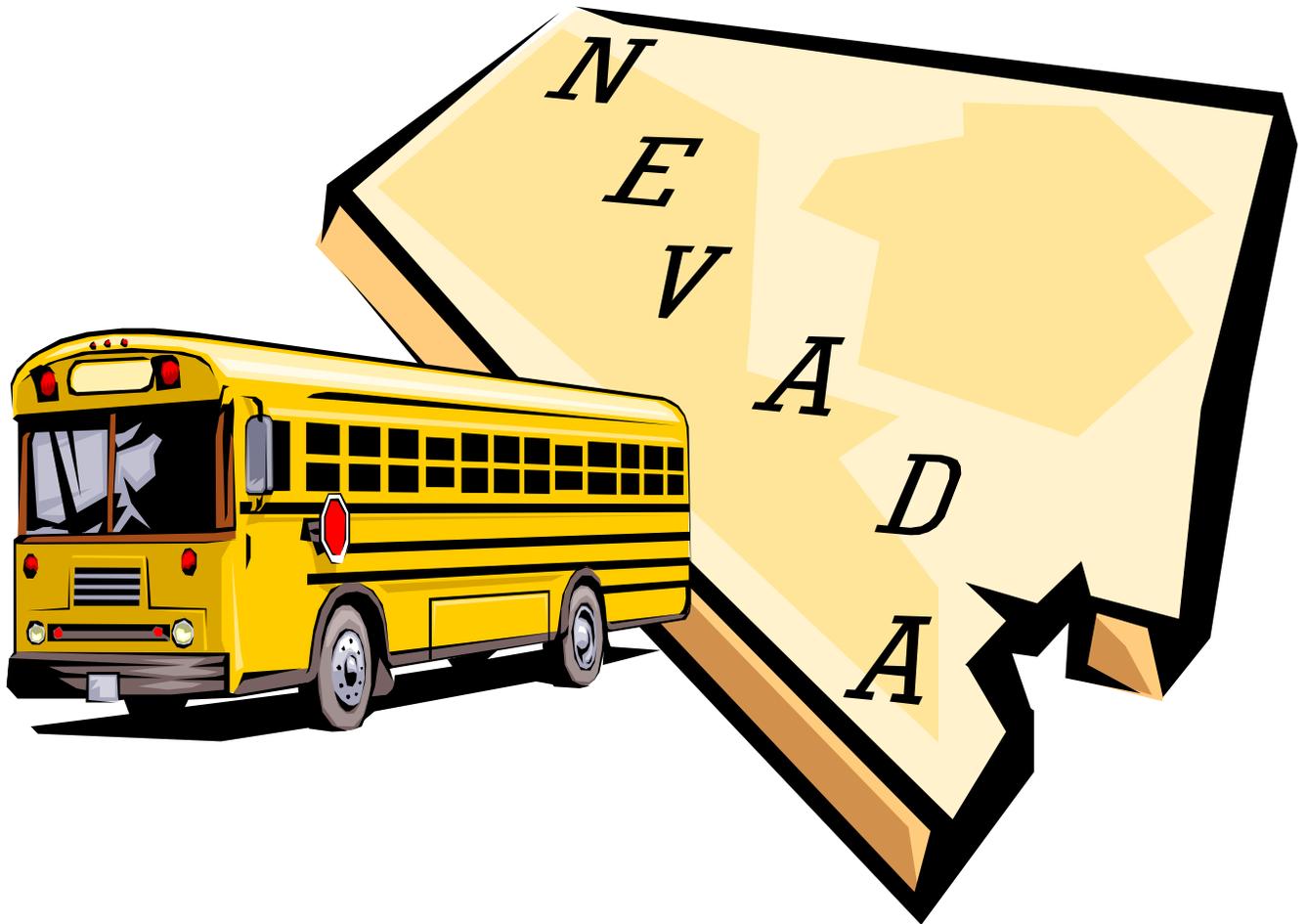




State of Nevada  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION



**SCHOOL BUS DRIVER  
TRAINING MANUAL**

Revised 2007

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The Nevada State Board of Education-Nevada State Board for Career and Technical Education is dedicated to fostering excellent educational opportunities provided to all learners by sustaining a coherent, aligned system of instruction and support in partnership with all educational communities.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Nevada School Bus Driver Training Manual is to provide a statewide training manual for all school bus drivers in Nevada. The manual was compiled in 1999, and approved during the June 1999 State Board of Education meeting. It has been May 19, 2002, May 17, 2003, June 18, 2004, June 17, 2005 and June 29, 2007.

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Listed below are a list of terms and acronyms that are used throughout this manual. These are listed here for easy reference.

