

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS AND VAN DRIVERS PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

The driver of a school bus is charged with a serious responsibility for the safety of the children in his/her care. The continuance of employment depends upon full and faithful acceptance of this responsibility.

The safety and health of the child should always be foremost in the minds of all who have anything to do with the transportation of pupils to and from school. It is with this in mind that this procedural guidance has been written.

The bus driver is the first school employee to meet the child in the morning and the last to see the child in the afternoon. It is good practice to speak to the child when he/she gets on the bus in the morning and when he/she departs in the afternoon. In this manner the driver can gain the goodwill and respect of the pupils who ride on the bus and at the same time teach a valuable lesson in citizenship and courtesy.

The school bus driver has many responsibilities over and beyond those encountered by the ordinary driver.

Importantly, rules and regulations are to be consistent from one bus driver to the next. For example, when a driver substitutes for another driver, if the regular driver permits or restricts certain behaviors to promote safe conditions, then the substitute driver should enforce the same expectations (Ex; low level talking, assigned seats, etc.) While drivers are allowed some latitude for establishing safe conditions on their bus, it is also important that drivers communicate and enforce standard expectations for bus behavior for grades K-5 and grade 6-12 students that are applicable district-wide.

General RSU 13 bus/van drivers' responsibilities and duties are as follows.

1. The driver should assist in the planning of bus stops and schedules. The driver should not discontinue a stop or route unless prior approval is confirmed. This is an administrative decision that must go through the proper procedures.
2. The driver should observe carefully the time schedule for different points on the bus route, to stay as consistent as possible.
3. The driver should suggest improvements which he/she believes will result in safer and more economical bus operation.
4. The driver will communicate to students that riding the bus is a privilege. Safety must be considered at all times. Violation of the bus rules will result in disciplinary consequences that may including termination of bus riding privileges.

1st offense: The bus driver shall make the broken rule known to the student and discuss it with him/her. Positive behavior will be suggested that can take the place of observed misbehavior. (Ex; change of seating, sitting closer to the driver, etc.)

2nd offense: The bus driver shall write a bus discipline report and give it to the school office. The bus driver and school administrator shall meet/talk about the situation. A copy of the bus discipline report is sent to the student's home.

3rd -5th offense: The bus driver shall report the offense in writing to the building administrator. The building administrator will impose a suspension of bus privileges of 1-3 days, 10-30 days, or 2-3 quarters/trimesters, as appropriate.

Procedure: If a bus driver reports a student for a 2nd-5th offense under the bus discipline rule, the school administrator, transportation director, and bus driver shall meet to discuss the situation. Because of the need to do this in a timely manner, this meeting shall be held as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours.

5. The driver shall:
 - a) Do a written pre-trip safety inspection of the bus.
 - b) Report any problems with the bus immediately.
 - c) Keep the windshield and mirrors clean and clear at all times.
 - d) Keep the bus clean on a daily basis.
 - e) Keep a daily written record of the mileage.
 - f) Report any damage to the bus as soon as it is noticed.
6. The driver will not operate the bus with students standing.
7. The driver will drive all regular runs as scheduled by the transportation supervisor except in cases of sickness or an emergency situation. The driver will give the transportation supervisor as much notice as possible if he/she will be absent in order that a substitute driver be obtained.
8. When transporting students for athletic events, field trips, and other extracurricular activities, the driver is to stay in close proximity to the bus while the activities are taking place. The driver will provide the coach/teacher with his/her cell number in case of emergencies.
9. The driver should observe carefully all school committee policies with respect to pupil transportation.

Responsibilities and duties to pupils and parents:

RSU 13 Drivers:

1. Must adopt a friendly and helpful attitude toward pupil passengers.
2. Shall keep his/her person neat and clean, and his/her deportment shall be comparable to that which is expected of a teacher.
3. Shall not smoke or use tobacco at any time while on duty and shall never permit any pupil or passenger to use tobacco in any form while on the bus. 'On duty,' applies to all instances, inclusive of field trips, athletic events, etc., where the bus driver's presence is required.

