

SCHOOL BUS RIDERSHIP

Every student, Kindergarten through Grade 12, attending a school should have the benefit of a planned school bus safety program. The majority of all school bus fatalities involve children under 10 years of age. It is therefore imperative that greater emphasis be placed on bus safety at the Kindergarten to Grade 4 levels. It is also important that provision be made to continue to reinforce safety precautions and procedures at the middle years and senior years level.

1. Policy Statement:

To transport students safely and efficiently according to the appropriate sections of The Public Schools Act and to provide a School Bus Ridership Program in accordance with Manitoba Regulation 465/88R.

2. Responsibilities:

While school bus safety is everyone's responsibility, the specific responsibility of ensuring that students, bus drivers and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are instructed in safe school bus riding practice shall rest as follows:

Instruction of Students:

- The school principal, in addition to being responsible for the supervision of bus loading and unloading zones, shall initiate a school bus safety program in accordance with Manitoba Regular 465/88R. The instructional program K-4 shall consist of the following:
 - general bus safety rules
 - emergency procedures
 - bus evacuation procedures

The Bus Safety program at the 5 - Grade 12 levels shall consist of the following:

- review of general safety rules
- emergency procedures
- bus evacuation procedures

Bus Safety Program for Bus Drivers:

The Co-ordinator of Transportation shall:

- distribute to the drivers of the school buses, copies of Manitoba Regulation 465/88R, a regulation respecting school buses under The Public Schools Act, and shall insist that the bus drivers comply with the regulation.
- direct the principals of the schools to assist the drivers of the school buses in carrying out the emergency school bus evacuation drills.
- ensure that there are four students identified on each school bus to assist the bus driver in the evacuation of pupils and in the use of safety devices, in the event an emergency situation occurs.
- ensure that a First Aid Course is made available to the bus drivers every three (3) years.
- ensure that each bus driver takes a Defensive Driving Course every 4-5 years.
- provide instructions to the bus drivers on the operation of safety devices on the school buses – flares, fire extinguishers, emergency exits, etc.
- instruct the bus drivers to maintain safety devices on the school buses in a good and operable condition at all times.
- provide in-service to the bus drivers on the proper operation of the school buses and on the proper use of safety devices.
- provide safety films to be viewed by the bus drivers at the regular inservice meetings, if possible.
- provide copies of the School Bus Drivers Handbook and the Professional Drivers Manuals to all school bus drivers.
- ensure that all bus drivers are in possession of a valid Class 2 driver's license and a Manitoba School Bus Operator's Certificate and have passed a medical examination as required by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division, a division of Manitoba Public Insurance.
- ensure that bus drivers do not transport students in a bus which has been involved in an accident until the bus has been inspected by a school division mechanic or other qualified mechanic and deemed to be in safe operating order.
- have the right to suspend any driver when the safety of transported students is in question. (The suspension shall be in effect until the next Board meeting, when the suspension shall be reviewed by the Board.)

- ensure that when an applicant for the position of Bus Driver is approved, the applicant will be given a minimum of 24 hours of instruction and training in order to be competent in the location of all controls and switches, and to be capable of driving the bus in a reasonable and proper manner.
- be responsible for establishing a bus driver training session. S/he shall arrange for drivers to receive initial and refresher training in accordance with Manitoba Regulation 465/88R.

Rules for School Bus Drivers:

1. Bus drivers will conduct two satisfactory evacuation drills per year at a safe site at each school.
2. Bus drivers will conduct simulated evacuation training for purposes of evacuation at a safe site designated by the bus driver.
3. Bus drivers will ensure that the first aid kit is in the bus and properly stocked.
4. Bus drivers will choose monitors from the student passengers on the bus.
5. Bus drivers will demonstrate to monitors the proper use of the two-way radio.
6. Bus drivers will ensure that safe ridership practices are carried out under all conditions.
7. Bus drivers will shut off ignition if the bus is involved in an accident.
8. In the case of an emergency, bus drivers will help students off the bus, instructing them as to proper conduct.
9. Bus drivers will perform a daily pre-trip inspection of the school bus to make sure the bus is safe to operate.
10. Bus drivers will activate loading lights when stopping to load or unload students.
11. Bus drivers will maintain eye contact with students who must cross in front of the bus and signal when it is safe to cross.
12. Bus drivers will instruct students that they must cross at least three meters in front of the bus.
13. Bus drivers will make sure everyone is seated.
14. Bus drivers will restrict carry-on items as required by Manitoba Regulation 465/88R.
15. Bus drivers are required to maintain a current First Aid certificate.

Information to Parent(s)/Legal guardian(s)/Students:

The Transportation Co-ordinator shall ensure that all parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are informed of their responsibilities regarding their children's transportation on division school buses.