<b>1-2-3</b>	1 = Applied Test, 2 = Emergency Warning Device, 3 = Pump down to check for pop out.
<b>BAC</b>	Blood Alcohol Concentration
<b>BP</b>	Blood Pressure
<b>CDL</b>	Commercial Drivers License
<b>CMV</b>	Commercial Motor Vehicle
<b>CSRS's</b>	Child Safety Restraint Systems
<b>DOT</b>	Department of Transportation
<b>ECP</b>	Exposure Control Plan
<b>EHA</b>	Education of The Handicapped Act
<b>FERPA</b>	Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act
<b>FET</b>	F=Fuses, E=Emergency, T=Fuses
<b>FMCSA</b>	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
<b>FMCSR</b>	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations
<b>FMVSS</b>	Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards
<b>GVW</b>	Gross Vehicle Weight
<b>HBV</b>	Hepatitis B Virus
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency virus
<b>I-C-D</b>	I = Inflation, C = Condition, D = Tread Depth
<b>IDEA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan
<b>IFSP</b>	Individual Family Service Plan
<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Authority
<b>LRE</b>	Least Restrictive Environment
<b>NHTSA</b>	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
<b>NAC</b>	Nevada Administrative Code
<b>NRS</b>	Nevada Revised Statutes
<b>NSST</b>	National Standards for School Transportation
<b>NTSB</b>	National Traffic Safety Board
<b>OSHA</b>	Occupational Safety & Health Act
<b>PSI</b>	Pounds Per Square Inch

# Counties and Nevada School Districts



# COMPARTMENTALIZATION

As a school bus driver you will be asked “why do school buses not have seat belts, especially when they are required by law?” The first thing you need to remember is that no one in the pupil transportation business would intentionally ignore a potential safety hazard. Most of these people in this business are parents too.

1. At first glance the arguments for seat belts make sense:
  - a. If seat belts are so important in cars and vans, how can we eliminate them on school buses?
  - b. We give our children double messages when they have to buckle up in a car but not on a school bus?
  - c. Seat belts would guarantee safety in a bus rollover.
  - d. Seat belts would restore order on school buses.
  - e. Fatalities and injuries would be lowered or eliminated if every child were secured in a seat belt.

These are legitimate questions. If police are giving tickets to drivers of cars for not wearing seat belts, the rules should be the same for school buses.

The main reason seat belts are not required on school buses is that a school bus is not a car. Most cars place the passenger’s feet approximately 18 inches off the road surface; while the head is normally within 30 inches of the windshield in the front seat; and there are numerous protrusions on the dashboard. The design of the school bus body places the passenger’s feet approximately 30 inches above the road surface, which protects the occupant from direct side impact crashes.

The seat of a school bus is a passive safety system. This system is called “compartmentalization.” Compartmentalization requires strong, well-padded, evenly-spaced, forward-facing, energy-absorbing seating which does not require your child to do anything to be safe. In the event of a crash, the system provides for impact against the energy-absorbing seat in front of the occupant or the padded side panel.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), after investigating 43 serious accidents that in most of the accidents, seat belts would not have made any difference in injury outcome, and in some cases, would have caused fatalities or increased injury. NTSB reported that school bus deaths and serious injuries were due to the seating position being in direct line with the crash forces. It is unlikely that seat belts would have improved their injury outcome.

