

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY HANDBOOK



This manual was developed to assist in understanding the school busing system throughout our division. It provides an overview of specific responsibilities within that system. This manual is published in order that students, parents and all other concerned with the safe operation of the busing system have the opportunity to become aware of the major factors and interlocking responsibilities which combine to provide a safe and adequate school bus service.

I. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN

1. General

Parents will obviously play the key role in influencing their children in all aspects of safety, at home, at play, and going to and from school. This is particularly true of younger children.

2. Parents can promote school bus safety in the following ways:

- Go over with and discuss with your children the contents of this booklet, particularly the responsibilities of the students.
- Provide extra help and guidance during the first several weeks of school, especially for kindergarten, grade one and grade two students. The children must have a good understanding of the location of bus stops; behavior while waiting for buses, as well as on board; what to do when buses are late, etc. Safety is of utmost importance and should be emphasized by the parents.
- Report any obvious and significant safety problems to the School bus coordinator giving specific details as to bus number, date, time, place, etc.
- Remind children should always proceed across the road with utmost caution.

3. What parents should be aware of regarding school bus service:

- Students should be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the normal pickup times.
- In the mornings primary school and kindergarten students must wait for the bus accompanied by an adult.
- In the afternoons students are only allowed to get off the bus if a parent or guardian indicated on the application form is receiving them, unless the parent who orders the service disclaims of this on the application form.
- Parents having problems concerning bus routes or pickup points should be referred to the School bus coordinator.
- Parents are responsible for students until they board the school bus and following unloading at their designated stop in the afternoon.
- Parents will be responsible for willful damages to school buses caused by their children.
- When the bus transportation privileges of a student are suspended, school attendance is still mandatory and the parents must make their own alternative arrangements.
- Provide written note or phone call to the School bus coordinator, or send a message, if your child is to return home by any other route than normal, or is not to ride the bus home at all.
- Children with head lice are not allowed to use the bus

- If, in the opinion of the driver, the student's behaviour is sufficiently negative to warrant, the driver may stop and wait until all children's behaviour is appropriate. This may cause delay on the regular schedule.

Please be aware of the following school bus policies: GUIDELINES REGARDING ITEMS HAULED ON THE SCHOOL BUS

**** ONLY ITEMS REQUIRED FOR CURRICULUM ARE TO BE TRANSPORTED ****

- Children take care of their own.
- Blades must be properly covered & placed on the floor at the student's feet under the seat
- Small instruments may be held by the student, large instruments to be left in an empty seat-not on the floor by the driver.
- Dirty schoolbags must be kept off the seats.

****NOTHING IS ALLOWED IN THE AISLES** **NO FIREARMS OR LIVE ANIMALS****

**** NO SKATEBOARDS, WATER GUNS, SNOWBOARDS, ETC.****

Cell phones, Gameboys, Discmans, Laptops, iPods:

- Cell phones can be used by students of the bus providing they are on the 'vibrate' mode to ensure the ringing is not a distraction to the driver or other students. The voice volume must be such that it does not distract or disturb others.
- Gameboys, discmans, laptops, iPods, etc., can be used by students providing they are quiet and are not a distraction to the driver or other students.

Permission to transport anything not mentioned above (like birthday cake) must be obtained from the School bus coordinator.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

Students riding on the bus must remember they are responsible for their conduct to the bus driver and through him to the principal.

- 1) The driver is in full charge of the bus and his/her directions must be obeyed.
- 2) The driver will report any misconduct to the principal of the school concerned.
- 3) The driver may assign specific seats to students at any time.
- 4) While the bus is in motion, students must not extend parts of their bodies out of the windows, try to get on or off the bus, or move about within it. All students must be seated when the bus is moving with seatbelts fasten.
- 5) Students must not throw paper or other material on the floor or out of the bus windows.
- 6) While on the bus, students must conduct themselves in a quiet and courteous manner, showing consideration for the comfort and safety of others.
- 7) Scuffling, fighting, smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, using drugs, and using obscene language on the bus are strictly prohibited.
- 8) Lunching on the bus is at the driver's discretion.
- 9) Students causing willful damage to the bus will be held fully accountable.

- 10) When leaving the bus, students must observe the bus driver's instructions. They should not cross the road without having a clear view in all directions.
- 11) Only the driver may open and close the doors.
- 12) Safety of students required to ride on school buses shall not be placed at risk by requiring operation of school buses, or other transportation, during extreme inclement weather or under hazardous road conditions.

III. STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Bus drivers are an important part of the School bus Company. They are responsible for the safety and conduct of the students while they are on the bus. Students riding on a bus are expected to give the bus driver respect, consideration and cooperation, and always and immediately carry out his/her reasonable instructions.

Purpose:

To establish behavioral expectations with appropriate and consistent consequences that promote self-respect, respect for other and property.

Guidelines & Procedures:

If a student chooses to break a rule, the following processes may be applied:

- First time: student warned by driver.
- Second time: student assigned designated seat, parents informed by the School bus coordinator.
- Third time: parents and Principal is informed.
- Fourth time: Suspension of bus privileges for designated period of time; parents notified and made responsible for transportation.

If, in the opinion of the driver, the student's behaviour is sufficiently negative to warrant, the driver may step outside of this process and refer the student to the School bus coordinator for appropriate disciplinary action.

For minor incidents of a continuing nature, bus drivers are encouraged to contact the parents prior to referring to the school bus coordinator.

The following procedures shall be carried out when it becomes desirable or necessary to suspend a student from riding a school bus.

- Decisions to expel a student from riding a school bus shall be made by the School bus coordinator, Principal is informed.
- Prior to the next pickup time the parents of the student must be personally informed by the School bus coordinator (or designate) of the suspension and the reasons for the suspension.
- Under extreme circumstances, the Director of Transportation (or designate) may inform the parent that the student will be denied transportation prior to the Principal having been informed.
- Re-instatement on the school bus may take place through a meeting and/or communication with the parent(s), student, Principal and bus driver to resolve the situation, provided the suspension is for five days or less.