Exemption: This requirement is waived for individuals who have driven a modified 15-passenger van for **each** of the two most recently completed school years **and** who have not been convicted of a traffic infraction for that same period of time while driving any vehicle.

- Drivers who have completed Level I and 2 Instructional Course (and are not expired) are only required to take the 1 hour hands-on training. *However*, if a driver has driven a modified 15-passenger van each of the two most recently completed school years and has not been convicted of a traffic conviction during that same period of time, the 1hour hands-on training is waived.

The requirement for the Van Driving Course will expire on June 7, 2011, when modified 15-passenger vans will no longer qualify as pupil transportation vehicles and cannot be used to transport students (see Rule 91, Section 002.11A).



OPERATING REGULATIONS

Pupil transportation vehicle operators are required to comply with operational requirements set by the Nebraska Department of Education and the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). These operating requirements are based on Nebraska statutes to ensure the safe transportation of Nebraska school children.

Any officer or employee of any school who violates any of these regulations or fails to include obligations to comply with these regulations in any contract executed by him or her on behalf of a school shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to removal from office or employment.

Any person operating a pupil transportation vehicle under contract with a school who fails to comply with these regulations shall be guilty of breach of contract and their contract shall be cancelled after notice and hearing by responsible officers of the school.



Authorized Passengers – No one except school personnel and school children regularly assigned to a pupil transportation vehicle for a particular route schedule or for a school-approved activity/function may ride in such vehicles. Supervisory and monitoring personnel are recognized as authorized passengers.

Backing – The driver of a pupil transportation vehicle shall not drive backwards on the school grounds unless the rear of the vehicle is observed and directed by a second responsible person. The driver of the vehicle shall not back up on any roadway unless such movement can be made with safety and without interfering with other traffic.

Convoy Distance – A pupil transportation vehicle shall not follow another vehicle within 475 feet when traveling outside the corporate limits of a town or city. This is not intended to prevent a pupil transportation vehicle from passing another motor vehicle.

Emergency Evacuation Drills – At least twice during each school year, each pupil to be transported in a pupil transportation vehicle shall be instructed in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drill. If the vehicle is equipped with seat belts, this drill shall include instruction on the proper use of seat belts (see page 28).

Headlights – All pupil transportation vehicles shall operate with headlights on at all times.

Hourly Driving Limitation – Any person operating a pupil transportation vehicle shall

not remain *on duty* for a longer period than 16 consecutive hours. When he/she has been continuously on duty for 16 consecutive hours, he/she shall be relieved and not be permitted or required to again go on duty without having at least 10 consecutive hours of rest off duty. Any pupil transportation vehicle driver, who has been on duty 16 hours in the aggregate in any 24-hour period, shall not be required or permitted to continue or again go on duty without having had at least eight consecutive hours off duty. (When the transportation of pupils is subject to the hourly driving limitations of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, then those regulations shall govern.)

- “*On duty*” means time spent doing any of the following: driving, loading, unloading, repairing, inspecting or otherwise attending the vehicle or its passengers.

Loading and Unloading Children

The following procedures shall be observed when controlling traffic with a school bus during the process of loading and unloading children:

- Check for oncoming traffic.
- Use rear view mirror system to check traffic approaching from the rear.
- Reduce the school bus speed with minimal braking and without greatly interrupting the flow of traffic.
- Activate the amber school bus 8-light alternately flashing warning signal lamps within these criteria:
 - ▶ Not less than 500 feet nor more than 1,000 feet from the bus stop in rural areas
 - ▶ Not less than 300 feet and not more than 600 feet from the bus stop within the corporate limits of a town or city.
- ✓ Exception –School bus loading and unloading zones, which are properly designated marked and supervised within the corporate limits of a town or city.
- ✓ These loading zones must be out of the flow of traffic and adjacent to the school building. School buses may be exempt from the use of a stop sign and flashing

warning lights by local given authority and board of education policy.

- Within 200 feet of stop, turn on the right turn signal.
- As the bus slows down to a stop, allow sufficient area to the right of the bus for pupils to load or unload.
- After the bus has stopped, place transmission in “Park” – or if there is no “Park” shift point, place in “Neutral” – and set the parking brake or press down on the service brake at each stop.
- Students should remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Check to see if traffic is able to stop -- activate the alternating flashing red warning lamps and extend stop arm.
- Check to see if road is clear in both directions and that all traffic is stopped. When the road is clear and all traffic has stopped, open the door to load and unload children.
- When the children have left the bus, they should walk to a distance of approximately 12 feet in front of the bus. Signal to the children when it is safe to cross the roadway.
- When children are safely across the road, or on their way home, retract stop arm, turn



off alternately flashing warning signal lamps, check traffic and proceed.

- When loading, do not put bus in motion until door is closed and children are seated.
- Students are not allowed to cross the

roadway behind the bus when it is stopped to load or unload. The driver must tell the children to stay at least 12 feet away when crossing in front of the bus.

- Students who walk along the roadway to and from the bus stop should do so along the left side of the roadway, facing traffic.
- Students should stand off the traveled portion of the roadway while waiting for traffic to pass.

No stops are to be made to load or unload students when they must cross over a median that separates lanes of traffic traveling in opposite directions, unless there is a traffic control light or a patrol stationed to assist students who must cross the highway. When unloading at such a place, students must wait to cross until after the bus has departed.

Passengers Restraint Systems (Seat Belts)

The pupil transportation vehicle operator is required to wear a lap belt whenever the vehicle is in motion. When passenger restraint systems or seat belts are provided in the pupil transportation vehicle, all passengers must use them. Children under the age of 6 must be seated in a child protection system when the pupil transportation vehicle is equipped with seat belts.

Post-Trip Check of Vehicle – School bus drivers shall conduct an interior “walk through” inspection for students that may remain on a school/activity/MFSAB, or coach bus at the end of each route and activity trip. Drivers of small vehicles shall do a visual inspection for students that may remain on the vehicle at the end of each route and activity trip.

Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection – At a minimum, each pupil transportation vehicle operator or transportation supervisor shall perform a pre-trip inspection each day a vehicle is used to transport children. Any defects discovered that may affect the operational safety of the vehicle or result in its mechanical breakdown must be reported immediately to the administrator or supervisor. *The vehicle should not be operated until the defect(s) are repaired.* Documentation of the daily inspections are filed weekly with the administrator and kept on file with the school.

Railroad Crossing – The following regulations shall apply to all school buses, whether loaded or unloaded, during the process of approaching and crossing railroad tracks:

- Approach the tracks with caution and decelerate.
- Activate the hazard-warning flasher lights at the following distances:
 - ▶ Not less than 500 feet and not more than 1,000 feet from the nearest railroad track in rural areas
 - ▶ At least 300 feet and not more than 600 feet from the nearest railroad track within the corporate limits of a town or city.
- Stop the school bus within 50 feet, but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
- Place transmission in “Park” – or if there is no “park” shift point, place in “Neutral” and press down on the service brake or set the parking brakes.
- Command the cooperation of students in an effort to provide maximum quietness.
- Open the service door and driver’s window.
- Listen and look in both directions along the track for any approaching trains. Close the entrance door.
- If no train is approaching, proceed in a gear low enough to permit crossing the tracks without having to shift gears if driving a vehicle with a manual transmission. Vehicles with automatic transmissions should be in “drive”.
- Deactivate hazard warning flasher lights after crossing last rail.
- No stops are necessary at any crossing if a police officer or a traffic control flagman (railroad employee) directs traffic to proceed. No stops are required at abandoned or exempted railroad crossings when it is clearly marked.

Railroad tracks should not be crossed unless there is at least 15 feet clearance from the back bumper to the nearest rail. When two or more tracks are to be crossed, do not stop unnecessarily a second time unless the school bus is completely clear of the first track and has at least 15 feet clearance in front and at least 15 feet clearance for the track to the rear.

Safe Pupil Transportation Plan – Each school providing pupil transportation must have a safe pupil transportation plan addressing appropriate procedures to deal with weapons, hazardous materials, security threats, severe weather, medical emergencies, pupil behavior, and mechanical breakdowns of the vehicle.

Seating – Seating must be provided so all students aboard can sit in a seat as intended by the manufacturer. The manufacturer’s rated seating capacity and the manufacturer’s gross vehicle weight (GVW) must not be exceeded at any time the vehicle is in motion. Bus routing and seating plans shall be coordinated to eliminate standees when a school vehicle is in motion. Pupil transportation vehicles will have no auxiliary seating accommodations such as temporary or folding jump seats.

Smoking – Smoking in a pupil transportation vehicle is prohibited.

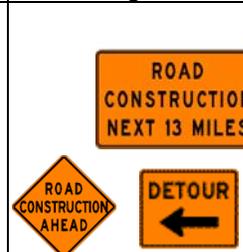
Speed Limits – The maximum pupil transportation vehicle speed limit shall be as posted. However, speed should be governed

by reasonable judgment and existing road or weather conditions.

Strobe Light – The white flashing strobe light must be used only in adverse weather conditions, when the vehicle is in distress, or to enhance the visibility of the vehicle when barriers inhibit visibility.

Towing – Pupil transportation vehicles shall not be operated with a trailer or other vehicle attached while children are being transported.

Transportation of Unsafe Items – Pupil transportation vehicles shall not transport any items, animals, materials, weapons (or “look-a-like” weapons) or equipment that would endanger the lives, health and safety of the children, other passengers or driver. An exception exists for “look-a-like” weapons that would be associated with a school sponsored or approved activity. These items could be transported with written permission of an administrator of the school. Also, any item that could break or produce injury if tossed about the inside the vehicle must be secured.

Colors and Shapes of Traffic Signs <i>(See DMV Driver’s Manual for a complete list of signs)</i>					
Red Stop, Yield, Do Not Enter, Wrong Way	White Regulatory, Speed Limits	Yellow Warning of Upcoming Hazard	Orange Alert to Road Workers, Construction Areas	Blue Motorist Services, Rest Areas, Hospitals	Green Guide information, Distance or Direction
Octagon, Triangle shaped signs	Vertical, Rectangle shaped signs	Pentagon, Round, Pennant, Diamond shaped signs	Pentagon, Round, Pennant, Diamond shaped signs	Horizontal Rectangle shaped signs	Horizontal Rectangle shaped signs
					



Inspection Process

To ensure that Nebraska children are being transported safely between home and school as well as to and from activities, the Nebraska Department of Education requires frequent vehicle mechanical inspections. These inspections are conducted on all pupil transportation vehicles.

These mechanical inspections are a two-part process:

- Complete inspection conducted before school starts in the fall and every 80 days thereafter. These inspections are done by school-appointed mechanics. (See *NDE Rule 92 Section 009.01 for more information.*)
- Daily pre-trip inspection must be performed before the vehicle is used for transporting students. If a vehicle is used several times during the day, this inspection may be done more than once a day to ensure the safety of the vehicle. This inspection can be conducted by the driver or designated pupil transportation personnel.

The pre-trip inspection consists of:

- Exterior inspection of the vehicle (the “daily walk-around”)
- Interior inspection of the vehicle
- Operational inspection (performed while the vehicle is being driven)

If faulty or improperly functioning equipment is discovered during this inspection, a written report (signed and dated) must be immediately filed with the school administration or the transportation supervisor. *The vehicle should taken out of service until repairs are completed.*

The daily pre-trip inspections are documented by the person conducting the inspection by completing a “checklist” of items to be inspected. Those checklists should be kept on the vehicle and then submitted on a weekly basis to the transportation supervisor or school administrator. Schools are required to keep the daily inspection forms on file in order to document that the daily inspections have been properly conducted.

A sample of a daily inspection form is provided on page 36. Schools can develop another format of this form to suit their needs. Another version of this daily inspection form should be created for inspecting small vehicles (cars or vans).



Exterior Inspection “The Daily Walk-Around”

Before you begin the daily walk-around, start the engine and allow the vehicle to warm-up. Remain in the vehicle while it is warming up. Set the parking brake and put the transmission in neutral. Get out and inspect the vehicle

thoroughly. Walk completely around it -- be alert to faulty equipment.

The equipment that must be inspected for proper working order is listed below.

Potential problems may be indentified during this process. *Pre-trip inspection items for small vehicles (vans and cars) have been indicated by an asterisk(*)*.

Under the Hood*– Before starting the engine for the daily walk-around, you should check the coolant and/or antifreeze and oil to make sure they are at the proper level. Also, look for cracked, loose, or worn drive belts, hoses, and hose clamps.



Fluid Leaks* – Examine inner wheels and tires and the area under the vehicle for wetness. Leaks can be engine oil, coolant, fuel, rear axle fluid, or grease, as well as brakes, clutch, or transmission fluid. Leaks should immediately be reported and repaired.

Lights* – Check all lights applicable to the vehicle: back-up lights, brake lights, directional signals, hazard flashers, headlights, lighted school bus sign, reflectors, running lights, stop arm lights, taillights, and warning lights. Any lights or reflectors exhibiting such problems as inconsistent flashing, cracks, or other damage, should be reported in writing and repaired.