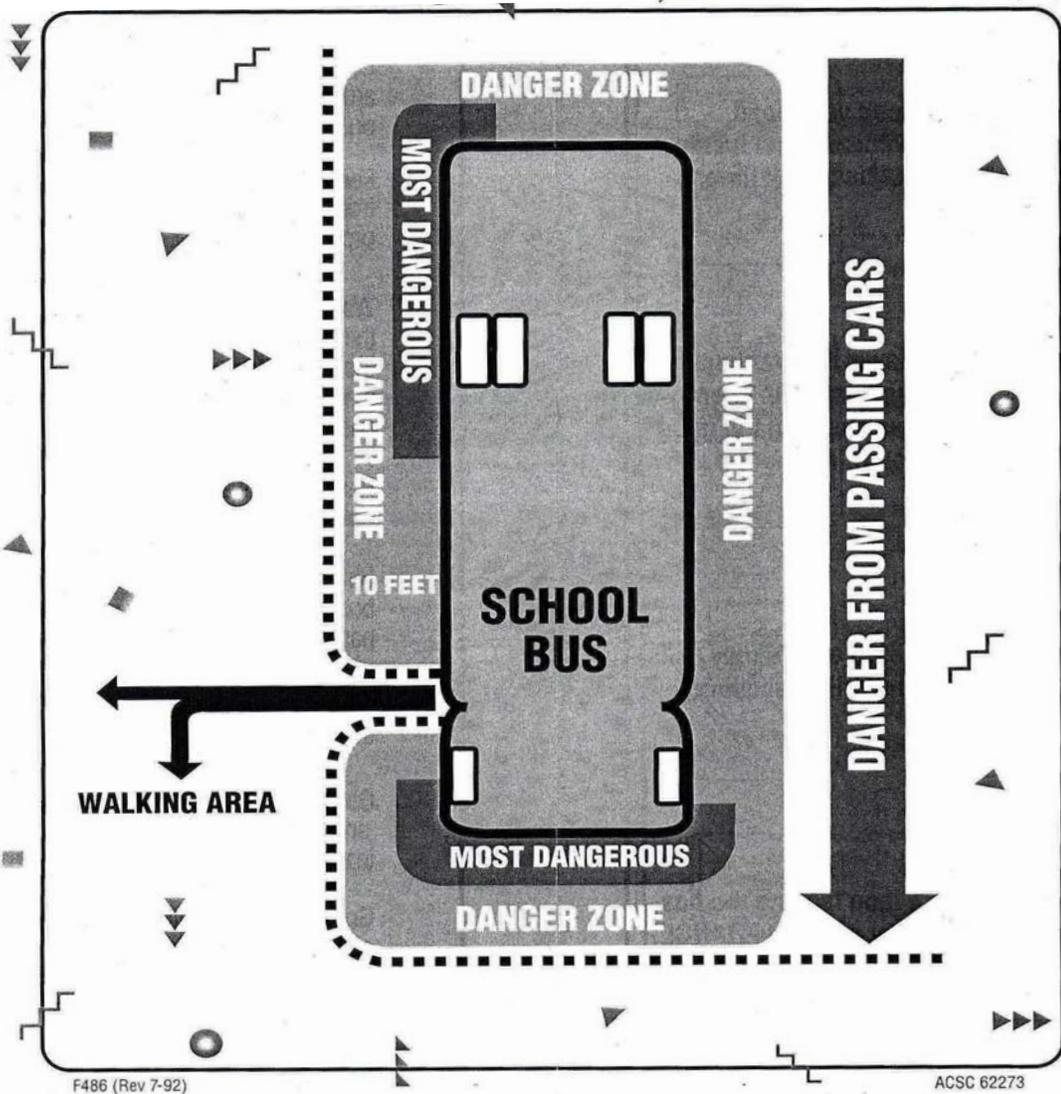
In addition, lap belts have proven to be dangerous for small children. Lap belts in school buses have two serious flaws. First, with younger children (3 to 12 years of age) there is the danger of “submarining” (sliding out of the lap belt when the school bus is involved in a rear-end collision) and sustaining significant internal injuries. The basic reason for this is the physiology of children, who are not yet fully developed. Lap belts were designed to fit over the pelvic area. In a crash, the belt could cause trauma to internal organs. The second flaw is that lap belts often result in severe head and neck injuries during a front-end collision.

(Unreported Miracles by Dr. Cal LeMon)

It is important to realize that lap belts only provide restraint around the hips of a seated individual. Lap/shoulder belts, on the other hand, provide restraint around the hips and across the upper torso of the child. The potential safety benefits of these two systems are very different. Lap belts, even when properly positioned and tightened, still allow full upper torso movement, which can result in head contact with surrounding surfaces. Unfortunately, there is little information on the positive and negative benefits of lap/shoulder belts in school buses.

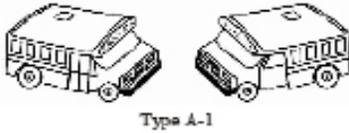
What is most important to remember is that the most dangerous area of a school bus is the loading/unloading zone. More children are killed in this area than while riding on the bus. You will provide far more important information to parents and students if you educate them on the dangers outside of the school bus.

# DANGER ZONE



# SCHOOL BUS TYPES

**Type A:** A Type A school bus is a conversion bus constructed utilizing a cutaway front section vehicle with a left side driver's door. This definition includes two classifications: Type A-1, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 14,500 pounds or less; and Type A-2, with a GVWR greater than 14,500 pounds and less than or equal to 21,500 pounds.



Type A-1



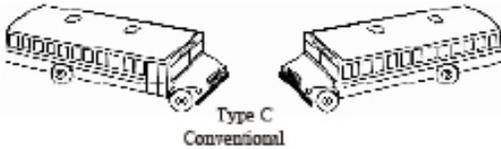
Type A-2

**Type B:** A Type B school bus is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. This definition includes two classifications: Type B-1, with a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or less, and Type B-2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.

