

Procedures Handbook

Business Management

Descriptor Term:

Student Transportation Management

Descriptor Code:

ED

Issued:

6/97

Rescinds:

Issued:

**Revised
9/01**

School Site Traffic Control

The principal of each school shall develop and implement a plan to ensure maximum vehicular and pedestrian safety for the campus and shall submit it to the superintendent for approval. The specific location and procedures for bus loading and unloading are set by the principal. This includes specified parking order or other arrangements for school buses. (Refer to EBBE, lines 1-2.)

If feasible, the principal should avoid placing alternative buses in the regular bus loading zone since it causes a significant delay for the regular buses and other campus traffic.

Students' Items on Bus

Students may carry school-related items on the bus such as projects, band instruments, etc. that can be safely secured by the student and do not create a threat of danger to the occupants on the bus and do not impede passenger movement. The following guidelines should be followed when securing students' items on the bus:

- Nothing can be placed in the bus aisle. The aisle must remain a clear passageway from the front to the rear of the bus.
- Nothing can be placed under the bus seats.
- Nothing can be placed against the emergency exits.
- No live animals shall be transported on the bus. Animals can be easily excited, which could create an unsafe situation for the driver.

In addition, no item(s) identified by the base school as inappropriate or disallowed by the school shall be transported on the bus (e.g. yo-yo's, laser lights, skateboards, etc.).

Student's Electronic Devices

Radios, tape players, video games, and other "hand-held" electronic devices can be taken on the bus IF the student has written documentation allowing such a device from his or her IEP-team, 504 committee, or teacher with the principal's approval. All devices must be used only with ear/head phones and be turned off when requested by the bus driver.

Student Medications

Students needing to take medication during the school day must consult with the school principal, the school nurse, or the teacher to get the proper instructions for the medications to be administered to the student at school. When a student requires medication on the bus or at school, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The parent must package the medication needed by the student for that day ONLY. The child's name and his or her teacher's name should be clearly labeled on the package. Directions for the administration of the medication should also be included.
2. The parent must notify the school principal or his or her designee that the child's medication is being delivered by the school bus.
3. The parent must give the medication package to the bus driver to transport to the school.

- 1 4. The principal or his or her designee must make arrangements to receive the medication package
2 from the bus driver. Drivers cannot leave the bus while other students are on board.
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4 **Alternate School Phone Numbers**

5 Building level administrators should make available to bus operators phone numbers other than the school's
6 main line. It is necessary to have communication with the school in emergency situations and in the event
7 a child cannot be located or is present on the wrong bus.
8

9 **Video Tapes on School Buses**

10 Video tapes may be utilized to help verify the safety and security of students, drivers, bus equipment, and
11 other motorists. If a reported bus incident occurs where there is a tape, then that tape should be given to the
12 principal for review. If the principal feels that an unsafe activity or a criminal violation has occurred, then
13 School Security shall be notified to review the tapes. In the event criminal charges are to be placed, the tape
14 becomes evidence and should be treated as such. The video equipment and taped images are property of
15 Knox County Schools.
16

17 **School Bus Safety Drills**

18 School bus safety drills should be an important part of every school's master safety plan. Students, parents,
19 staff, emergency personnel, bus drivers, and community members each have important roles and should have
20 a clear understanding of their roles in the event of an emergency involving a school bus. The following items
21 are recommended by the Transportation Department:
22

- 23 • The emergency plan should be in writing.
- 24 • Specific information and descriptions should be made for each member of the safety team.
- 25 • Parents should receive a copy of the emergency plan.
- 26 • Parents and community members should be notified of practice drills.
- 27 • Staff and other adults should practice all drills before including any students.
- 28 • School bus evacuation procedures should be demonstrated and/or rehearsed for all students.
- 29 • All students could view appropriate school bus safety video(s) early each school year.
30

31 **School Bus Accidents**

32 When a bus accident occurs, the school that the bus serves has the following duties:
33

- 34 1. Verify the accident with the Transportation Department.
- 35 2. Activate the Safety Response Team (SRT).
- 36 3. The principal or his/her designee should report to the accident scene with a cell phone.
37

38 **Safety Response Team (SRT)**

- 39 1. Select and train Safety Response Team (SRT) members.
- 40 2. Activate the SRT.
- 41 3. Designate team members to remain in school and man telephones AND team members to go
42 immediately to the site with the principal if possible.
- 43 4. Distribute a list of students assigned to the bus if available.
44

45 **School-Site Duties**

- 46 1. Pull emergency cards of the students and call those parents who can be reached.
- 47 2. Man all office telephones.
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3. Assign one member to line left open for calls from the accident site. Make thorough notes on each call received from the bus site personnel and keep the notes on file.
4. Upon return to school, provide guidance and counseling services to students and/or parents.