Mirrors* – Mirrors should be clean, aimed and tightly adjusted so visibility is unobstructed. For school buses, refer to Section 10 of the Department of Motor Vehicle’s Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Manual (page 37 of the Pupil Transportation Guide) for more detailed

information to properly adjust school bus mirrors.

Windows* – All windows, especially the windshield and rear window, should be clear of dirt, ice, road film, and snow that can cause glare or impair visibility. Do not clear just a “peephole.”

Emergency Rear Door – Check to see that it opens easily from the outside. The emergency door-warning buzzer should sound when the door is opened and the ignition key is on. This door must always be ready for emergencies, yet tightly sealed when closed to prevent possible entrance of exhaust fumes.

Exhaust System* – Look for visible exhaust and listen for excessive noise and vibration. Check for leaks in the exhaust system and holes in the body of the vehicle. Leaks should immediately be reported and repaired. Look for sagging tailpipes (exhaust pipes) and mufflers. Carbon monoxide poisoning occurs most frequently when a vehicle is standing still or is in an enclosed space with the engine running. Also be aware that smoke from a faulty exhaust system in a diesel engine is filled with carcinogens.

Tires *– Check the tires and to see if they are properly inflated. Don’t drive the vehicle unless the tires are in good shape. One flat rear tire can place a dangerous weight on the companion tire of a dual set.



Wheels* – Look for loose or missing nuts, excessive corrosion, cracks or other damage. Tighten loose nuts. There must be no damaged wheels on the vehicle.

Interior Inspection

Pre-trip inspection items for small vehicles (vans and cars) have been indicated by an asterisk (*).

After the exterior inspection is complete, the vehicle should be checked thoroughly on the inside. All driver's instruments and controls must be functioning properly. All of the following items should be checked before operating the vehicle:



Lights* – Check the panel light and the interior dome lights. They should be clean and work properly.

Mirrors* – They should be cleaned, aimed and adjusted tightly so visibility is unobstructed. See Appendix A for correct mirror adjustment detailed in Section 10 from the Department of Motor Vehicle's Commercial Driver's License Manual.

Windows* – These should be cleaned from the inside as well as the outside, for total visibility, especially the windshield and rear window. The windshield wipers and washer fluid mechanism should operate properly. There should always be ample fluid in the washer fluid reservoir.

Defroster, Fan and Heater* – The vents should be unobstructed to permit proper airflow. Assure vents are not covered with coats, books, papers, etc.

Driver's Seat and Restraint System* – The seat should be adjusted so that the driver's feet reach the pedals. The doors, mirrors, and windows must be in comfortable viewing distance, and the steering wheel is easily grasped without stretching or reaching. Restraint systems must retract properly and ends should attach securely.

Emergency Door and Buzzer – The door should be tightly sealed from the inside, but ready for emergency use. The buzzer should sound when the door is opened.

Emergency Equipment* – In a school bus, all emergency equipment should be easily accessible, yet out of the pupil's reach. In a small vehicle, emergency equipment is stored in the trunk. Emergency equipment consists of the first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and reflectors. The fire extinguisher should be charged and properly stored. Replace cracked or broken hoses, keep nozzles unobstructed and make sure locking pins and sealing wires are in place. Periodically, shake the fire extinguisher to loosen the powder.



Stop Arm control and Service Door Control
Check to see that the controls coordinate with the actions of the stop arm and door. If there is a problem, it should be reported and repaired.

Horn* – The vehicle’s horn must properly operate. In a bus, the horn should have high and low tones.

Loose objects – Be sure to check the passenger compartment. Inspect seats and windows for damage. Make sure there are no potential missiles (such as lunch boxes, toys, or school books) lying on the seats or floor.

The following equipment of the Interior Inspection should be checked with the engine running:

Air Pressure or Vacuum Gauge – This gauge indicates the proper capacity of pressure to operate the brakes. Do not operate the vehicle until the pressure reaches the proper capacity. Loss of pressure indicates a leak in the system. Newer buses do not have vacuum gauges, but are equipped with warning lights and a buzzer system. When the engine is on, the warning lights should go off and the electric brake motor should not be running. When the engine is turned off, listen for a motor noise when the brakes are applied.

Voltmeter Gauge – The voltmeter gauge indicates the voltage of the electrical charging system. This meter should show about 14 volts with the engine running or 12 volts if the engine is off. If it shows a higher or lower voltage, report the problem to the transportation supervisor.

Brake Pedal and Warning Light* – If the light comes on during a hard brake application, in a vehicle equipped with a dual brake system, it indicates that at least one of the brake systems is not working properly. Vehicles equipped with anti-lock brakes will have an additional red warning light if the brakes are not working properly.

Fuel Gauge* – It should indicate a safe margin of fuel for operating. A pupil transportation vehicle should always have at least a quarter tank of fuel.

Oil Pressure Gauge* – The oil pressure gauge indicates the proper oil pressure. If it

does not, the engine should be turned off. Check the owner’s manual or ask the school mechanic to learn what the proper oil pressure is for the vehicle.

Water Temperature Gauge* – The water temperature gauge indicates the temperature of the coolant in the engine. It should read cool or warm. If it reads hot, the engine should immediately be turned off and the problem reported.

Passenger Restraint Systems*-- In vehicles equipped with passenger-restraint systems, ensure that the systems operate properly (i.e. belts retract properly and ends attach securely).

Operational Inspection

The operating inspection is performed while the vehicle is being driven. A daily road check, both before and after loading the pupils, allows the driver to evaluate the working condition of that equipment which can only be inspected while the vehicle is in motion.

A driver should be constantly aware of the weight and motion of the passengers and how the vehicle is affected (as in pick-up characteristics, the tendency to drift, how the vehicle handles on curves, etc.) by always monitoring how the engine performs under load.

The operational inspection consists of checking the following points. *[Small vehicles should be inspected for items with an asterisk (*)]*

Brakes *– Do not wait until the vehicle is on the road to test the brakes. They can be tested in the yard at the bus garage. Moving at a low speed, come to a complete stop. The vehicle should stop in a straight line without pulling to one side, skidding, or swerving. The brakes should not grab, lock, or make excessive noise such as squeaking or squealing. The brake pedal should not feel grabby, over sensitive, or spongy. When the brakes are not in use, watch

for dragging which causes the vehicle to pull to one side.

Clutch – The following instructions apply if the bus has a manual transmission. When changing gears, the driver should control the speed of the engine so the shift can be completed easily and smoothly without jerking or slipping. Careless shifting wears out the clutch and reduces its service life. When the shift is completed, remove foot from the clutch- do not “ride” the clutch. When the pedal is released, the clutch should have some “free play.” Watch for dragging, grabbing, or lack of free play on the pedal. Listen for unusual sounds. If you smell an odor like burning rubber, the vehicle should immediately be stopped.

Emergency (Parking) Brake – Slowly engage the clutch while the parking brake is on to test both air and mechanical brakes. If the bus has automatic transmission, select the drive gear, and with the parking brake applied, apply the accelerator. If the vehicle moves easily, the parking brake is not holding and should immediately be reported. With air brake systems, the parking brake will remain applied if there is partial or complete air loss in the service brakes. Release the parking brake when the vehicle is in motion.

Engine* – Warm the engine for several minutes before putting the vehicle into drive. Increase the engine’s speed slowly so that all the parts can be lubricated. Do not exceed the maximum rpm. Listen for unusual sounds such as backfire, light tapping, occasional misfire, piston slap, rapid hammering, or whistling. Be alert to slow engine warm-up, lack or normal response, vibrations of the chassis, or failure of a warm engine to start.

Steering*– The steering should be easy to handle, precise, responsive, and steady in turns and over rough roads. Power steering should be exceptionally quiet. The steering should not have excessive “play,” jerking, “kickback” or rattles.

Suspension* – Improper suspension can cause “bottoming,” excessive bounce, swaying and weaving on curves or rough roads, or one end of the vehicle to sag. Check for broken springs or faulty shock absorbers.

Transmission* – With the transmission in a moving gear, the vehicle should move smoothly in response to depressing the accelerator. An automatic or manual transmission should slip into gear and have easy and smooth gear changes throughout the shifting range. Do not exceed the manufacturer’s recommended speed for each specific gear (rpm). Exceeding speed recommendations could damage the transmission or reduce its service life. Any metallic or unusual sounds or shifting difficulty should be reported immediately.

Continue to check all equipment throughout the day being alert to warning signs that will indicate potential problems. Be aware that the condition of the vehicle changes during the day.

At the end of the operating period check the passenger compartment for lost articles such as books, lunch boxes, clothing, or toys. Inspect the seats for damaged upholstery and the window for cracks or breaks. Clean the vehicle, sweeping the floor, washing the seats, windows, and exterior.

If faulty or improperly functioning equipment is discovered during an inspection, that vehicle must be removed from service until repairs have been completed.





Safe Pupil Transportation

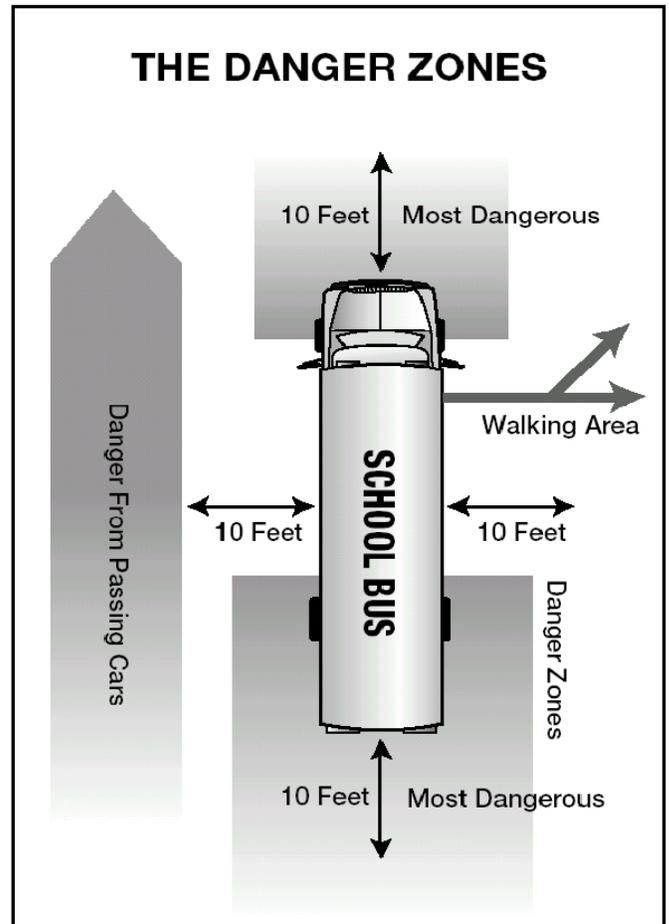
Securing maximum transportation safety for the students is one of the primary responsibilities for a pupil transportation vehicle driver.

School bus stops are the most dangerous part of the school bus ride. Nationally, most of the children are injured or killed when they exit a bus.

Routes must be developed so no stops are made to load or unload students when they must cross over a median that separates lanes of traffic traveling in opposite directions. However, if there is a traffic control light or a patrol stationed to assist students who must cross the highway, a stop could be made at that point in the route. When unloading at such a place, students must wait to cross until after the bus has departed.

All pupil transportation vehicles should carry a list of phone numbers to contact in the case of an emergency. These numbers should include the following:

- Police, Sheriff, and/or State Patrol
- Fire Department
- Hospital
- School Administration
- School Superintendent's or Principal's home phone numbers



The School Bus "Danger Zone"

Section 10A of the CDL Manual states the "Danger Zone" is the area on all sides of the school bus where children are in the most danger of being hit by a passing vehicle or the school bus itself. It is vital that children are familiar with the "Danger Zone" and are instructed to stay at least ten feet away from the bus and to never go behind the bus. Even with the mirrors provided on the bus, drivers have blind spots within that area around the bus.

Remind the school children of these two important points:

- If they cannot see the school bus driver in a bus mirror, the bus driver will not be able to see them.
- If they drop an item near or under the bus when exiting, tell the bus driver but leave the object where it dropped. It can be retrieved later by an adult.

Loading and Unloading Procedures

The school bus driver is the most important component of the loading and unloading process. The driver must be observant to the surroundings at stops and closely watch students as they leave the school bus.



Be aware of the dangers of children's clothing becoming entangled on the bus. Jacket and sweatshirt drawstrings, backpack straps, scarves and loose clothing may get caught on the bus handrail or door.

This is not only a danger while getting on or off the bus, but could happen any place on the bus.

Warning System

Nebraska school buses are equipped with an eight-light warning system distinguished by two amber and two red alternately flashing lights on the front and rear of the bus. On the eight-light warning system, the stop arm extends automatically when the door opens and retracts automatically when the door closes. The hazard light warning system is to be used only at railroad crossings or during emergency situations. Both the eight-light warning system and stop arm are to be used only at loading and unloading stops.

Pupil Security

Being able to define and identify security threats and incidents helps drivers distinguish between a prank and an actual emergency, and enables the driver's ability to determine the appropriate course of action.