4. Must under no circumstances allow intoxicating liquor nor use any illegal or impairing drugs at any time on the school bus nor permit any pupil or passenger to use the same.
5. Will upon notice submit to random drug testing.
6. Refrain from profanity and/or vulgar language and expect the same from pupils.
7. Should refer all requests from parents concerning transportation changes to the Transportation Director for review.
8. Shall pick up and unload pupils only at designated bus stops and at the school unless otherwise instructed by school officials.
9. Shall assign bus seats if circumstances warrant.
10. Shall maintain discipline at all times on the bus.
11. Shall stop the bus immediately and give the necessary instructions to passengers if there is any disorder on the bus.
12. Shall remain with the bus and children in case of an accident or breakdown and radio or phone the Transportation Director, Bus Garage for assistance.
13. Shall instruct pupils concerning the proper procedure to follow when leaving the bus.
14. Shall require pupils to walk in front of the bus and wait his/her signal before crossing the highway and always account for the whereabouts of all students who discharge and cross before putting the bus in motion.
15. Shall not permit any person other than a pupil, teacher, school official, mechanic, police or patrol officer to ride in the bus without consent from the Transportation Director.
16. Shall not permit any gun, loaded or unloaded, or weapons of any kind, to be brought on the bus.
17. Shall not permit any animal, with the exception of a qualified service animals, to be brought on the bus. (RSU 13 DRAFT Policy IMGA)
18. Shall not permit any person to leave the bus by any other than the right-hand service door except in an emergency.

Responsibilities and duties - drivers transporting elementary and Pre-K students.

1. Pre-K and Kindergarten students will be provided an orientation experience regarding proper bus behavior and bus safety prior to the beginning of school. Parents will be invited to ride the bus with students as appropriate.

2. The school will fill out tags that Pre-K and Kindergarten student will be required to wear the first week or until the driver, the parent(s) and the student are comfortable with the arrangements. The tag will identify the morning bus number assignment and the afternoon bus number assignment.
3. Pre-K and elementary drivers will not let a child in grades Pre-K to 3 off the bus unless a responsible caregiver is visible at home. If there is no one at home, the driver is to take the child back to school and release him/her to a teacher or principal. The bus garage must be contacted by radio immediately when a student is going to be taken back to school.

Responsibilities and duties – bus accidents.

1. Any accident in which a school bus is involved – 911 must be called immediately. The accident must also be reported immediately by radio or cell phone to the Transportation Director, who will notify any additional, proper authorities. If the Transportation Director cannot be reached, the driver should call the Bus Garage. The driver should stay calm and speak slowly and clearly. No information is to be divulged by the driver to anyone other than to a Law Enforcement Officer or the Transportation Director, Business Manager or to the Superintendent of Schools.
2. If a bus accident or incident occurs, the driver shall not drive again until the Business Manager or his/her designee completes an investigation and a formal determination of action is made. Union drivers will be placed on a paid administrative leave.
3. All drivers and students will participate in an annual safety orientation and bus evacuation drill supervised by the Transportation Director.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THESE EXPECTATIONS. I FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE REVIEWED THESE RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES WITH THE RSU 13 DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION. I UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS RECEIVED.

Bus/Van Driver's Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Bus/Van Driver's Name Printed _____

Transportation Director Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Mr. Roy Grotton, RSU 13 Transportation Director

Approved: October 6, 2016

Legal References

Maine Department of Education 20-A MRSA: Chapter 215; Transportation

Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles 29-A MRSA: Chapters 5,11,13 and 19

Maine Department of Education rules, Code of Maine Regulations (05-071 CMR Chapter 81) -
Uniform School Bus Standards for Pupil Transportation in Maine

RSU 13 Policies

EEA

Student Transportation Services

EEAEAA

Drug and Alcohol Testing of School Bus Drivers

EEAEAA-R

Procedures for Drug and Alcohol Testing of School Bus Drivers