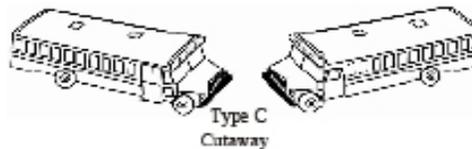


Type B

**Type C:** A Type C school bus is constructed utilizing a chassis with a hood and front fender assembly. The entrance door is behind the front wheels—also known as a conventional style school bus. This type also includes the cutaway truck chassis or truck chassis with cab with or without a left side door and with a GVWR greater than 21,500 pounds.

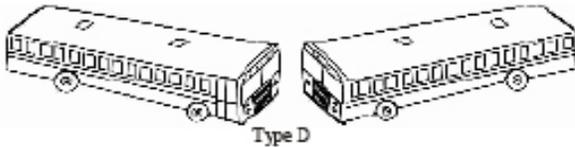


Type C  
Conventional



Type C  
Cutaway

**Type D:** A Type D school bus is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is ahead of the front wheels—also known as a rear engine or front engine transit style school bus.



Type D

# CHAPTER 1: DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## INTRODUCTION

As a school bus driver, you are responsible for the safety and well being of many young lives. This chapter outlines the qualifications and responsibilities for a school bus driver.



## DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

### Commercial Driver License Tests

You will have to take one or more knowledge tests, depending on what class of license and what endorsements you need.

1. The **CDL KNOWLEDGE TESTS** you will need are:
  - a. The general knowledge test; taken by all applicants;
  - b. The passenger transport test, taken by all bus driver applicants;
  - c. The air brakes test;
  - d. The school bus test.
  
2. The **CDL SKILLS TESTS** you will need are:
  - a. Pre-trip Vehicle Inspection;
  - b. Basic Vehicle Control;
  - c. On-road Test.

### Border States

Drivers' who reside outside of Nevada in a border state must hold a valid Commercial Drivers License (CDL) with a passenger and school bus endorsement in that state. A border state employee is a person whose legal residence is outside of the State of Nevada and who commutes on a daily basis into Nevada for the purpose of employment at a place which is less than 35 miles from the state border. (NRS 482.012)

## Legal Age

You must be at least 21 years of age to be issued a Commercial Drivers license (CDL) with a passenger and school bus endorsement to drive a school bus.

## Medical Exams

School bus drivers are required to be certified as medically able to drive a school bus.

1. To drive a school bus you must:
  - a. Pass a DOT medical exam performed by a U.S. licensed doctor every two years;
  - b. The doctor will give you a medical report and will fill out and sign a medical certificate that you must carry with your CDL;
  - c. You must present your medical certificate to DMV when applying for your CDL;
  - d. You must carry your medical certificate and CDL with you when you drive a school bus. If you do not have them, you will be ticketed by law enforcement and be placed Out-of-Service.

### 2. Driver's with High Blood Pressure

- a. A driver with high blood pressure may be required to be recertified more frequently.
- b. Driver's with Stage 1 blood pressure (140/90 to 159/99) may be certified for one year. If your blood pressure is greater than 140/90 but less than 160/100, a one-time certificate for 3 months can be issued.
- c. If you have Stage 2 blood pressure (160/100 to 179/109), a one-time certificate for 3-months can be issued. Once your blood pressure has been reduced to less than 140/90, you can be recertified yearly.
- d. If you have Stage 3 blood pressure (180/110 or higher), you can not be certified until your blood pressure is reduced to 140/90 or less. You will be required to be recertified every 6 months. (FMCSR pg. 288)



## **Driving Record**

When you apply for your CDL you will be asked to:

1. Certify that you have a driver's license from more than one state;
2. Provide a list of states that you have held a driver's license for the previous 10 years;
3. Certify that your driver's license is not currently suspended, revoked or cancelled in any state nor subject to any actions;
4. Surrender your current driver's license;
5. Provide proof of your Social Security Number;
6. Before issuing your license, DMV will run a nationwide driving record check. (CDL 1-5)

## **Renewal of CDL**

To renew your CDL you will need to:

1. Provide a current DOT medical certificate;
2. Pass the CDL General Knowledge Test and any other required tests if you have been convicted of 2 or more moving violations in a CMV, or if you have had 2 or more moving violations in any vehicle within the previous four years. Skills testing may also be required as a result of moving violations;
3. Pay the required renewal fee. (CDL 1-6)

## **Instruction Permit**

1. An instruction permit is issued for a 1 year period. It is issued for the purpose of behind-the-wheel training.
2. The holder of an instruction permit must have their current DOT medical certificate in their possession, and must be accompanied at all times by a driver who is: (CDL 1-6)
  - a. At least 25 years of age;

- b. Seated close to the driver; and
- c. Be accompanied by a Nevada Certified School Bus Driver Trainer.