- A **security threat** is any source that may result in an event that endangers the student or property.
- A **security incident** is an unforeseen event that does not necessarily result in an injury or property damage, but could result in an interruption of service.

Safe Pupil Transportation Plan

In order for pupil transportation vehicle drivers to react appropriately to potentially dangerous situations, all schools are required to develop a safe pupil transportation plan that, *at a minimum*, addresses the following safety issues:

- Weapons
- Pupil behavior
- Terrorist threats
- Severe weather
- Hazardous materials
- Medical emergencies
- Mechanical breakdowns of vehicle

This plan must provide guidance and procedures for drivers, students, school personnel, and other passengers in emergency situations listed above. A copy of the Safe Pupil Transportation Plan should be carried on each pupil transportation vehicle.

Student Behavior Guidelines for Riding School Buses

- Students are not to change from seat to seat while the bus is in motion unless the driver grants permission.
- Students are not permitted to stand while the bus is in motion or extend their arms, heads or legs out of the windows at any time.
- Students should not create noise to the degree that it interferes with the driver's

ability to hear emergency vehicles or an approaching train.

- Students should not place objects in the aisle or in front of the emergency exits.

Student discipline

Often times seat assignments can solve behavior problems on the bus. However, poor behavior can quickly escalate resulting in safety concerns that may impact other students and the safe operation of the vehicle.



Defiance results from the student's recognition that the adult is not in control of the situation. If

the situation has reached the point where the student will not follow the adult's requests, do not attempt to force the student to obey. It is better to give simple directions that can be followed in order to regain control of the situation quietly.

If you are forced to take disciplinary action to control the situation, stop the vehicle in a safe location as soon as possible. Explain distinct guidelines you can expect the student to obey and that you can also enforce. Suggest an action that can be performed successfully. Inform the administration of the incident so documentation of the events can be on file.

School policy should be in place to detail the steps to formally discipline a disruptive student.

15-passenger Vans as Pupil Transportation Vehicles

Drivers of modified 15-passenger vans must be very alert to the tendency of these vehicles to go out of control and possibly rollover. *These vans are manufactured as 15-passenger vans but the seating has been modified to carry a maximum of 10 passengers and the driver.*

Proper loading of a modified 15-passenger van is vital when transporting students. Students and luggage should be evenly distributed in the vehicle. There should be no excess weight stored behind the last seat.

On June 7, 2011, modified 15-passenger vans *will no longer qualify as a small vehicle and cannot be used to transport students.* Rules 91 and 92 include a provision for a 3-year sunset (phase out) for the use of vans originally manufactured as 15 passenger vehicles. (See Rule 91-002.11A and Rule 92-002.06A.)

Schools can continue to use smaller vans with seating of 10 passengers (not counting driver) to transport students.

Post Trip Vehicle Check

School bus drivers shall conduct an interior "walk through" inspection for students that may remain on a school/activity/MFSAB, or coach bus at the end of each route and activity trip. Drivers of small vehicles shall also do a visual inspection for students that may remain on the vehicle at the end of each route and activity trip.

Especially with long school bus routes, some of the students may fall asleep and not exit the bus at the school or their appropriate stop. Schools must develop a policy and process that assures that each vehicle has been checked for students before the driver leaves the vehicle at the end of each route and activity trip.

The school bus drivers are responsible for the safe delivery of their passengers.





Strategies for Safe Driving

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the basic skills necessary to operate a pupil transportation vehicle safely and efficiently. By developing these skills, the driver can devote more time to the changing traffic situation.

S.I.P.D.E.

Formula To Safe Driving

Traffic safety experts have determined how we can avoid traffic accidents. There are five steps involved in the process:

S – Aggressively **Search** the traffic environment.

I - **Identify** that a potential hazard(s) exists.

P - **Predict** which of the potential hazard(s) may endanger the safety of your vehicle and its occupants.

D - **Decide** which action(s) to take if the potential hazard develops.

E - **Execute** the maneuver(s) to avoid the hazard.

There are six positions from which collisions most commonly occur with other vehicles. You must be aware at all times for potentially dangerous situations that may happen.

- The vehicle(s) ahead.
- The vehicle(s) approaching from behind.
- A vehicle coming in from an angle.
- The vehicle you are passing.
- The vehicle that is passing your vehicle.
- The oncoming vehicle – a potential head-on collision.

Driving Situations

Stopping and Starting – To assure the safety of the student, slow down the vehicle when approaching a stop and slowly drive away from stops. If your passengers reach for support

when you are starting or stopping, your stops and starts are too abrupt. If driving a bus with a manual transmission, do not depress the clutch until the bus is almost stopped. When the clutch is disengaged, the combined braking action of the engine and transmission is eliminated.

Backing – The driver of a pupil transportation vehicle shall not drive backwards on the school grounds unless the rear of the vehicle is observed and directed by a second responsible person. The driver of the vehicle shall not back on any roadway unless the movement can be made with safety and without interfering with other traffic.



Passing – Before passing another vehicle, check your mirrors to make sure no vehicle is passing you. When you do pass, make sure you have room to pass without forcing the vehicle you are passing or the vehicle approaching you to slow down or pull off the road. Do not tailgate when waiting to pass. When you are following too closely to the vehicle in front, your vehicle has insufficient time to gain momentum to pass quickly.

The best way to pass is to stay a good distance behind the slow moving vehicle and increase your speed before you move into the other lane. When you do pass, you can steer the bus into the opposite lane, accelerate and use the bus's momentum to pass quickly and safely.

You should never pass when the vehicle in front of you changes lanes to pass, decelerates suddenly, signals a left turn, wanders, weaves, or when you are being passed by another vehicle.

Do not pass on a curve or hill. Do not speed up when a motorist is passing you. Pull away from student stops slowly. When it is clear, allow vehicles to pass before accelerating to full road speed.

Curves and Turns – Slow down on all curves and turns, but do not lock the brakes. Reduce your speed before entering a curve or turn and accelerate slightly as the vehicle comes out of it to increase traction. Be extra cautious when you do not know the road or it appears to have a wet surface.



Steep Hills – Before starting down a steep hill, down shift as needed to help control engine speed and test the brakes by gently applying the foot brake to ensure they are functioning properly. As your

vehicle moves down the grade, continue checking traffic in all directions, stay in the right most or curb lane. Increase following distance and observe the downhill braking procedures.

- Select a “safe” speed, one that is not too fast for the weight of the vehicle, length and steepness of the grade, weather and road conditions.

- Once a “safe” speed has been reached, apply the brakes hard enough for 3-4 seconds to reduce your speed 5 mph below your “safe” speed and continue this procedure all of the way down the hill.
- **See CDL Manual for more information related to “Steep Mountain Grades.”**

Soft Shoulders – Returning the vehicle to the pavement can be frustrating, especially if the shoulder is soft and the tires begin to sink into it or the pavement is much higher than the shoulder. If the vehicle leaves the pavement, do not try to get the wheels back on the road until after you have slowed to a minimum speed. Turn the wheels sharply toward the road and slowly climb back onto the pavement. Rubbing against the side of the pavement can damage tires, wheels, and other parts.



Expressway Driving – Use the outside lane of traffic, even though there is more exposure to entrance and exit ramps. Do not back up on an expressway.

Bridges – Obey all posted weight limit signs. Do not assume that bridge inspectors or engineers have allowed for a safety margin. A two-lane bridge will be posted on each side of the bridge. The total weight capacity of the bridge will be the total of the two posted weight limits. Therefore, if the weight of the bus and its load are close to the posted weight limit, you should be safe if the bus is the only vehicle on the bridge. The law prohibits more than one

vehicle at a time on a one-way bridge. Yield the right-of-way on a one-way bridge.



The posted weight limit is most likely the total weight capacity of the bridge on a one-way bridge.

Be alert for damage or structural defects, especially on old bridges. Watch for damaged or loose planks, the bridge surface breaking up or guardrails that are damaged. Use common sense in crossing bridges that are flooded or may have been damaged by flooding. Look for erosion around the banks of bridge supports or other warnings that point to weakening of the bridge. It may be necessary to take another route.

Slow down on bridges. Remember that bridge surfaces freeze faster than road surfaces. Avoid backing up on bridges.

Railroad Crossings – The following regulations shall apply to school buses, either loaded or unloaded, during the process of approaching and crossing railroad tracks except at any such crossing where a police officer or a traffic control flagman directs traffic to proceed:



- Approach the tracks with caution and decelerate.
- Activate the hazard warning flasher lights at a distance of not less than 500 feet and not more than 1,000 feet from the nearest railroad track in rural areas

and at least 300 feet and not more than 600 feet from the nearest railroad track within the corporate limits of a town or city.

- Stop the school bus within 50 feet, but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
- Place the transmission in “Park”. If there is no “Park” shift point, place in “Neutral” and press down on the service brake or set the parking brakes.

- Command the cooperation of the students in an effort to provide maximum quietness.
- After the students are quiet, open the door and driver window, listen and look in both directions along such track for any approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train. Close the entrance door.
- If no train is approaching, proceed in a gear low enough to permit crossing the tracks without having to shift and deactivate hazard warning flasher lights after crossing last rail.
- When two or more tracks are to be crossed, do not stop unnecessarily a second time unless the school bus is completely clear of the first track and has at least 15 feet clearance in front and at least 15 feet clearance for the track to the rear.

Use of Strobe Light – The white flashing strobe light shall be used only in poor weather conditions, when the vehicle is in distress, or to enhance the visibility of the vehicle when barriers inhibit such visibility.

Small Vehicles – Drivers should double check that all doors are closed appropriately before putting the vehicle into motion. The driver and all passengers must use seat belts. To avoid toxic fumes from entering the vehicle, rear windows should not be open while it is in motion. This allows toxic fumes to enter the vehicle.



Signs, Signals And Markings

All signs, signals and pavement markings are indicators that tell the driver or pedestrian where they are and when and where to go. Color and shape has significant meaning such as a red octagon for stop signs only, and a red equilateral triangle for yield signs only.

The chart on page 10 describes the colors and shapes of various traffic signs. For a complete description of signs, signals and markings,

review the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles Driver's Manual available on DMV's website.

Vehicle Signals:

Steady red – Vehicles must stop and not move until the signal indicates that they may enter the intersection.



Steady yellow – A steady yellow signal is a warning to drivers that the signal is going to turn red. The driver should stop on a steady yellow signal. If you are in the intersection when the signal changes from yellow to red, continue moving and clear the intersection safely.

Steady green – A steady green signal indicates that vehicles can move through the intersection, turn left or turn right. The driver should give the right-of-way to vehicles approaching in the opposite lane when he is crossing that lane to make a left turn. Pedestrians should also be given the right-of-way.

Flashing red – A flashing red signal means vehicles must come to a complete stop and then proceed if clear. This signal is used at dangerous intersections, where visibility is limited.

Flashing yellow – A flashing yellow signal means vehicles should slow down and move with caution.

Steady green arrow – A steady green arrow means vehicles can cautiously move in the direction of the arrow without stopping. Again, vehicles should yield the right-of-way to pedestrians.

Pedestrian Signals:



Don't Walk – Pedestrians should not leave the curb until the signal indicates.

Don't Walk, FLASHING – If the signal is flashing, the pedestrian should not cross. If the pedestrian is in the crosswalk allow him to complete the crossing.



Walk – Pedestrians are permitted to leave the curb to cross the road.

Pavement Markings:

Broken yellow line – Separates traffic moving in opposite directions. Passing and turning are allowed. Traffic should stay to the right of a yellow centerline.

Broken yellow line with solid yellow line (two lane road) – Indicates that passing is not permitted from the lane in which the line is located.

Double solid yellow line (two lane road) – Indicates that passing is not permitted in either direction, from either lane (passing prohibited zone).



Multi-lane with white center line – White lines separate lanes of traffic going in the same direction. Broken white lines separate lanes of traffic going in the same direction, and may be crossed with care.

Multi-lane with middle left turn lane – The two way turn lane is for left turns only.

Crosswalk lines – Solid lines mark pedestrian crosswalks. These lines extend the entire width of the roadway.

Stop lines – White stop lines are painted across the lane to indicate the stopping point for vehicles.

Following Distance

To determine the proper following distance when driving a small vehicle, use the **Two-Second Rule**. Choose a reference point ahead of the vehicle you are following -- a sign, utility pole, tree, etc. When the vehicle you are following passes the chosen reference point, begin counting seconds -- one thousand and one, one thousand and two, etc.

If the small vehicle reaches the reference point any earlier than one thousand two (or two seconds) you are following too closely. Two seconds is the recommended minimum interval between your small vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. The two-second interval should be doubled on wet, slippery roads and at interstate speeds.

Minimum interval time for school buses is at least one second for each 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds below 40 mph. Over 40 mph, five seconds is needed for a 40 foot bus and seven seconds for a 60 foot bus. **Refer to the CDL Manual (2-27) for more information about the proper following distance concerning school buses.**



Defensive Driving

Courtesy is an important part of defensive driving. Practice courtesy toward other drivers and pedestrians. If several automobiles are behind you, pull away from student stops slowly and allow vehicles to pass when traffic is clear before accelerating the vehicle up to full road speed. Drive around puddles or slow down to avoid splashing pedestrians.

