

## OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL BUSES

### Background

The Division believes that it is necessary to establish rules and regulations to ensure the safety and comfort of those people using school buses operated by the Division.

### Procedures

1. The driver may appoint one or more of the older students as monitors to assist with maintaining proper conduct and other matters on the bus.
2. The driver may assign a seat for each student, but may ask students for some input prior to making these arrangements.
3. The driver is in full charge of the bus at all times. If attempts by the bus driver to correct undesirable behavior are not effective, the bus driver should attempt to deal with the behavior by talking to the student(s), parents, and Coordinator of Transportation. If the conflict is not resolved, the student(s) should be reported to the Principal who may temporarily or permanently suspend the student(s) from riding on the school bus.
4. The Principal shall advise the Coordinator of Transportation when a student is suspended from school or riding on the school bus, who shall convey this information to the relevant driver.
5. A minimum of two school bus evacuation drills must be conducted each school year. These should be planned in consultation with the Coordinator of Transportation.
6. No one other than students and the driver may ride on the bus during regular routes unless authorized by the Board or Superintendent. The bus driver is authorized to permit other school personnel to ride the bus under special circumstances (see Administrative Procedure 560 – *Student Transportation System*).
7. Buses must arrive at school at least **five minutes** prior to school registration in the morning, but not more than **fifteen minutes** prior, unless authorized by the Principal. Bus drivers are responsible for their passengers until the school doors are opened.
8. Buses must be at the school prior to dismissal time where safe and practical, and remain at least **five minutes** after dismissal time.

9. School division buses are not to be used for private business purposes.
10. All bus drivers shall be familiar with and comply with the rules and regulations of the Alberta Highway Traffic Act.
11. In all weather conditions, bus drivers on rural routes must make sure that someone is at home before dropping off younger students (K-3). Arrangements should be in place by the end of September, via information supplied to the student's bus driver which will designate an alternate drop-off for younger students (K-3) in the event that parents cannot get home. In the event that there is no one at home at the alternate drop-off, the children will be returned to town and left at their billet as identified on the student registration form / student demographic form.
12. Bus drivers on rural routes must notify all parents on their run when the bus is not operating due to cold weather, blizzard conditions or mechanical issues. Drivers must also notify the Coordinator of Transportation if their bus will not be making the regular run. Further details are outlined in Administrative Procedure 567- *Busing During Inclement Weather*.
13. Jurisdictional policy does not require buses to stop at controlled railway crossings. Regulations spelled out in the *Alberta Highway Traffic Act* dealing with railway crossings are to be followed.
14. Consumption of food on the bus is at the discretion of the driver. Cleanliness of the bus, both inside and outside, is the responsibility of the driver.
15. If garbage containers are to be used on the bus, they must be placed so as not to block the aisle or the emergency door.
16. Bus drivers must use their discretion in determining whether students are wearing suitable clothing for the weather conditions. Working cooperatively with parents is highly recommended in resolving these problems.
17. Under no circumstances should students be disciplined by dropping them off en route other than their normal drop-off point.

**Conduct and Expectations on School Buses.** Parents/guardians must sign and return this form prior to their child starting to ride the school bus.

A copy of "Conduct and Expectations on School Buses" will be posted in each bus and shall also be provided to all bus students at the beginning of the school year.

1. Students must be on time and may be left by the driver if habitually late.
2. Students must obey the driver and the monitor.

3. Students must sit in the seat assigned by the driver.
4. Students are only allowed to ride on their designated bus.
5. Students are to be properly dressed for existing weather conditions. If there is a concern by the bus driver that students are not dressed properly for the current weather conditions, the student may be denied access to the bus by the driver.
6. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed and the driver or monitor may separate students who are being disruptive.
7. Whether or not the bus is parked or in motion, students must not extend any part of their body out of a bus window.
8. Students must enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner and shall remain seated while the bus is in motion.
9. When leaving the bus, students must always observe the directions of the driver and must always pass in front of the bus when crossing the road.
10. All students must remain absolutely quiet while the bus is stopped at a railway crossing and shall remain quiet while the bus is passing through the crossing.
11. Students must know the location of the emergency exits (doors and windows), first-aid kit, and fire extinguisher.
12. Students must not throw paper or other garbage on the floor of the bus or out a bus window.
13. Rear doors shall only be used in case of an emergency or during an evacuation drill.
14. Any student causing willful damage on the bus shall pay for repairs.
15. A student may only be picked up or dropped off at prearranged and approved pick-up and drop-off points.
16. Use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, cannabis, alcohol, drugs, and profane language is prohibited by students and bus drivers.
17. Firearms, pets, and other objects that may cause injury to other passengers shall not be transported on the bus.
18. The installation and use of audio and video recording equipment is permitted to assist with the ongoing safety of passengers and bus drivers. The Coordinator of Transportation shall communicate to parents that monitoring equipment may be used in the buses from time to time.

19. If a student does not abide by the rules and regulations as outlined in the foregoing, the driver may report the student to the Principal of the school for further disciplinary action. If a suspension is issued by the Principal, the parents will be responsible for seeing that the student is transported to and from school during the suspension from the bus.

If parents have a concern about the bus driver, they should first discuss their concern with the bus driver. If the concern is not resolved by the driver, they can raise their concern with the Coordinator of Transportation.

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December, 2003

Updates: July 2008, July 2009, October 2009, Jan. 2020, November 2023

**References**

Section 4, 11, 33, 36, 37, 52, 53, 59, 59.1, 68, 197, 222, 225 Education Act, Highway Traffic Act