## **Transfer**

If you hold a valid CDL in another state, you need to do the following within 30 days from moving to Nevada.

1. Complete a Nevada CDL application;
2. Provide a copy of your current DOT medical certificate;
3. Certify that you have only one license and that your license is not currently revoked, suspended or cancelled in any state, nor subject to any of these actions;
4. Provide proof of your social security number;
5. Provide your current license;
6. Your certified birth certificate or passport if you were born in the U.S. If you were born outside of the U.S., you will need your passport or U.S. Immigration card. (CDL 1-6)

## **OTHER CDL RULES**

There are other federal and state rules that affect school bus drivers in all states.

1. Be able to read and speak English enough to converse with the general public, to understand highway traffic signs and signals in English and be able to respond to official inquiries and make entries on reports or records. (FMCSA 391.11)
2. You can not have more than one driver's license. You can be fined up to \$5,000 and/or be put you in jail;
3. You must notify your employer within 30 days if convicted of any traffic violations (except parking). You must do this no matter what type of vehicle you were driving;
4. You must notify your DMV agency within 30 days if you are convicted in any other jurisdiction of any traffic violation (except parking). You must do this no matter what type of vehicle you were driving;
5. You must notify your employer immediately if your license is suspended, revoked, or

cancelled;

6. You must give your employer information on all driving jobs you have held for the past 10 years;
7. You can not drive a school bus without a CDL. You can be fined you up to \$5,000 or be put you in jail!
8. You can not drive a school bus if you have more than one license, or if your CDL is suspended or revoked;
9. All states are connected to one computerized system to share information about CDL drivers. So, if you lie, we will find out!
10. You will lose your CDL for at least one year for a first offense:
  - a. If you drive a CMV under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance;
  - b. If you leave the scene of an accident involving a CMV you were driving;
  - c. If you use a CMV to commit a felony. (CDL 1-3)

## Serious Traffic Violations

You will also lose your CDL:

1. For at least 60 days if you have committed two serious traffic violations within a three-year period involving a CMV;
2. For at least 120 days for three serious traffic violations within a three-year period. Serious traffic violations are excessive speeding (15 mph or more above the posted limit), reckless driving, improper or erratic lane changes, following a vehicle too closely, and traffic offenses committed in a CMV in connection with fatal traffic accidents. (CDL 1-3)

## Disqualifications

It is illegal to operate a CMV if your Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is .04% or more. You will lose your CDL for one year for the first offense. You will lose it for life for your second offense. **Check your school district policy.**

## Disqualification for Railroad-Highway Crossing



## Violations

A driver will be disqualified for not less than 60 days if the driver is convicted of a first violation of a railroad highway grade crossing violation, 120 days if during any three year period for a second violation and one year if during any three year period for a third or subsequent railroad highway grade crossing violations in separate incidents. (CDL 1-3)

## NEVADA REQUIREMENTS

### Minimum Requirements:

1. Hold a valid Nevada (except those licensed in border states) CDL license with a passenger and school bus endorsement;
2. Be of good, reputable and sober character;
3. Be competent and qualified by **experience, attitude and disposition** to drive a school bus in a safe and dependable manner;
4. Have **GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE** and dress in an appropriate manner according to your school district policy;
5. Successfully complete a training course, approved by the State Board of Education which includes **at least 20** hours of training while **driving a school bus** and **at least 20** hours of classroom training in:
  - a. The responsibilities of drivers;
  - b. The requirements for drivers of school vehicles;
  - c. The appropriate management and discipline of disruptive pupils who threaten the safety of other pupils or the driver while riding in a school bus or at the school bus stop;
  - d. The laws affecting the operation of a school bus or vehicle belonging to a school district;
  - e. Defensive driving;
  - f. Emergency procedures; and
  - g. First aid and CPR training.
6. Each school bus driver shall undergo pre-employment drug testing. (FMVSS

§382.301) The employer shall establish a program which provides for the testing of prohibited drugs. (FMVSS §653.31)

7. Pass a written test **each year**. (NRS 392.380) You will have three opportunities to achieve a passing score. (NAC 392.420)
8. Receive a minimum of 10 hours of In-Service training yearly.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING**

### **Implied Consent**

If you operate a CMV, you shall be deemed to have given your consent to drug and alcohol testing. (CDL 1-3)