Glare from the sun reflecting off snow, water or other objects creates a visibility hazard. Sunglasses are essential in cutting glare.

Even though you obey the law, do not count on other drivers and pedestrians to do the same. Many drivers believe that the other driver will do the right thing. Anticipate other drivers to do the wrong thing. Many people drive while they are not mentally alert so be alert for drivers who are angry, distracted, drunk, half asleep, or ill.

You cannot drive safely and rush at the same time. Establish a safe driving pattern and make it a habit. Plan your schedule so there is plenty of time. If you are frequently late, the schedule should be changed. Safety is your first priority – schedules are second.

Driving In Poor Weather Conditions

It takes twice the distance to stop on wet surfaces as on a dry surface. Road surfaces are the most slippery just after they have become wet. Water combines with accumulated road film, causing the road surface to become very slippery. This combination creates a greater possibility of skidding due to reduced traction.

Speeding when the road is covered with water can cause the vehicle tires to lose contact with the surface of the road. Learn to adjust your speed to road and weather conditions. Brake slowly and maintain a safe braking distance from other cars on the road.

Visibility and traction are the greatest hazards of winter driving. Be especially cautious on bridge surfaces when the temperature is at freezing level and road surfaces are wet. Bridge surfaces freeze more quickly than road surfaces because of cold air underneath the bridge.

Extra caution is needed when approaching a school bus stopped on a wet road surface. If

the school bus were to lose traction at a bus stop where students were waiting, the results could be disastrous.

If you do not have anti-lock brakes, you can help prevent the vehicle from skidding if you do not slam on your brakes. Instead apply them gently or tap them on and off, several times. If driving a bus, use the engine and transmission to slow the bus down whenever possible. In a bus with manual transmission, downshifting is more effective than using the service brakes.

If the vehicle begins to skid, turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid until it straightens out. For example, if the rear of the vehicle skids to the right, turn the wheel to the right.



If you have difficulty getting the vehicle started on a slick surface or the vehicle becomes stuck, attempt to ease the rear wheels into motion by feeding the gas slowly. If the vehicle has manual transmission, release the clutch gently. As soon as one of the rear wheels spin, let up on the gas. Do not allow the rear wheels to continue spinning. Spinning can damage the rear axle and the vehicle may become stuck even further. It may be necessary to “rock” the vehicle by quickly shifting from low to reverse to low again until the vehicle moves in either direction. If driving a bus, using a higher gear ratio will help to prevent the wheels from spinning.

Essential equipment for safe winter driving includes ice scrapers, squeegees, defrosters,

wiper blades, windshield washers (in proper working order), and antifreeze in the radiator. Before starting, be sure that the lights, signals, mirrors, windshield, and windows are completely clear. Defrost or scrape until you have the proper visibility, not just a “peephole.”

In fog or mist, turn on your lights and slow down to a speed which enables you to see ahead an adequate and safe distance. Use the headlights on low beam -- high beam creates glare. Use fog lights if the vehicle is so equipped. Fog lights are specifically designed to light the road, rather than the fog. Fog lights not only help you to see the road, but also help other drivers to see you.

If you cannot see more than a few feet ahead of the bus, pull off the road and turn on all lights including the emergency flashers to make certain the vehicle can be seen by other driver(s). When you can see enough to continue, use the white line on the edge of the road and the centerline as guides to keep the vehicle on the road.

Driving At Night

Make sure your headlights are clean and properly aimed at all times. To avoid blinding other drivers, dim your headlights before going over the crest of a hill or entering a curve.

When you see oncoming headlights, switch your headlights from high beam to low beam. If the oncoming driver does not dim his headlights, do not retaliate. If the oncoming lights are blinding you, do not look directly at the vehicle, but look toward the right edge of the road.

Driver Visibility

Driver visibility is a key safety issue. The mirrors, lights and signs should be cleaned often. Other motorists may approach behind the bus before they are able to react if lights and signs are not visible. You also have less time to respond to other traffic when dirty windows and lights cause visibility problems when you drive.



Emergency Driving Situations

There are a variety of emergency driving situations that may occur while you are driving a pupil transportation vehicle. While the possibility of these emergencies occurring is slight, you must know how to effectively respond.

Tire Blowouts

If a tire blows out, especially a front tire, a vehicle can suddenly swerve and skid to one side, even more so when driving at a high speed. Do not panic and slam on the brakes. Slamming on the brakes will send the bus into a skid. Get a firm grip on the steering wheel and hold it steady to maintain control of the bus.

Let the bus slow down until you can gently and safely apply the brakes and pull off the road. In case of brake failure, engage the parking brake and turn off the ignition. Rubbing the front tire against a curb or foliage will help to slow down the bus.

Accelerator Malfunction

If the accelerator sticks, pump it with several sharp jabs. Shift the transmission to neutral or depress the clutch, steer the bus onto the shoulder of the road, and then turn off the ignition.

Flooded Engine

Flooding of the carburetor is remedied by holding the accelerator down to the floor but not by pumping it. Engage the starter for 20-30 seconds. Let the engine cool and repeat these steps if necessary.

Lights Malfunction

When lights fail, try other lights such as high or low beams, turn signals, parking, fog, or brake

lights. It is important to remain visible at all times.



Release of Hood Latch

Decelerate immediately if the hood latch releases. The pupil transportation vehicle must be stopped so that the hood can be re-latched. Until it can be re-latched, some visibility will be possible either through the small space between where the hood hinges to the body of the bus or through the driver's left window.

Colliding with an Animal

Do not swerve drastically to miss a small animal or you might lose control of the vehicle. If the pupil transportation vehicle does strike, injure, or kill an animal, the driver should not stop the vehicle. However, if the pupil transportation vehicle hits a large animal, such as a deer or a farm animal, there may be damage that may cause the vehicle to be inoperable.

These would be considered "reportable" accidents for insurance purposes. Stop the vehicle and inspect for damage. If the vehicle has sustained considerable damage, report the incident to the local authorities and the school

administration. If the vehicle can be driven, continue on the route.

Driver Distractions

The pupil transportation vehicle driver may be affected by a physical emergency such as dirt in the eyes, violent coughing, or sneezing. Slow down and stop; then correct the condition.

Wireless cell phones should not be used by a driver while the vehicle is in motion. The only exception would be in the case of emergencies. Schools should have policies addressing the use of these phones by a pupil transportation vehicle driver while on duty.

Do not try to retrieve any dropped item from the floor of the bus while it is in motion. Again stop; then recover or dispose of the dropped item.

A stinging insect, such as a bee, in the pupil transportation vehicle can create mild panic among the students. Ignore it while the bus is in motion. If it becomes a dangerous distraction, stop on the shoulder of the road; then remove the insect.

Student behavior problems and related issues are very distracting to the driver of a pupil transportation vehicle. Dangerous situations can occur quickly when the driver's attention is drawn away from the road due to students' disruptive actions. It may be necessary to pull the vehicle over to the side of the road in order to take control of the situation.



Accidents and Emergencies

If an accident is unavoidable, remain in the driver's seat and maintain control of the steering wheel. Just before impact of the accident, the driver should protect himself by crossing his arms over his face and pressing his head and arms against the dash or steering wheel. Students should cross their arms over their faces and press their heads and arms against the backs of the seat in front of them.

Accident Procedures

The operator of any pupil transportation vehicle which is involved in an accident in Nebraska in which any person is killed or injured, or, where property damage exceeds \$1000 for any one person, including the pupil transportation vehicle driver, must make a report within 10 days to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

As a pupil transportation vehicle driver, you must follow the specific procedures in the case of an accident involving a pupil transportation vehicle. Also, local school policy and the school's Safe Pupil Transportation Plan should include procedures for transporting pupils to their homes or to school in case of a pupil transportation vehicle being involved in an accident.

The following steps address post-accident procedures:

- Stop the vehicle immediately.
- Remain at the scene of the accident. Provide reasonable assistance to any person injured in the accident.
- Make certain all pupils are in a safe place away from traffic. They must not leave the assigned area without permission.
- Notify the law enforcement agency immediately. As necessary, inform the school administrator and request medical assistance.
- Make accurate notes of the incident including information such as names, license numbers, registration numbers, location, time, road and weather conditions.
- Set three flares or reflectors to warn traffic, as follows:

- ✓ On the traffic side of the vehicle, within ten (10) feet of the rear corner to mark the location of the vehicle.
- ✓ On the shoulder of the road or in the lane the vehicle is stopped in, about 100 feet behind and ahead of the vehicle.
- ✓ Back beyond any hill, curve, or other obstruction that prevents other drivers from seeing the vehicle within 500 feet.
- If the vehicle must stop on or by a one-way or divided highway, place warning devices 10 feet, 100 feet, and 200 feet toward the approaching traffic.

If you are driving a pupil transportation vehicle and approach a scene of an accident in which your vehicle is not involved and no other assistance is available, you must stop to provide assistance. Activate the emergency flashers.

Inform your passengers of the situation and park the vehicle in a safe location. Call local authorities to obtain help for those affected by the accident. Provide reasonable assistance until assistance arrives and then continue on the route schedule. Local school policy should include specific instructions to handle these situations.

Understanding the law and knowing the correct driving procedures will help you become a safe driver. When you begin to identify the mistakes of others and adjust your driving to compensate, you have mastered the basic fundamentals for “defensive driving.”



Emergency Evacuations and Equipment

Nebraska State Statute requires schools to conduct emergency evacuations at least twice a year for all students that are transported in a school bus. This includes students with special needs and those students that only ride for school activities.



School Bus Evacuation Drills

- All pupils shall be given an opportunity to participate in evacuation drills including those pupils who ride only on special trips.
- All pupils shall be instructed in school bus passenger safety and procedures for emergency evacuation prior to participation in evacuation drills.
- Drills should be held in restricted off-street areas and not on bus routes.
- All types of emergency evacuations should be practiced with emphasis on utilizing the rear emergency exit.

In a school bus accident or emergency situation, the school bus driver must use his/her best judgment to decide what action shall be taken. As a school bus driver, your primary responsibility is pupil safety. In an

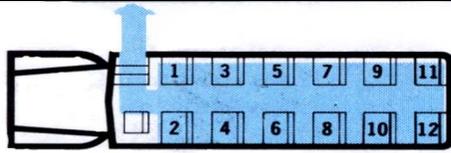
emergency, it may be necessary that the bus be evacuated.

This procedure requires a definite plan followed by periodic practice in emergency evacuation drills.

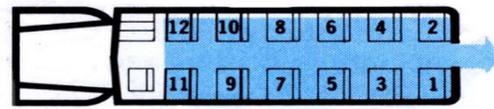
A School Bus Must Be Evacuated In These Situations:

- The bus is on fire, it must be stopped and evacuated immediately. Passengers will move to a point 100 feet or more from the bus and remain there until the bus driver has determined that no danger remains. If a school bus is unable to move and is close to existing fire or highly combustible materials, the “danger of fire” shall be assumed and all passengers must be evacuated.
- The bus is stopped in an unsafe location and is unable to proceed, the driver must determine immediately if it is safer for passengers to remain on the bus or to evacuate. For example, if the bus is in the path of any train, or on or closely adjacent to any railroad tracks.
- The bus could change position and increase the danger. For example, if a bus were to come to rest near a body of water or precipice where it could slide into the water or over a cliff, it must be evacuated;
- There is danger of collision. Under normal traffic conditions, the bus should be visible for a distance of 300 feet or more. A position over a hill or around a curve where such visibility does not exist should be considered reason for evacuation

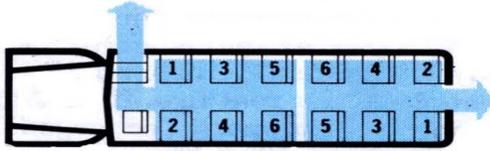
School Bus Evacuation Plans



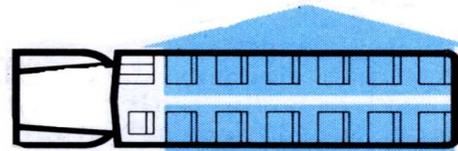
Front Door Evacuation



Rear Door Evacuation



Front-Rear Evacuation



Window Evacuation

Important Factors In School Bus Evacuation

The safety of the pupils is of utmost importance and must be given first consideration. Prior to evacuation, the emergency brakes shall be set, ignition turned off, and the transmission placed in an appropriate gear.

The driver must stay in the bus during evacuation to facilitate the evacuation procedures.

Evacuations shall be conducted with "deliberate speed." A time interval of 1½ to 2 seconds per passenger has proven to be the safest and most efficient. A bus should be completely evacuated in 2 ½ minutes.

To insure a safe exit, passengers must have their hands free. They must leave lunch boxes, books, and other personal belongings on the bus.

To assist the driver in evacuations, older students should be selected (and trained) to serve in the capacities listed below.

- Leaders - will lead passengers to safety from each door utilized for evacuation.
- Helpers - two pupils shall be stationed to aid passengers as they leave the bus through the rear emergency exit.