Accident-Site Duties

1. Take cellular phones.
2. Principal or designee and staff members will work under the direction of the Incident Coordinator (designated by 911).
3. Gather students in a safe area when instructed and provide comfort and care.
4. Take roll and ensure students are not removed from the site by parents or anyone else without permission of the Incident Coordinator.
5. Keep media away from students.
6. Designate a member to write down the names of each student sent to the hospital.
7. Maintain continuous communication with the school.
8. Collect student belongings for return to school.

Post-Accident Duties

1. Verify with the Transportation Department that transportation arrangements have been made for remaining students.
2. Prepare a list of students with full names, home addresses, and parents' names for the police report.
3. Refer all questions regarding the accident to the Superintendent or the Communications Department (594-1902).
4. Prior to the next school day, the principal or designee should check on all injured students.

Audio/Video Media on the Bus

The contractor is responsible for ensuring that his or her employee does not allow inappropriate broadcasted or recorded media to be played on school bus equipment while students are on board. This applies when the driver is transporting students to and from school on a regular route and when transporting students to school-related events. At all times, the driver must use caution when selecting channels and/or other media for listening and/or viewing on radios, tape/CD players, video-players, etc. on the bus. Controversial, profane, or explicit programs such as Mancow, Phil and Billy, or other inappropriate live or recorded media are not allowed on the bus.

Specific Accommodations, Modifications, and Other Support Strategies

The principal and case manager are responsible for making sure the contractor and/or driver is informed of specific accommodations, modifications, and other support strategies that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP.

Student Misconduct on School Bus

School bus drivers must immediately report any student misconduct to the principal of the student's school. To do this, drivers must complete a School Bus Incident Report when a student misbehaves. Drivers must complete the entire form and give it to the principal; the principal must send it in to the Transportation Department. The driver is to keep the goldenrod copy for his/her records.

Drivers Not Authorized to Suspend Students from Bus

The suspension of a student from riding the school bus shall follow the same procedures as for any other school suspension. Thus, drivers do not have the authority to suspend a pupil from transportation privileges.

Student Suspension Applies to All Buses

Principals should not suspend a student from one bus for disciplinary reasons and place that student on another bus before the suspension has been served except as required by state and/or federal regulations. However, a principal may utilize another bus for diagnostic time periods if the student's interest will benefit from such a temporary placement.

Discipline Appeals

The principal or his or her designee will investigate and determine any consequence to impose when a student violates school bus rules. Only the principal or his or her designee may reduce or suspend a student's bus-riding privileges. Appeals relating to a reduction or suspension of bus privileges must be initiated by the parent/guardian at his or her child's base school with the administrator assigning the consequence. This appeal must occur on or before five (5) school days following the parents' notification of the incident.

Any appeals of transportation decisions or procedures relating to a reduction or suspension of bus privileges shall be made in the following order:

1. Principal or his or her designee assigning specific consequence
2. Transportation lead router
3. Transportation Supervisor
4. Disciplinary Hearing Authority
5. Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
6. Superintendent
7. Knox County Board of Education

Field Trip Bus Service Providers

The principal or his/her designee is responsible for arranging transportation for all field trips under his or her supervision. He or she must select providers with equipment approved by the Superintendent. It is recommended that schools use Knox County Schools bus contractors assigned to provide regular transportation services within their high school zone. However, the principal may use any provider with appropriate certifications based on his or her specific needs. The principal is responsible for payment of transportation providers arranged at the school level.

Field Trip Interference with Regular Route

School buses that are used for off-campus trips must be available for their regularly scheduled, contracted bus routes or arrangements must be made by the owner for the "extra" bus to be available for the scheduled routes - and on time! Principals should not request or encourage regular route modifications to accommodate conflicting field trip schedules.

Cost of Services for Field Trips

"When students pay the cost of a bus, a commercial carrier, or a privately-owned vehicle arranged by the school, the rate will be negotiated by the owner and the principal".