### **Requirements for Drug and Alcohol Testing**

All school bus drivers must submit to any of the following types of testing:

1. Pre-Employment;
2. Random;
3. Post Accident;
4. Reasonable Suspicion;
5. Follow-up. (FMVSS §382.652)

### **Drug & Alcohol Use**

1. No driver shall report for duty or remain on duty while having any drugs or alcohol in their system.
2. No employer shall permit the driver to drive a school bus with any drugs or alcohol in their system. (FMVSS §382.201)

### **On-Duty Use**

1. No driver shall use drugs or alcohol while on duty.
2. No employer having actual knowledge that a driver is using drugs or alcohol shall permit the driver to drive a school bus. (FMVSS§ 382.205)

## **Use Following an Accident**

A driver who is required to take a post-accident drug or alcohol test shall not use alcohol for eight hours following the accident, or until undergoing a post-accident drug or alcohol test, whichever occurs first. (FMVSS §382.209)

## **Refusal to Submit to a Required Alcohol or Controlled Substances Test**

1. No driver shall refuse to submit to a post-accident, a random, a reasonable suspicion, or a follow-up drug or alcohol test.
2. An employer can not permit a driver who refuses to submit to such tests to continue employment. (FMVSS §382.311)

## **Fatigued Driver**

A driver shall not operate a school bus while their ability or alertness is impaired due to illness, or any other cause. (FMVSS §392.3)

## **DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

School Bus drivers are required to do the following:

1. Renew your commercial license when required;
2. Be familiar with and abide by all federal, state and school district rules, policies and procedures;
3. Report to work with a professional attitude, emotionally and physically prepared to transport students;
4. Recognize the importance of establishing rapport with parents, supervisors, and school administrators when working to ensure proper student conduct;
5. Establish a professional rapport with your students;
6. Instruct students in proper behavior, consequences of improper behavior, general procedures and evacuation drills;
7. Maintain order, safety, and secure the rights of others on the school bus;
8. Exercise good judgment, using appropriate verbal intervention. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Minimizing interior noise;
  - b. Controlling passenger movement;
  - c. Requiring an orderly entrance and exit;
  - d. Eliminating movement or potential movement of objects;
  - e. Requiring silence at railroad crossings.
9. Handle minor infractions with school district approved, on-board consequences and discussions;
  10. In instances of serious or recurring misconduct, follow school district policy. Submit written reports to your district supervisor or administrator according to your school district policy;
  11. Represent the school district by presenting a positive image in dress, language, and manner.

**Each school district has the authority to develop policies and procedures that exceed the requirements of the State Board of Education.**

## **DRIVER DUTIES**

The general duties and responsibilities of a school bus driver are as follows:

1. Refrain from the use of stimulants, sedatives and alcoholic beverages;
2. Responsible for the safe operating condition and cleanliness of the bus;
3. Use the school bus only for the transportation of pupils, following established routes and schedules set by your school district Transportation Department;
4. Allow no one else to drive the school bus without the proper licenses and prior school district approval;
5. Drivers are responsible for any traffic violations they may receive. If convicted of a traffic violation, you will be responsible for all fines;
6. Report any and all bus accidents or incidents that occur while the bus is moving or

still regardless of damage;

7. Perform the necessary pre-trip and post-trip inspections, and report any needed repairs;
8. Assure that all students are able to cross the road safely;
9. Keep accurate school bus inspection logs, and submit all reports when required;
10. Conduct the required emergency evacuation drills twice yearly;
11. Do not drop a student off anywhere other than their scheduled drop off point without prior school district approval.
12. Be familiar with assigned routes and designated school bus stops.
13. Maintain a clean bus, this includes all route activity and extra-curricular activities.
14. **Always have a positive attitude!**

**You are responsible for any traffic violations and  
all fines! SO DRIVE SAFELY!**

# CHAPTER 2: INSPECTIONS



## INTRODUCTION

You are required to inspect your school bus every time prior to driving any school bus. You must know and follow your school districts system for inspection. You will need to point to or touch each item and explain what you are checking and why. You must document each inspection and be able to provide proof that you inspected all areas on your school bus. If you do not conduct the required pre-trip inspection, you will face disciplinary action in accordance with federal, state and local school district policy.

You need to check your school bus throughout the day. Always be aware of any signs that might indicate that there is a problem with the bus.