During an evacuation, passengers must be directed to a safe point at least 100 feet from the bus and remain there until given further directions

Common Types Of School Bus Emergency Evacuations

Utilizing the front or service door:

This evacuation is conducted using the same techniques as a routine unloading. The driver will choose whether to evacuate the bus one side at a time or on a staggered seat basis.



Utilizing only the rear exit door:

- The bus driver shall walk back through the bus to the rear exit and direct the pre-assigned leader and helpers to take their positions.
- The leader will open the rear emergency door, exit, and stand clear, ready to lead exiting passengers to a safe location set by the driver.
- The helpers will exit and take their position, one on each side of the rear emergency exit to assist passengers in exiting the bus in a safe and orderly manner.
- Passengers shall remain in their seats until directed by the driver to leave the bus. The driver may choose whether to evacuate the bus one side at a time or on a staggered seat basis.
- The driver shall advise all passengers to have their hands free and coats buttoned. Each passenger shall be two steps away from the bus before the next person exits.

Taller passengers would be reminded to duck their heads in order to exit safely.

Utilizing roof hatches, side emergency doors, and side/rear emergency windows:

- The side door is located on the left side (the street side) of the bus. Use caution exiting, as belongings may be tossed around and might be a hazard underfoot.



- Evacuation procedures are the same as if utilizing the 5-step rear door exit evacuation. Follow the instructions for opening the side/rear window emergency exits. Instructions are displayed on the door and below the window.

Evacuation of Pupils with Disabilities

Each bus route shall have its own written emergency evacuation plan. This plan shall include a pupil's ability to evacuate or to help others.

When possible, pupils with disabilities should practice their evacuation skills as required of their non-disabled peers.

The driver/attendant shall also be familiar with any extra equipment on the bus that would aid in the actual evacuation.

It is important to enlist the help of school liaisons, parents and other personnel (such as physical therapists) to train and help pupils understand emergency procedures.

Local emergency personnel should also be involved in developing the plans, especially if there are unique medical complexities of the pupils on board.

School Bus Pupil Representatives

The school bus driver is responsible for the safety of pupils. However, in an emergency a driver might be incapacitated, unable to direct evacuation. Therefore, school bus representatives (school safety patrol members or appointed pupil) should be selected, trained and prepared to direct the evacuation.

School bus representatives should be:

- mature pupil – maturity is more important than age;
- good citizens – a desire to serve is most important;

Choosing pupils who live near the end of the route might be helpful. They must also have written parental permission in advance.

Training programs shall prepare pupils to respond appropriately in case of an emergency. The school bus representatives should be instructed the proper way to:

- turn off ignition switches;
- set emergency brakes;
- summon help when and where needed (instructions and telephone numbers shall be available on buses);
- use windows for evacuation in emergencies;
- set flags and reflectors or reflective triangles;
- open and close service and emergency exit doors;
- direct school bus evacuations;
- perform other duties as directed by the driver.

Emergency Equipment

Pupil transportation vehicle drivers must be knowledgeable about the use and location of all emergency equipment. Emergency equipment includes the following:

- reflector kit.
- bus-mounted hazard flashers.
- body fluid clean-up kit.
- first aid kits.
- fire extinguishers.
- a case of three triangle shaped reflectors. (can be used day and night).

Hazard flashers are part of the lighting system of the pupil transportation vehicle. These can also be used to warn traffic.

Fire Extinguishers

Each pupil transportation vehicle must be equipped with at least one dry chemical-type fire extinguisher with hose and with a total rating of 2A10-B:C or greater.



In a bus, the fire extinguisher must be mounted and secured in the driver's compartment. In small vehicles, the first extinguisher should be secured in the trunk or the rear of the vehicle.

To operate a fire extinguisher, remove it from the bracket and hold in an upright position. Pull the safety pin and stand upwind from the burning material. Activate the extinguisher by squeezing the handle. Direct it at the base of the fire using short bursts and sweeping side to side.



First Aid Kits

The first aid kit should be clearly identified, mounted and secured in the driver's compartment. Buses with a capacity of less than 30 must have one first aid kit. Buses with more than a capacity of 30 must have two first aid kits – one mounted in the driver's compartment and the other mounted over the rear exit door. The first aid kit should be stored in the trunk or the rear of small vehicles. Replace items as they are used.

Contents of a First Aid Kit:

- 3 Sterile gauze compress
- 2 Non-sterile triangular bandage (40" x 36" x 54") with 2 safety pins
- 24 Sterile gauze pads (3" x 3")
- 2 Adhesive Tape (1" X 2 ½ yards)
- 2 Sterile gauze roller bandage
- 12 Bandage compress (3")
- 12 Bandage compress (2")
- 1 Bandage scissors (4")
- 3 Sterile eye pads
- 100 Adhesive bandage (3/4" x 3")
- 1 Pair of medical examination gloves
- 1 Mouth to mouth airway
- 1 Moisture and dustproof container for kit

Body Fluid Clean-up Kit

The body fluid clean-up kit should be stored in the driver's compartment. The kit is designed for one time use and should be replaced as necessary. In a small vehicle, it should be stored in the rear or trunk of the vehicle. (The contents for a body fluid clean-up kit are listed on the following page.)

Contents of a Body Fluid Clean-up Kit:

- 1 Absorbent Pack - 5 oz
- 2 Plastic disposable gloves
- 1 Scoop
- 1 Scraper
- 2 Plastic trash bag with tie (Minimum 12 in. x 12 in.) (1 Red-biohazard and 1 black)
- 1 Disinfectant - 8 oz.
- 1 Disposable Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered germicidal towels
- 1 Benzalkonium chloride towelette
- 1 Antiseptic biohand cleaner—4oz
- 1 Moisture and dustproof container for kit



Basic First Aid Procedures

First aid is the immediate and temporary care given to the victim of an accident or sudden illness until medical services can be obtained. A pupil transportation vehicle driver should know how to properly administer basic first aid.

Keep these points in mind when handling situations that may require you to administer first aid:

- Remove everyone from danger and then provide first aid in a safe location. Also, do not attempt to make a rescue until you are sure you won't become a victim.
- Remain calm. Keeping your composure while helping the injured person will help him/her to keep calm and cooperate. If the person becomes anxious or excited, the damage from the injury could be increased.
- Plan quickly what you need to do. Learn basic procedures or have your first aid information available so you can care for the injured person.
- Send for professional help as soon as possible. Have local emergency telephone numbers and school telephone numbers available.
- Let the person know that help is on the way and try to make them as comfortable as possible

Evaluating the Situation and Setting Priorities

To effectively deal with emergencies, the situation must be evaluated and priorities set. Three evaluations which must be made to establish priorities for treatment:

- Condition of the scene
- Type of injury
- Need for treatment

Primary first aid procedures are to:

- Restore breathing.
- Control bleeding.
- Prevent shock.

Whenever possible, do not move the victim – treat the person where you find him/her. However, several types of situations require the person to be moved out of immediate danger, such as fire, electrocution, and drowning.

Bleeding

Bleeding needs immediate attention. Evaluate the type of bleeding and the amount of blood lost:

- Capillary oozing – injuries to capillaries or small veins. It is indicated by steady oozing of dark colored blood.
- Venous bleeding – bleeding from the vein. It is indicated by a flow of dark-colored blood at a steady rate.
- Arterial bleeding – bleeding from an artery. It is indicated by bright red blood flowing quickly in spurts.



Blood flowing in a small, steady stream or small spurts can be serious, but can be controlled. Blood flowing in a heavy stream or large

spurts is very serious and must be brought under control immediately.

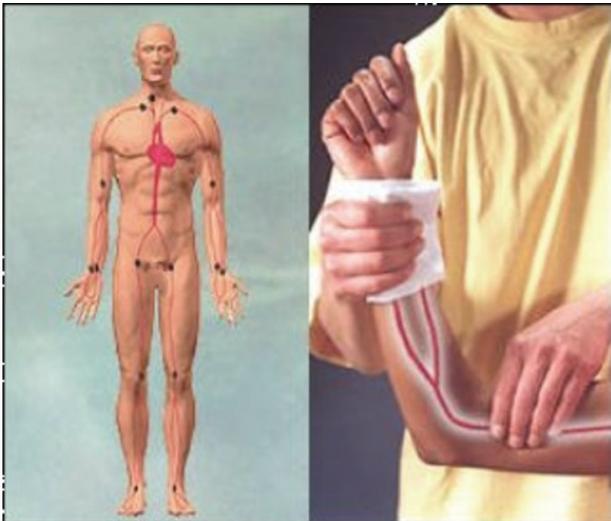
The primary step to control bleeding is to exert direct pressure over the wound. Place the

cleanest material available against the bleeding point and apply pressure by hand until the wound clots and can be dressed with bandages. If necessary, apply direct, even pressure with your bare hand. If blood soaks through the bandage, do not remove it. Apply more bandages and secure them. Make sure the bandages are not too tight so circulation is not restricted.

Look for swelling around the wound. If the bandage interferes with the circulation of the blood, loosen it. Elevate the wound above the level of the heart, except when there is a broken bone.

Artery Pressure Point

If direct pressure on the wound does not control bleeding, direct pressure on any artery pressure point closest to the wound is necessary. The artery pressure point must be located between the heart and the wound. (see illustration below)



Tourniquet Warning

A tourniquet should only be used for hemorrhaging that cannot be controlled by direct or arterial pressure. Tourniquets are dangerous to apply, to leave on, and to remove. Stoppage of blood supply below the tourniquet can lead to gangrene and loss of limb.

Shock

Shock occurs when the vital body functions are depressed. The three most common causes of shock are:

- Excessive bleeding
- Inadequate breathing
- Unsplintered fractures

If shock is not treated promptly, death may result, even if the injury causing the shock is not severe enough to cause death. It is NOT recommended that drivers attempt to splint a fractured bone; instead simply treat the victim for shock.

Recognizing shock

When a person is in shock, the skin is pale, cold, clammy, and moist with beads of sweat around the lips and forehead. The pulse is fast, weak, or entirely absent. Breathing is shallow and irregular and the eyes are dull and vacant with dilated pupils. The person complains of nausea and dizziness. She may be unaware of the seriousness of the injury and then suddenly collapse.

Control of shock

The victim should lie down on top of an article of clothing, newspaper or other material and kept warm with a light blanket. In warmer temperatures, it is not necessary to use cover.

The person should not become overly warm so that perspiration occurs. Perspiration draws blood to the skin, away from the interior of the body where it is needed. In order to help the flow of blood to the heart and head, elevate their legs at least 12 inches high. If there is a head or chest injury or breathing seems difficult, elevate the chest instead of the legs.

Offer small amounts of water to the person every 15 minutes. Do not give water if the victim is vomiting, nauseous, or unconscious.

Burns

It is not recommended to treat burns. First aid treatment often causes complications and interferes with the treatment given by the

physicians. Keep the burned area uncontaminated and treat for shock.

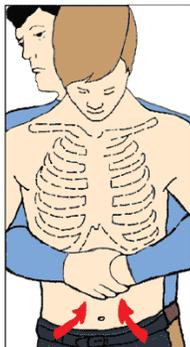
Do not apply burn preparation and do not use ice water – it intensifies the shock. There are exceptions when it may be necessary to give first aid. Chemicals may continue to burn the skin if they are not removed. Large amounts of water should be used to flush the area free of the chemicals, particularly if it is a chemical burn of the eyes or face.

Epilepsy

Once an epileptic seizure begins, you may not be able to move the person. Try to prevent him/her from injury, such as striking his head or body against any hard, sharp, or hot object.

Do not restrain the person or interfere with his movements. Epilepsy victims seldom bite their tongues during seizures. More harm is done when an object is forced between the teeth or into the mouth. Breaking teeth, cutting lips, mouth, or tongue, can occur more often than by the tongue being bitten because of the seizure.

You should communicate information about any seizure to the parents and to the school authorities.



Choking

The Heimlich Method, or Hug of Life, is a procedure to help a choking person. Stand behind the person, place your arms around his/her waist and grasp your hands together halfway between the navel and sternum (right below the rib cage). Form a fist with the thumb side against the midriff area. Grasp your fist

with your other hand, press midriff area with a quick upward thrust. If the person has collapsed, turn him on his back. Straddle him and press into the same spot with a quick upward thrust with the heel of one hand placed on top of the other hand. Continue until object is freed and/or the person begins coughing.

Do not slap an adult or a child who is choking on the back – this can force the object further into the throat. Artificial respiration or offering water is useless because the throat is blocked. Children often choke from running with food or other objects in their mouths.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

CPR should be used when a person is unresponsive or when breathing or heart beat stops. Call 911 immediately. If someone is available, have him or her call emergency medical services while you begin CPR. Try to stimulate the victim. If no response, turn them onto their back by supporting the head and neck. If head or neck injury is suspected, do not bend or turn neck.

The following describes steps to administer CPR:

- Tilt the head back and lift chin up and out to open the airway.
- Take 5 to 10 seconds to check if the victim is breathing normally (but no more than 10 seconds). Rescuers should consider gasping as *not* breathing.
- If normal breathing is not present, take a normal breath, pinch their nose shut, and seal your lips tightly around their mouth or insert a mouth-to-barrier device.
- Each rescue breath (with or without barrier device) should be just over 1 second.
- After delivering the first 2 rescue breaths, the rescuer should immediately chest compressions.