The Transportation Co-ordinator shall arrange for each student eligible for bus transportation to be notified of his/her pick-up spot, bus number and time of pick-up.

The Co-ordinator of Transportation shall supply each student eligible for transportation with a copy of regulations and guidelines regarding ridership on Division school buses.

Parental concerns on any aspect of transportation can be addressed to the Transportation Co-ordinator or the principal.

Parental Responsibilities:

1. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are to notify the driver or the transportation office if their child will not be travelling on the bus at a particular time or on a particular day.
2. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are to ensure that students are dressed appropriately for weather conditions. In winter, buses travelling in rural areas or students taking part in extra curricular activities should be prepared for sudden storms or emergency situations i.e. students should wear snow boots and other warm clothes.
3. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must be aware of the student responsibilities outlined in this policy.
4. In the case of students registered in the school division for the first time, or students who became regular bus students for the first time, or students who have been transported previously but have changed residence, requests for transportation must be made to the Transportation Co-ordinator.

Student Responsibilities:

1. Students must be on time. The bus driver will wait a maximum of two minutes for late students.
2. Students are to walk on the side of the road facing traffic to get to the bus stop if there is no sidewalk or path.
3. Students approaching the bus from the opposite side of the road to the bus stop should wait until the bus is stopped in order to have the advantage of the flashing lights for a safe crossing. Students should make sure that traffic has stopped before crossing the road to board the bus.
4. Students should stay off the road while waiting for the bus.
5. Students are to wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before attempting to board.

6. Students are to line up and board single file in an orderly manner.
7. Students should use the handrail and watch their step when boarding.
8. Students are to be courteous.
9. Students are to remain seated until they reach their destination.
10. Students are not to open windows without the driver's permission.
11. Students are to keep head and hands inside the bus at all times.
12. Students are to avoid loud talking and boisterous behaviour and keep absolutely quiet when the bus is stopped at railway crossings.
13. Students are not to throw anything out of a bus window.
14. Students are not to wrestle, fight or indulge in any kind of horseplay while riding on a bus.
15. Students are to avoid eating and drinking on the bus unless permitted to do so by the driver.
16. Students are to keep books, packages, coats and all other objects out of the aisles.
17. Students are to assist in keeping the bus safe and clean.
18. Students must not tamper with the bus or its equipment.
19. Students must not take onto the bus any object that could endanger passengers e.g. animals, weapons, etc.
20. Students must not smoke on a school bus.
21. Students are to use the rear door for emergency purposes only.
22. Older students are encouraged to look after the safety and comfort of small children.
23. Students are to cross at least three meters in front of the bus, but only after checking to make sure there is no traffic approaching and the bus driver has given the all-clear signal.
24. Students must move at least two meters from the side of the bus as it pulls away.
25. Students must cooperate with monitors or school bus patrols on their bus.

Code of Conduct:

INFRACTION	ACTION BY BUS DRIVER	ACTION BY ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR	ACTION BY VICE-PRINCIPAL OR PRINCIPAL
<p>Minor offences:</p> <p>For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excessive noise. 2. Name calling. 3. Moving about on bus in motion. 4. Failure to follow bus safety procedures. 5. Throwing objects. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Verbal instruction</u> to correct behaviour. 2. <u>Make note</u> of incident in discipline action book. 3. <u>Report to principal</u> on 2nd occurrence. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) notified</u> of problem (in writing with copy to Superintendent.) 2. Meeting with principal, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), students, Division personnel (documentation) further occurrence leads to suspension.
<p>Major offences:</p> <p>For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acts of vandalism. 2. Abuse of other students/driver. 3. Possession of alcohol/drugs. 4. Smoking on the bus. 5. Threatening violence. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Driver reports</u> action to Asst. Supervisors and Principal. 2. Records action in discipline action book. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervisor meets with driver, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), principal, student to assess occurrence. Division bills parent(s)/legal guardian(s) for costs (in cases of vandalism through superintendent.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Principal may</u> suspend student further occurrence automatic suspension. 2. <u>Principal may</u> contact outside agencies (ARM, RCMP, etc.).
<p>Gross misconduct:</p> <p>For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Violent attack. 2. Gross vandalism. 3. Dangerous behaviour (smoke, bombs, etc.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Driver immediately radios the "Bus Garage". 2. The bus garage will contact the Supervisor and Principal/ Superintendent for direction. 3. <u>Records action</u> in discipline action book. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Supervisor responds</u> to the call from the Bus Garage. 2. <u>Meeting</u> with Parent(s)/legal guardian(s), principal, RCMP, division administration, driver and student. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Superintendent involved</u> – long term suspension or expulsion. 2. <u>Principal may involve RCMP.</u>