No school bus shall be driven unless the driver has inspected and verified that the following parts are in good working order;

1. Service brakes;
2. Parking (hand brake);
3. Steering mechanism;
4. Lighting devices and reflectors;
5. Tires;
6. Horn;
7. Windshield wiper or wipers;
8. Rear-vision mirror or mirrors.  
(FMVSS 392.7)

**Have a planned and systematic inspection of the bus before each trip.**

Good drivers continue to check all systems throughout the day, knowing that the condition of the bus can change as the day progresses. They are always alert to any “warning signals” which indicate that the bus is not operating properly. By checking all systems throughout the day will prevent a breakdown or accident.

# PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

## Engine Compartment (Engine Off)

1. **Leaks and Hoses**
  - a. Look for puddles on the ground.
  - b. Look for dripping fluids on underside of engine and transmission.
  - c. Inspect hoses for condition and leaks.
2. **Oil Level**
  - a. Indicate where dipstick is located.
  - b. Check oil level to make sure it is above refill mark.
3. **Coolant Level**
  - a. Inspect reservoir sight glass, or if engine is not hot, remove radiator cap and check for visible coolant level.
4. **Power Steering Fluid**
  - a. Indicate where power steering fluid dipstick is located.
  - b. Check power steering fluid to make sure it is above refill mark.
5. **Engine Compartment Belts**
  - a. Check to the following belts for adjustment (no more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch play at the center of the belt), cracks, or frays:
    - i. Power Steering Belt
    - ii. Water Pump Belt
    - iii. Alternator Belt
    - iv. Air compressor belt.

- b. If any of the parts are not belt driven, make sure the part is working properly and is not damaged or leaking and is mounted securely.

6. **Clutch/Gearshift**

- a. Press in clutch, place gearshift lever in neutral (or park for automatic transmissions).
- b. Start the engine and slowly release the clutch.

## **Interior Cab Check, Gauges, T.A.P. and Brakes**

1. **Oil Pressure Gauge**

- a. Make sure oil pressure gauge is working.
- b. Check that oil pressure gauge shows increasing or normal oil pressure and that warning light goes off. The gauge should gradually rise.

2. **Temperature Gauge**

- a. Make sure the temperature gauge is working.
- b. Temperature gauge should begin to climb to the normal operating level and light should be off.

3. **Ammeter/Voltmeter**

- a. Check that gauges show alternator and/or generator is charging and that warning light is off.

4. **Mirrors and Windshield**

- a. Mirrors should be clean and adjusted properly from the inside.
- b. Windshield should be clean with no illegal stickers, no obstructions, or damage to the glass.

5. **Steering Play**

- a. **Non-power Steering:** Check for excessive play by turning

the steering wheel back and forth. There should not be more than 10 degrees (about 2 inches) of play.

- b. **Power Steering:** With the engine running, check for excessive play by turning the steering wheel back and forth. There should not be more than 10 degrees (about 2 inches) before front left wheel barely moves.

6. **Wipers/Washers**

- a. Check that wiper arms and blades are secured, not damaged, and operates smoothly and correctly.

7. **Lighting Indicators**

- a. Make sure that the following indicators work when lights are turned on:
  - i. Left turn signal
  - ii. Right turn signal
  - iii. Four-way flashers
  - iv. High beam headlight
  - v. Alternately flashing amber light indicator
  - vi. Alternately flashing red light indicator
  - vii. Strobe light indicator

8. **Horn**

- a. Check that horn works.

9. **Heaters and Defrosters**

- a. Make sure that the heater and defroster are working.

10. **Brakes**

- a. **Parking Brake Check**
  - i. Apply parking brake after you make sure that it will hold the vehicle by shifting into a lower

gear and gently pulling against the brake. tug)

**b. Hydraulic Brake Check**

- i. Pump the brake pedal 3 times, then hold it down for 5 seconds. The brake pedal should not move (depress) during the 5 seconds.
- ii. If equipped with a hydraulic brake reserve (back-up) system, with the key off, press the brake pedal and listen for the sound of the reserve system electric motor.
- iii. Check that the warning buzzer or light is off.

**11. Air Brake Check**

- a. With engine running, build the air pressure to 100-125 psi. Shut the engine off and push in the parking brake. Press on the foot brake and hold it for 1 minute. Check the air gauge to see if the air pressure drops not more than 3 psi in 1 minute.
- b. With the key in the on position, begin rapidly applying and releasing the foot brake. The low air warning devices should activate before air pressure drops below 60 psi.
- c. Continue to rapidly apply and release the foot brake, at approximately 40 psi the parking brake should pop out (close).

**12. Driver Seat and Seat Belt**

- a. Check that the driver seat is secured and the seat belt is securely mounted, adjusts and latches properly.

## **Inside the Vehicle**

**1. Emergency Equipment**

- a. Check for spare electrical fuses.
- b. Check for 3 red reflective triangles.
- c. Check for a properly charged and rated fire extinguisher with

a current certification tag dated within the last year.