The American Heart Association recommends a compression-to-ventilation ratio of 30:2 for victims from infants (except newborns) through adults. This means for after each set of 30 chest compressions, the victim receives 2 breaths. For infants and children, compression depth should be 1/3 to 1/2 of the depth of the chest. For an adult, compressions should be about 2 inches.

Repeat this cycle of 30 compressions to 2 breaths until signs of circulation return or until professional responders take over.

The American Heart Association released guidelines in 2005 that emphasizes effective chest compressions during CPR:

- To give effective chest compressions, all rescuers should “push hard and push fast.” Compress the chest at a rate of about 100 compressions per minute for all victims.
- Allow the chest to recoil (return to normal position) completely after each compression, and use approximately equal compression and relaxation times.
- Try to limit interruptions in chest compressions. Every time you stop chest compressions, blood flow stops.

Summary of Lay Rescuer CPR for Adults, Children, and Infants

Step/Action	Adults: 8 and older	Child: 1 to 8 years	Infant: Under 1 year
Airway	Head tilt – chin lift		
Breaths Initial	2 breaths at 1 second per breath		
Foreign-body airway obstruction	Abdominal Thrust		Back slaps and chest thrusts
Compressions:			
Compression Landmarks	In the center of the chest, between nipples		Just below the nipple line
Compression method: Push hard and fast. Allow complete recoil	2 hands: Heel of 1 hand, second hand on top	2 hands: Heel of 1 hand with second on top or 1 hand: Heel of 1 hand only	2 fingers
Compression depth	1 ½ to 2 inches	About 1/3 to 1/2 the depth of the chest	
Compression rate	About 100/minute		
Compression-ventilation ratio	30:2		

(Source: *Currents in Emergency Cardiovascular Care*, A joint publication of the Citizen CPR Foundation, Inc. and the American Heart Association. Volume 16, Number 4, Winter 2005/2006)

Daily Vehicle Inspection Form

*Schools can design variations of this form
to suit their particular needs*

Bus No.	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Other	
	Am	Pm	Am	Pm	Am	Pm	Am	Pm	Am	Pm	Am	Pm	Am	Pm
Under the Hood	1. Water Level													
	2. Oil Level													
	3. Belts & Hoses													
	4. Fluid Leaks													
Inside Vehicle	5. Floor Clean													
	6. Seats & Windows													
	7. Emergency Equipment													
Start Engine	8. Oil Pressure													
	9. Air/Vacuum Pressure													
	10. Fuel Level													
	11. Heaters & Defrosters													
	12. Wipers & Washer													
	13. Service Door													
	14. Low & High Beam Indicator													
	15. Left Signal Indicator													
	16. Amber Warning Lights													
	17. Emergency Exit & Buzzer													
Outside Vehicle	18. Rear Clear Lights													
	19. Amber Warning Lights													
	20. Left Turn Signal, Rear													
	21. Brake & Taillights													
	22. I.D. Lights													
	23. Exhaust System													
	24. Tires & Wheels, Rear													
Move to Front	25. Headlights, High Beam													
	26. Clear Lights													
	27. Amber Warning Lights													
	28. Left Turn Signal, Front													
	29. Front Tires & Wheels													
	30. Crossover Mirror													
	31. Both Rear View Mirrors													
Re-Enter Vehicle	32. Low Beam Indicator													
	33. Right Signal Indicator													
	34. Red Warning Lights													
Outside Vehicle	35. Right Turn Signal, Front													
	36. Red Warning Lights													
Move to Front	37. Right Turn, Signal													
	38. Red Warning Lights													
Re-Enter Vehicle	39. Service Brakes													
	40. Parking Brake													

Odometer		Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Activity		Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.
Regular Route	Before	Am					Trips	Before	Am				
	After	Pm						After	Pm				

Driver Signature: _____ Date: _____ Provided by NDE

Section 10A

SCHOOL BUSES



THIS SECTION IS FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

SECTION 10

SCHOOL BUSES

This Section Covers

- **Danger Zones and Use of Mirrors**
- **Loading and Unloading**
- **Emergency Exit and Evacuation**
- **Railroad-highway Grade Crossings**
- **Student Management**
- **Antilock Braking Systems**
- **Special Safety Considerations**

Because state and local laws and regulations regulate so much of school transportation and school bus operations, many of the procedures in this section may differ from state to state. You should be thoroughly familiar with the laws and regulations in your state and local school district.

10.1 – Danger Zones and Use of Mirrors

10.1.1 – Danger Zones

The danger zone is the area on all sides of the bus where children are in the most danger of being hit, either by another vehicle or their own bus. The danger zones may extend as much as 30 feet from the front bumper with the first 10 feet being the most dangerous; 10 feet from the left and right sides of the bus and 10 feet behind the rear bumper of the school bus. In addition, the area to the left of the bus is always considered dangerous because of passing cars. Figure 10.1 illustrates these danger zones.

10.1.2 – Correct Mirror Adjustment

Proper adjustment and use of all mirrors is vital to the safe operation of the school bus in order to observe the danger zone around the bus and look for students, traffic, and other objects in this area.

You should always check each mirror before operating the school bus to obtain maximum viewing area. If necessary, have the mirrors adjusted.

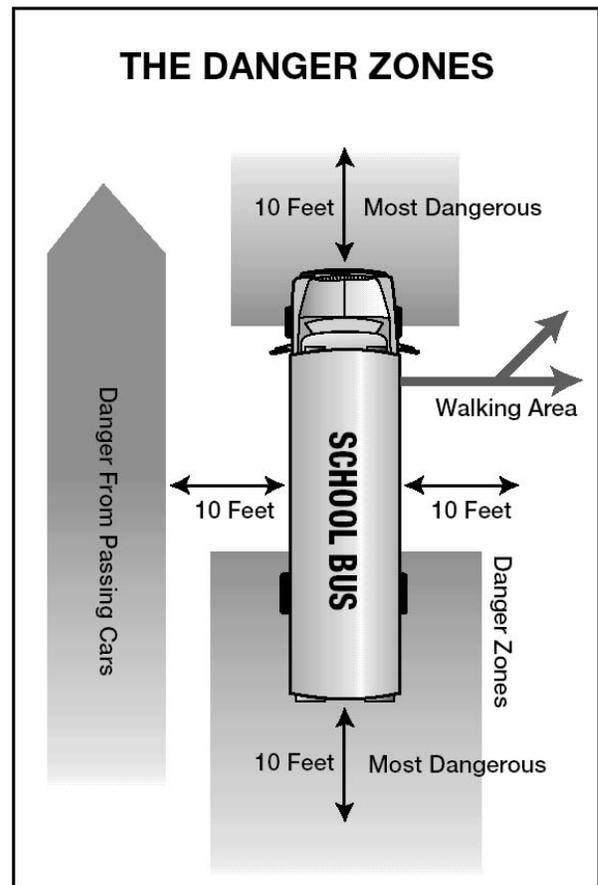


Figure 10.1

10.1.3 – Outside Left and Right Side Flat Mirrors

These mirrors are mounted at the left and right front corners of the bus at the side or front of the windshield. They are used to monitor traffic, check clearances and students on the sides and to the rear of the bus. There is a blind spot immediately below and in front of each mirror and directly in back of the rear bumper. The blind spot behind the bus extends 50 to 150 feet and could extend up to 400 feet depending on the width of the bus.

Ensure that the mirrors are properly adjusted so you can see:

- 200 feet or 4 bus lengths behind the bus.
- Along the sides of the bus.
- The rear tires touching the ground.

Figure 10.2 shows how both the outside left and right side flat mirrors should be adjusted

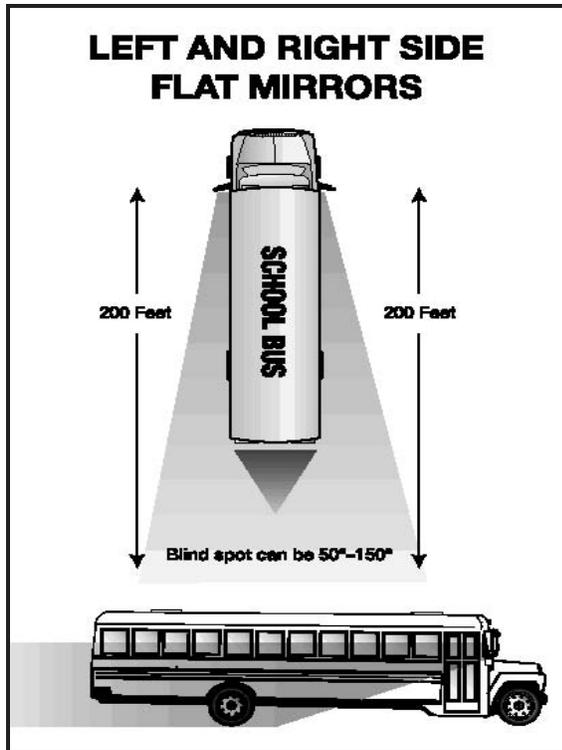


Figure 10.2

10.1.4 – Outside Left and Right Side Convex Mirrors

The convex mirrors are located below the outside flat mirrors. They are used to monitor the left and right sides at a wide angle. They provide a view of traffic, clearances, and students at the side of the bus. These mirrors present a view of people and objects that does not accurately reflect their size and distance from the bus.

You should position these mirrors to see:

- The entire side of the bus up to the mirror mounts.
- Front of the rear tires touching the ground.
- At least one traffic lane on either side of the bus.

Figure 10.3 shows how both the outside left and right side convex mirrors should be adjusted.

LEFT AND RIGHT SIDE CONVEX MIRRORS

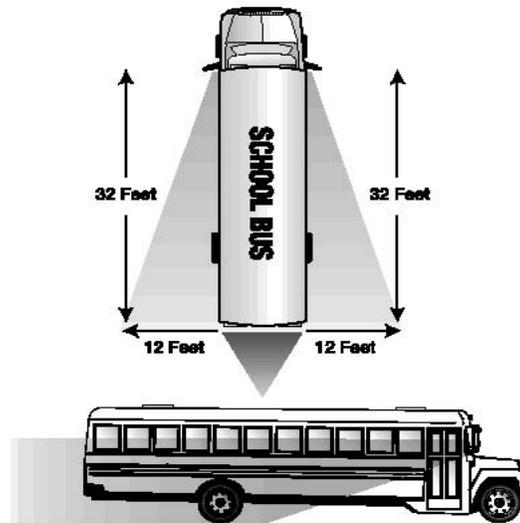


Figure 10.3

10.1.5 – Outside Left and Right Side Crossover Mirrors

These mirrors are mounted on both left and right front corners of the bus. They are used to see the front bumper “danger zone” area directly in front of the bus that is not visible by direct vision, and to view the “danger zone” area to the left side and right side of the bus, including the service door and front wheel area. The mirror presents a view of people and objects that does not accurately reflect their size and distance from the bus. The driver must ensure that these mirrors are properly adjusted.

Ensure that the mirrors are properly adjusted so you can see:

- The entire area in front of the bus from the front bumper at ground level to a point where direct vision is possible. Direct vision and mirror view vision should overlap.
- The right and left front tires touching the ground.
- The area from the front of the bus to the service door.
- These mirrors, along with the convex and flat mirrors, should be viewed in a logical sequence to ensure that a child or object is not in any of the danger zones.

Figure 10.4 illustrates how the left and right side crossover mirrors should be adjusted.

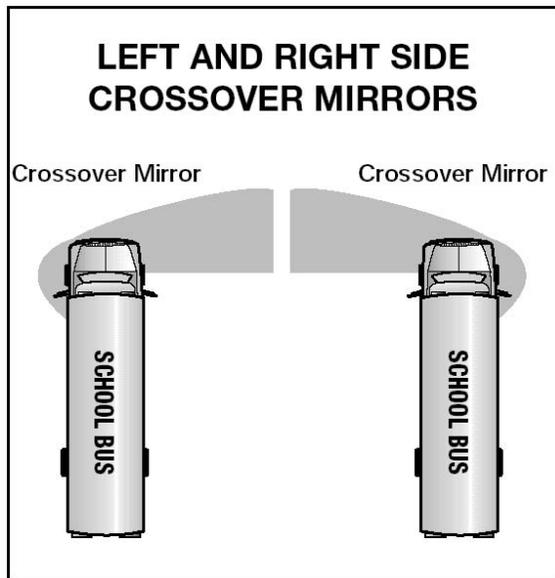


Figure 10.4

10.1.6 – Overhead Inside Rearview Mirror

This mirror is mounted directly above the windshield on the driver's side area of the bus. This mirror is used to monitor passenger activity inside the bus. It may provide limited visibility directly in back of the bus if the bus is equipped with a glass-bottomed rear emergency door. There is a blind spot area directly behind the driver's seat as well as a large blind spot area that begins at the rear bumper and could extend up to 400 feet or more behind the bus. You must use the exterior side mirrors to monitor traffic that approaches and enters this area.