Chartered Bus Service

A school can charter bus service for a short-term lease on a Federal Approved Manufactured Coach. This includes one day or multiple day trips and must be for a special event (i.e. Huntsville Space Center, Chattanooga Aquarium, Colonial Williamsburg, etc). Regularly scheduled events or routes are not included. For all trips outside of Tennessee, only buses and drivers that are U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) certified can be used. The coach or tour bus must meet the following specifications:

- 1 • Steel or similar material used for framing
- 2 • Emergency windows, doors, or hatches with approved glass
- 3 • Fire extinguishers and first aid kits identified with marked locations
- 4 • All seats and luggage secured
- 5 • Luggage carried in a separate compartment

6 **Verifying Safety Inspection and Insurance**

7 Prior to the departure of any charter or bus service arrangement made by an individual school, it is the
8 responsibility of the principal or his/her designee to verify that the following information is completed and
9 on file in the school office:

- 10
- 11
- 12 • A copy of the most recent safety inspection for the specific vehicle(s) being used to transport students
- 13 • An insurance binder describing coverage amounts that meet the five million dollar liability ICC
14 requirement

15 **Field Trip Seating Arrangements**

16 When working with principals and/or teachers planning the off-campus field trip, the bus driver should offer
17 seating plan advice. Following are the guidelines for seating on off-campus trips:

18 Trips under 100 Miles Round-Trip

19 Buses should transport no more than two persons per seat for middle and high school and three persons
20 per seat for grades kindergarten through five.

21 Trips Over 100 Miles Round-Trip

22 On trips that exceed one hundred miles round-trip, students of all grades should never sit more than two
23 to a seat for comfort and safety.

24 **Special Education Buses ON Field Trips**

25 On special education buses, students should ride no more than two to a seat.

26 **No Standees on Field Trips**

27 NO passenger is allowed to stand on an off-campus trip.

28 **Vehicles to Accommodate Special Needs Students on Field Trips**

29 Students who require a bus with specific equipment to be transported to and from school should have the
30 same equipment on all school-related field trips. Every effort should be made to include student peers on
31 the required vehicle with the special needs student.

32 Public Law 93-113, Section 504 declares, “no student may be deprived of an off-campus trip on the basis
33 of disability”. The teacher requesting a trip shall comply with the law by arranging accommodations for the
34 special needs (lift bus; assistance with feeding, toileting; interpreter for the deaf, etc.) of qualified disabled
35 students. The principal approving the trip shall ascertain that the appropriate accommodations have been
36 made.

37 **Student Behavior on Field Trips**

38 All field trips are an extension of the school. Therefore, students are expected to behave the same as they are
39 at school. Students are also expected to display appropriate behavior while being transported to off-campus
40 sites. As on regular routes, students must obey all bus rules. The driver should be sure to enforce posted
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1 bus rules, the special rules that apply to off-campus trips regarding the storage of student's items on the bus.
2 It is the trip organizer's (Knox County Schools staff member's) responsibility to assist the driver's
3 enforcement of the bus rules on these trips for the safety of all who are involved. However, the driver must
4 keep in mind that some students and/or the planners of off-campus trips may not be fully aware of the bus
5 rules.

6 7 **Student Items on Bus During Field Trips**

8 Any items brought on the bus (luggage, sleeping bags, ice chests, picnic items, etc.) must be adequately
9 secured in the bus seats. Belting/webbing that is used to secure these items must be of sufficient strength
10 to hold them in place on the bus seat. Absolutely nothing can be placed in the bus aisles or in front of the
11 emergency door; this is state and federal law.

12
13 No specific rule exists for the exact placement (front or back seats) of items that are secured in the seats.
14 However, securing items on the back seats and seating students in the front part of the bus allows for better
15 supervision of riders. The safety of the students will depend upon how well (and correctly) the items have
16 been secured.

17
18 Ideally, the best arrangement that can be made when transporting items with students on an off-campus trip
19 is to solicit volunteers who will take equipment and other items in their private cars or trucks.

20 21 **Use of Vans for School-Related Events**

22 Under federal law, any motor vehicle designed to carry more than 10 persons is classified as a bus. Further,
23 this law defines a bus as a school bus if it is used, or intended for use, in transporting students to and from
24 school-related activities.

25
26 Under these criteria, a passenger van designed to carry more than 10 persons cannot be used to transport
27 students (Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations Handbook, 393.5). A passenger van does not offer the
28 same level of safety to its occupants as a certified school bus. In a crash, the risk of injury or fatality is
29 significantly increased for occupants of a vehicle not meeting the Federal Motor Vehicle Standards for
30 school buses.