You should position the mirror to see:

- The top of the rear window in the top of the mirror.
- All of the students, including the heads of the students right behind you.

10.2 – Loading and Unloading

More students are killed while getting on or off a school bus each year than are killed as passengers inside of a school bus. As a result, knowing what to do before, during, and after loading or unloading students is critical. This section will give you specific procedures to help you avoid unsafe conditions which could result in injuries and fatalities during and after loading and unloading students.

The information in this section is intended to provide a broad overview, but is not a definitive set of actions. It is imperative that you learn and obey the state laws and regulations governing loading/unloading operations in your state.

10.2.1 – Approaching the Stop

Each school district establishes official routes and official school bus stops. All stops should be approved by the school district prior to making the stop. You should never change the location of a bus stop without written approval from the appropriate school district official.

You must use extreme caution when approaching a school bus stop. You are in a very demanding situation when entering these areas. It is critical that you understand and follow all state and local laws and regulations regarding approaching a school bus stop. This would involve the proper use of mirrors, alternating flashing lights, and when equipped, the moveable stop signal arm and crossing control arm.

When approaching the stop, you should:

- Approach cautiously at a slow rate of speed.
- Look for pedestrians, traffic, or other objects before, during, and after coming to a stop.
- Continuously check all mirrors.
- If the school bus is so equipped, activate alternating flashing amber warning lights at least 200 feet or approximately 5-10 seconds before the school bus stop or in accordance with state law.
- Turn on right turn signal indicator about 100-300 feet or approximately 3-5 seconds before pulling over.
- Continuously check mirrors to monitor the danger zones for students, traffic, and other objects.
- Move as far as possible to the right on the traveled portion of the roadway.
- Bring school bus to a full stop with the front bumper at least 10 feet away from students at the designated stop. This forces the students to walk to the bus so you have a better view of their movements.
- Place transmission in Park, or if there is no Park shift point, in Neutral and set the parking brake at each stop.
- Open service door, if possible, enough to activate alternating red lights when traffic is a safe distance from the school bus.
- Make a final check to see that all traffic has stopped before completely opening

the door and signaling students to approach.

10.2.2 – Loading Procedures

- Perform a safe stop as described in subsection 10.2.1.
- Students should wait in a designated location for the school bus, facing the bus as it approaches.
- Students should board the bus only when signaled by the driver.
- Monitor all mirrors continuously.
- Count the number of students at the bus stop and be sure all board the bus. If possible, know names of students at each stop. If there is a student missing, ask the other students where the student is.
- Have the students board the school bus slowly, in single file, and use the handrail. The dome light should be on while loading in the dark.
- Wait until students are seated and facing forward before moving the bus.
- Check all mirrors. Make certain no one is running to catch the bus.
- If you cannot account for a student outside, secure the bus, take the key, and check around and underneath the bus.
- When all students are accounted for, prepare to leave by:
 - Closing the door.
 - Engaging the transmission.
 - Releasing the parking brake.
 - Turning off alternating flashing red lights.
 - Turning on left turn signal.
 - Checking all mirrors again.
 - Allowing congested traffic to disperse.
- When it is safe, move the bus to enter traffic flow and continue the route.

The loading procedure is essentially the same wherever you load students, but there are slight differences. When students are loading at the school campus, you should:

- Turn off the ignition switch.
- Remove key if leaving driver's compartment.
- Position yourself to supervise loading as required or recommended by your state or local regulations.

10.2.3 – Unloading Procedures on the Route

- Perform a safe stop at designated unloading areas as described in subsection 10.2.1.
- Have the students remain seated until told to exit.
- Check all mirrors.
- Count the number of students while unloading to confirm the location of all students before pulling away from the stop.
- Tell students to exit the bus and walk at least 10 feet away from the side of the bus to a position where the driver can plainly see all students.
- Check all mirrors again. Make sure no students are around or returning to the bus.
- If you cannot account for a student outside the bus, secure the bus, and check around and underneath the bus.
- When all students are accounted for, prepare to leave by:
 - Closing the door.
 - Engaging transmission.
 - Releasing parking brake.
 - Turning off alternating flashing red lights.
 - Turning on left turn signal.
 - Checking all mirrors again.
 - Allowing congested traffic to disperse.
- When it is safe, move the bus, enter the traffic flow and continue the route.

Note. If you have missed a student's unloading stop, do not back up. Be sure to follow local procedures.

Additional Procedures for Students That Must Cross the Roadway.

You should understand what students should do when exiting a school bus and crossing the street in front of the bus. In addition, the school bus driver should understand that students might not always do what they are supposed to do. If a student or students must cross the roadway, they should follow these procedures:

- Walk approximately 10 feet away from the side of the school bus to a position where you can see them.
- Walk to a location at least 10 feet in front of the right corner of the bumper, but still remaining away from the front of the school bus.

- Stop at the right edge of the roadway. You should be able to see the student's feet.

When students reach the edge of the roadway, they should:

- Stop and look in all directions, making sure the roadway is clear and is safe.
- Check to see if the red flashing lights on the bus are still flashing.
- Wait for your signal before crossing the roadway.

Upon your signal, the students should:

- Cross far enough in front of the school bus to be in your view.
- Stop at the left edge of the school bus, stop, and look again for your signal to continue to cross the roadway.
- Look for traffic in both directions, making sure roadway is clear.
- Proceed across the roadway, continuing to look in all directions.

Notes

1.: The school bus driver should enforce any state or local regulations or recommendations concerning student actions outside the school bus.

10.2.4 – Unloading Procedures at School

State and local laws and regulations regarding unloading students at schools, particularly in situations where such activities take place in the school parking lot or other location that is off the traveled roadway, are often different than unloading along the school bus route. It is important that the school bus driver understands and obeys state and local laws and regulations. The following procedures are meant to be general guidelines.

When unloading at the school you should follow these procedures:

- Perform a safe stop at designated unloading areas as described in subsection 10.2.1.
- Secure the bus by:
 - Turning off the ignition switch.
 - Removing key if leaving driver's compartment.
- Have the students remain seated until told to exit.

- Position yourself to supervise unloading as required or recommended by your state or local regulations.
- Have students exit in orderly fashion.
- Observe students as they step from bus to see that all move promptly away from the unloading area.
- Walk through the bus and check for hiding/sleeping students and items left by students.
- Check all mirrors. Make certain no students are returning to the bus.
- If you cannot account for a student outside the bus and the bus is secure, check around and underneath the bus.
- When all students are accounted for, prepare to leave by:
 - Closing the door.
 - Fastening safety belt.
 - Starting engine.
 - Engaging the transmission.
 - Releasing the parking brake.
 - Turning off alternating flashing red lights.
 - Turning on left turn signal.
 - Checking all mirrors again.
 - Allowing congested traffic to disperse.
- When it is safe, pull away from the unloading area.

10.2.5 – Special Dangers of Loading and Unloading

Dropped or Forgotten Objects. Always focus on students as they approach the bus and watch for any who disappear from sight.

Students may drop an object near the bus during loading and unloading. Stopping to pick up the object, or returning to pick up the object may cause the student to disappear from the driver's sight at a very dangerous moment.

Students should be told to leave any dropped object and move to a point of safety out of the danger zones and attempt to get the driver's attention to retrieve the object.

Handrail Hang-ups. Students have been injured or killed when clothing, accessories, or even parts of their body get caught in the handrail or door as they exited the bus. You should closely observe all students exiting the bus to confirm that they are in a safe location prior to moving the bus.

10.2.6 – Post-trip Inspection

When your route or school activity trip is finished, you should conduct a post-trip inspection of the bus.

You should walk through the bus and around the bus looking for the following:

- Articles left on the bus.
- Sleeping students.
- Open windows and doors.
- Mechanical/operational problems with the bus, with special attention to items that are unique to school buses – mirror systems, flashing warning lamps and stop signal arms.
- Damage or vandalism.

Any problems or special situations should be reported immediately to your supervisor or school authorities.

10.3 – Emergency Exit and Evacuation

An emergency situation can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere. It could be a crash, a stalled school bus on a railroad-highway crossing or in a high-speed intersection, an electrical fire in the engine compartment, a medical emergency to a student on the school bus, etc. Knowing what to do in an emergency—before, during and after an evacuation—can mean the difference between life and death.

10.3.1 – Planning for Emergencies

Determine Need to Evacuate Bus. The first and most important consideration is for you to recognize the hazard. If time permits, school bus drivers should contact their dispatcher to explain the situation before making a decision to evacuate the school bus.

As a general rule, student safety and control is best maintained by keeping students on the bus during an emergency and/or impending crisis situation, if so doing does not expose them to unnecessary risk or injury. Remember, the decision to evacuate the bus must be a timely one.

A decision to evacuate should include consideration of the following conditions:

- Is there a fire or danger of fire?
- Is there a smell of raw or leaking fuel?
- Is there a chance the bus could be hit by other vehicles?

- Is the bus in the path of a sighted tornado or rising waters?
- Are there downed power lines?
- Would removing students expose them to speeding traffic, severe weather, or a dangerous environment such as downed power lines?
- Would moving students complicate injuries such as neck and back injuries and fractures?
- Is there a hazardous spill involved? Sometimes, it may be safer to remain on the bus and not come in contact with the material.

Mandatory Evacuations. The driver must evacuate the bus when:

- The bus is on fire or there is a threat of a fire.
- The bus is stalled on or adjacent to a railroad-highway crossing.
- The position of the bus may change and increase the danger.
- There is an imminent danger of collision.
- There is a need to quickly evacuate because of a hazardous materials spill.

10.3.2 – Evacuation Procedures

Be Prepared and Plan Ahead. When possible, assign two responsible, older student assistants to each emergency exit. Teach them how to assist the other students off the bus. Assign another student assistant to lead the students to a “safe place” after evacuation. However, you must recognize that there may not be older, responsible students on the bus at the time of the emergency. Therefore, emergency evacuation procedures must be explained to all students. This includes knowing how to operate the various emergency exits and the importance of listening to and following all instructions given by you.

Some tips to determine a safe place:

- A safe place will be at least 100 feet off the road in the direction of oncoming traffic. This will keep the students from being hit by debris if another vehicle collides with the bus.
- Lead students upwind of the bus if fire is present.
- Lead students as far away from railroad tracks as possible and in the direction of any oncoming train.
- Lead students upwind of the bus at least 300 feet if there is a risk from spilled hazardous materials.

- If the bus is in the direct path of a sighted tornado and evacuation is ordered, escort students to a nearby ditch or culvert if shelter in a building is not readily available, and direct them to lie face down, hands covering their head. They should be far enough away so the bus cannot topple on them. Avoid areas that are subject to flash floods.

General Procedures. Determine if evacuation is in the best interest of safety.

- Determine the best type of evacuation:
 - Front, rear or side door evacuation, or some combination of doors.
 - Roof or window evacuation.
- Secure the bus by:
 - Placing transmission in Park, or if there is no shift point, in Neutral.
 - Setting parking brakes.
 - Shutting off the engine.
 - Removing ignition key.
 - Activating hazard-warning lights.
- If time allows, notify dispatch office of evacuation location, conditions, and type of assistance needed.
- Dangle radio microphone or telephone out of driver's window for later use, if operable.
- If no radio, or radio is inoperable, dispatch a passing motorist or area resident to call for help. As a last resort, dispatch two older, responsible students to go for help.
- Order the evacuation.
- Evacuate students from the bus.
 - Do not move a student you believe may have suffered a neck or spinal injury unless his or her life is in immediate danger.
 - Special procedures must be used to move neck spinal injury victims to prevent further injury.
- Direct a student assistant to lead students to the nearest safe place.
- Walk through the bus to ensure no students remain on the bus. Retrieve emergency equipment.
- Join waiting students. Account for all students and check for their safety.
- Protect the scene. Set out emergency warning devices as necessary and appropriate.
- Prepare information for emergency responders.

10.4 – Railroad-highway Crossings

10.4.1 – Types of Crossings

Passive Crossings. This type of crossing does not have any type of traffic control device. You must stop at these crossings and follow proper procedures. However, the decision to proceed rests entirely in your hands. Passive crossings require you to recognize the crossing, search for any train using the tracks and decide if there is sufficient clear space to cross safely. Passive crossings have yellow circular advance warning signs, pavement markings and crossbucks to assist you in recognizing a crossing.

Active Crossings. This type of crossing has a traffic control device installed at the crossing to regulate traffic at the crossing. These active devices include flashing red lights, with or without bells and flashing red lights with bells and gates.

10.4.2 – Warning Signs and Devices

Advance Warning Signs. The round, black-on-yellow warning sign is placed ahead of a public railroad-highway crossing. The advance warning sign tells you to slow down, look and listen for the train, and be prepared to stop at the tracks if a train is coming. See Figure 10.5.



Figure 10.5

Pavement Markings. Pavement markings mean the same as the advance warning sign. They consist of an "X" with the letters "RR" and a no-passing marking on two-lane roads.

There is also a no passing zone sign on two-lane roads. There may be a white stop line painted on the pavement before the railroad tracks. The front of the school bus must remain behind this line while stopped at the crossing.



Figure 10.6

Crossbuck Signs. This sign marks the crossing. It requires you to yield the right-of-way to the train. If there is no white line painted on the pavement, you must stop the bus before the crossbuck sign. When the road crosses over more than one set of tracks, a sign below the crossbuck indicates the number of tracks. See Figure 10.7.

Flashing Red Light Signals. At many highway-rail grade crossings, the crossbuck sign has flashing red lights and bells. When the lights begin to flash, stop! A train is approaching. You are required to yield the right-of-way to the train. If there is more than one track, make sure all tracks are clear before crossing. See Figure 10.8.

Gates. Many railroad-highway crossings have gates with flashing red lights and bells. Stop when the lights begin to flash and before the gate lowers across the road lane. Remain stopped until the gates go up and the lights have stopped flashing. Proceed when it is safe. If the gate stays down after the train passes, do not drive around the gate. Instead, call your dispatcher. See Figure 10.8.

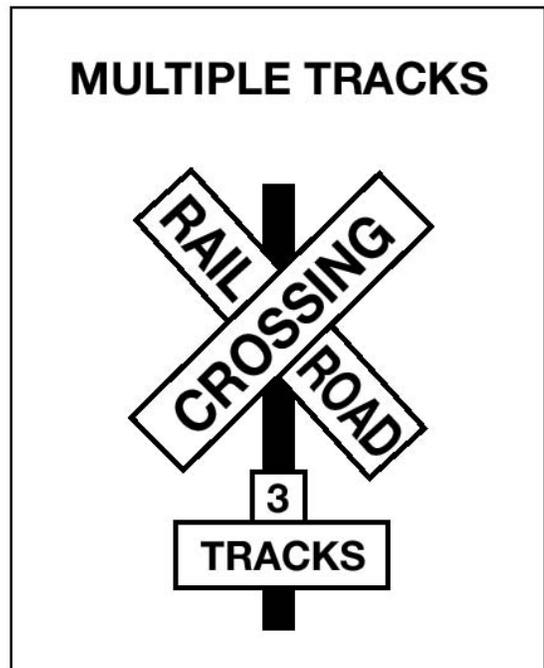


Figure 10.7

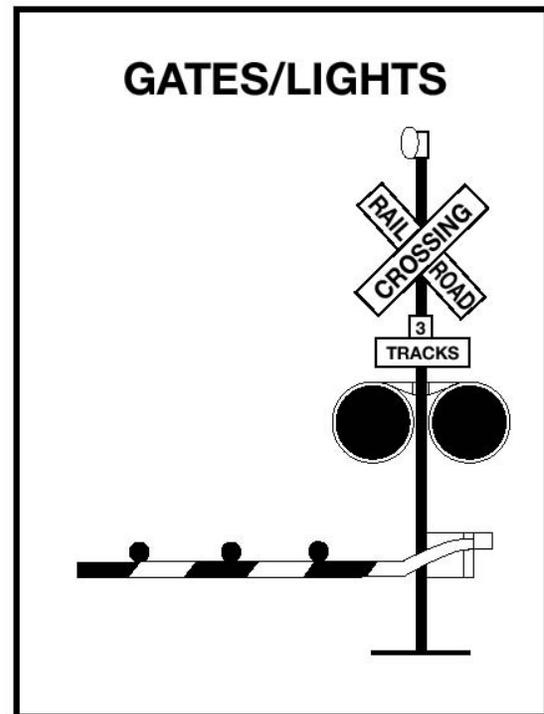


Figure 10.8

10.4.3 – Recommended Procedures

Each state has laws and regulations governing how school buses must operate at railroad-highway crossings. It is important for you to

understand and obey these state laws and regulations. In general, school buses must stop at all crossings, and ensure it is safe before proceeding across the tracks. The specific procedures required in each state vary.

A school bus is one of the safest vehicles on the highway. However, a school bus does not have the slightest edge when involved in a crash with a train. Because of a train's size and weight it cannot stop quickly. An emergency escape route does not exist for a train. You can prevent school bus/train crashes by following these recommended procedures.

- Approaching the Crossing:
 - Slow down, including shifting to a lower gear in a manual transmission bus, and test your brakes.
 - Activate hazard lights approximately 200 feet before the crossing. Make sure your intentions are known.
 - Scan your surroundings and check for traffic behind you.
 - Stay to the right of the roadway if possible.
 - Choose an escape route in the event of a brake failure or problems behind you.
- At the Crossing:
 - Stop no closer than 15 feet and no farther than 50 feet from the nearest rail, where you have the best view of the tracks.
 - Place the transmission in Park, or if there is no Park shift point, in Neutral and press down on the service brake or set the parking brakes.
 - Turn off all radios and noisy equipment, and silence the passengers.
 - Open the service door and driver's window. Look and listen for an approaching train.
- Crossing the Track:
 - Check the crossing signals again before proceeding.
 - At a multiple-track crossing, stop only before the first set of tracks. When you are sure no train is approaching on any track, proceed across all of the tracks until you have completely cleared them.
 - Cross the tracks in a low gear. Do not change gears while crossing.
 - If the gate comes down after you have started across, drive through it even if it means you will break the gate.

10.4.4 – Special Situations

Bus Stalls or Trapped on Tracks. If your bus stalls or is trapped on the tracks, get everyone out and off the tracks immediately. Move everyone far from the bus at an angle, which is both away from the tracks and toward the train.

Police Officer at the Crossing. If a police officer is at the crossing, obey directions. If there is no police officer, and you believe the signal is malfunctioning, call your dispatcher to report the situation and ask for instructions on how to proceed.

Obstructed View of Tracks. Plan your route so it provides maximum sight distance at highway-rail grade crossings. Do not attempt to cross the tracks unless you can see far enough down the track to know for certain that no trains are approaching. Passive crossings are those that do not have any type of traffic control device. Be especially careful at "passive" crossings. Even if there are active railroad signals that indicate the tracks are clear, you must look and listen to be sure it is safe to proceed.

Containment or Storage Areas. If it won't fit, don't commit! Know the length of your bus and the size of the containment area at highway-rail crossings on the school bus route, as well as any crossing you encounter in the course of a school activity trip. When approaching a crossing with a signal or stop sign on the opposite side, pay attention to the amount of room there. Be certain the bus has enough containment or storage area to completely clear the railroad tracks on the other side if there is a need to stop. As a general rule, add 15 feet to the length of the school bus to determine an acceptable amount of containment or storage area.

10.5 – Student Management

10.5.1 – Don't Deal with On-bus Problems When Loading and Unloading

In order to get students to and from school safely and on time, you need to be able to concentrate on the driving task.

Loading and unloading requires all your concentration. Don't take your eyes off what is happening outside the bus.

If there is a behavior problem on the bus, wait until the students unloading are safely off the bus and have moved away. If necessary, pull the bus over to handle the problem.

10.5.2 – Handling Serious Problems

Tips on handling serious problems:

- Follow your school's procedures for discipline or refusal of rights to ride the bus.
- Stop the bus. Park in a safe location off the road, perhaps a parking lot or a driveway.
- Secure the bus. Take the ignition key with you if you leave your seat.
- Stand up and speak respectfully to the offender or offenders. Speak in a courteous manner with a firm voice. Remind the offender of the expected behavior. Do not show anger, but do show that you mean business.
- If a change of seating is needed, request that the student move to a seat near you.
- Never put a student off the bus except at school or at his or her designated school bus stop. If you feel that the offense is serious enough that you cannot safely drive the bus, call for a school administrator or the police to come and remove the student. Always follow your state or local procedures for requesting assistance.

10.6 – Antilock Braking Systems

10.6.1 – Vehicles Required to Have Antilock Braking Systems

The Department of Transportation requires that antilock braking systems be on:

- Air brakes vehicles, (trucks, buses, trailers and converter dollies) built on or after March 1, 1998.
- Hydraulically braked trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 lbs or more built on or after March 1, 1999.

Many buses built before these dates have been voluntarily equipped with ABS.

Your school bus will have a yellow ABS malfunction lamp on the instrument panel if it is equipped with ABS.

10.6.2 – How ABS Helps You

When you brake hard on slippery surfaces in a vehicle without ABS, your wheels may lock up.

When your steering wheels lock up, you lose steering control. When your other wheels lock up, you may skid or even spin the vehicle.

ABS helps you avoid wheel lock up and maintain control. You may or may not be able to stop faster with ABS, but you should be able to steer around an obstacle while braking, and avoid skids caused by over braking.

10.6.3 – Braking with ABS

When you drive a vehicle with ABS, you should brake as you always have. In other words:

- Use only the braking force necessary to stop safely and stay in control.
- Brake the same way, regardless of whether you have ABS on the bus. However, in emergency braking, do not pump the brakes on a bus with ABS.
- As you slow down, monitor your bus and back off the brakes (if it is safe to do so) to stay in control.

10.6.4 – Braking if ABS is Not Working

Without ABS, you still have normal brake functions. Drive and brake as you always have.

Vehicles with ABS have yellow malfunction lamps to tell you if something is not working. The yellow ABS malfunction lamp is on the bus's instrument panel.

As a system check on newer vehicles, the malfunction lamp comes on at start-up for a bulb check and then goes out quickly. On older systems, the lamp could stay on until you are driving over five mph.

If the lamp stays on after the bulb check, or goes on once you are under way, you may have lost ABS control at one or more wheels.

Remember, if your ABS malfunctions, you still have regular brakes. Drive normally, but get the system serviced soon.

10.6.5 – Safety Reminders

- ABS won't allow you to drive faster, follow more closely, or drive less carefully.
- ABS won't prevent power or turning skids—ABS should prevent brake-induced skids but not those caused by spinning the drive wheels or going too fast in a turn.

- ABS won't necessarily shorten stopping distance. ABS will help maintain vehicle control, but not always shorten stopping distance.
- ABS won't increase or decrease ultimate stopping power—ABS is an “add-on” to your normal brakes, not a replacement for them.
- ABS won't change the way you normally brake. Under normal brake conditions, your vehicle will stop as it always stopped. ABS only comes into play when a wheel would normally have locked up because of over braking.
- ABS won't compensate for bad brakes or poor brake maintenance.
- Remember: The best vehicle safety feature is still a safe driver.
- Remember: Drive so you never need to use your ABS.
- Remember: If you need it, ABS could help to prevent a serious crash.

10.7 – Special Safety Considerations

10.7.1 – Strobe Lights

Some school buses are equipped with roof-mounted, white strobe lights. If your bus is so equipped, the overhead strobe light should be used when you have limited visibility. This means that you cannot easily see around you – in front, behind, or beside the school bus. Your visibility could be only slightly limited or it could be so bad that you can see nothing at all. In all instances, understand and obey your state or local regulations concerning the use of these lights.

10.7.2 – Driving in High Winds

Strong winds affect the handling of the school bus! The side of a school bus acts like a sail on a sailboat. Strong winds can push the school bus sideways. They can even move the school bus off the road or, in extreme conditions, tip it over.

If you are caught in strong winds:

- Keep a strong grip on the steering wheel. Try to anticipate gusts.
- You should slow down to lessen the effect of the wind, or pull off the roadway and wait.
- Contact your dispatcher to get more information on how to proceed.

10.7.3 – Backing

Backing a school bus is strongly discouraged. You should back your bus only when you have no other safe way to move the vehicle. You should never back a school bus when students are outside of the bus. Backing is dangerous and increases your risk of a collision. If you have no choice and you must back your bus, follow these procedures:

- Post a lookout. The purpose of the lookout is to warn you about obstacles, approaching persons, and other vehicles. The lookout should not give directions on how to back the bus.
- Signal for quiet on the bus.
- Constantly check all mirrors and rear windows.
- Back slowly and smoothly.
- If no lookout is available:
-
- Set the parking brake.
- Turn off the motor and take the keys with you.
- Walk to the rear of the bus to determine whether the way is clear.
- If you must back-up at a student pick-up point, be sure to pick up students before backing and watch for late comers at all times.
- Be sure that all students are in the bus before backing.
- If you must back-up at a student drop-off point, be sure to unload students after backing.

10.7.4 – Tail Swing

A school bus can have up to a three-foot tail swing. You need to check your mirrors before and during any turning movements to monitor the tail swing.

Section 10

Test Your Knowledge

1. Define the danger zone. How far does the danger zone extend around the bus?
2. What should you be able to see if the outside flat mirrors are adjusted properly? The outside convex mirrors? The crossover mirrors?
3. You are loading students along the route. When should you activate your alternating flashing amber warning lights?
4. You are unloading students along your route. Where should students walk to after exiting the bus?
5. After unloading at school, why should you walk through the bus?
6. What position should students be in front of the bus before they cross the roadway?
7. Under what conditions must you evacuate the bus?
8. How far from the nearest rail should you stop at a highway-rail crossing?
9. What is a passive highway-rail crossing? Why should you be extra cautious at this type of crossing?
10. How should you use your brakes if your vehicle is equipped with antilock brakes (ABS)?

These questions may be on your test. If you can't answer them all, re-read Section 10.