- d. A First Aid Kit, sealed, visible and clearly marked.
- e. A Body-Fluid Clean Up Kit, sealed, visible and clearly marked.

**2. Emergency Exits**

- a. Make sure that all emergency exits are not damaged, operate smoothly, close securely and are not obstructed.
- b. Make sure that all emergency exits warning devices are working.
- c. Make sure that all emergency exits are clearly labeled.
- d. Check that the flip seat at an emergency exit can remain in the upright position when not in use.

**3. Seating**

- a. Look for broken seat frames and check that seat frames are firmly attached to the floor.
- b. Check that seat cushions are attached securely to the seat frames

**Outside the Vehicle**

**1. Steering**

**a. Steering Box and Hoses**

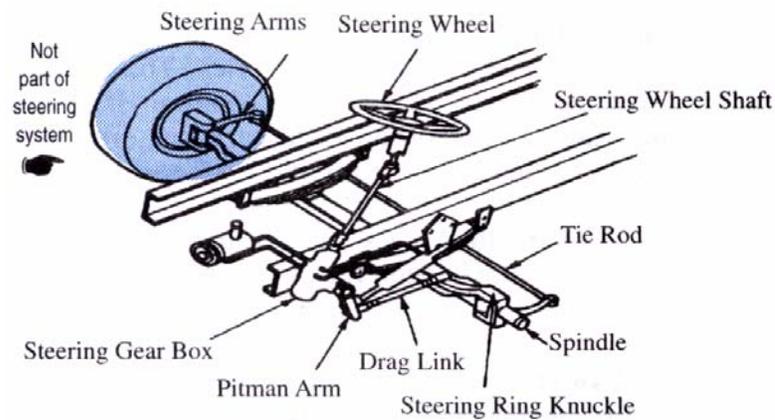
- i. Check that the steering box is securely mounted and not leaking. Look for any damaged or missing nuts, bolts, and cotter keys.
- ii. Check for power steering fluid leaks or damage to power steering hoses.

**2. Steering Linkage**

- i. See that connecting links, arms, and rods from

the steering box to the wheel are not worn cracked.

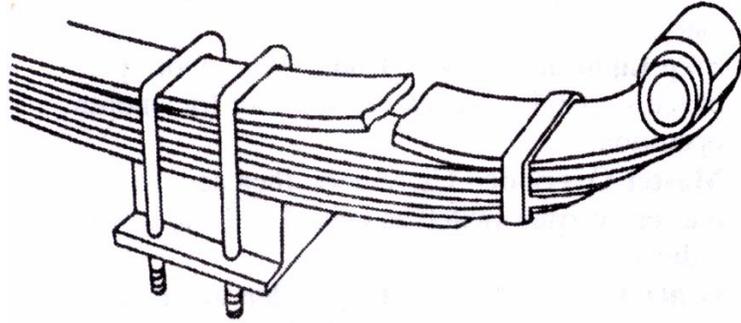
- ii. Check that joints and sockets are not worn or loose and that there are no missing nuts, bolts, or cotter keys.



**Examples of Steering System Key Parts**

## **Suspension**

1. **Springs/Air/Torque**
  - a. Look for missing, shifted, cracked, or broken leaf springs.
  - b. Look for broken or distorted coil springs.
  - c. If vehicle is equipped with torsion bars, torque arms, or other types of suspension components, check that they are not damaged and are mounted securely.
  - d. Air ride suspension should be checked for damage and leaks.

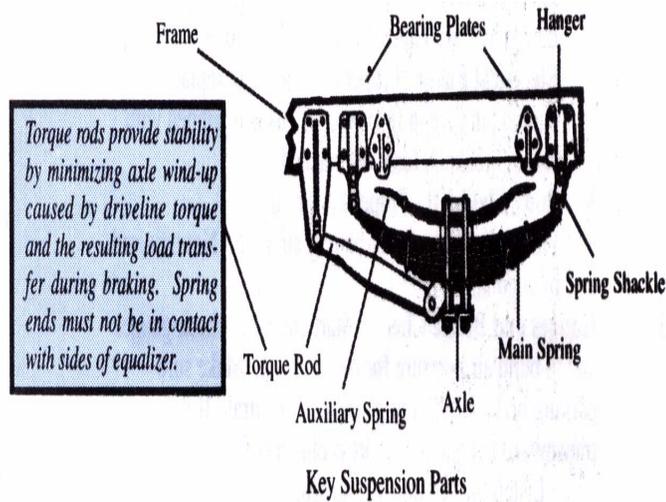


Safety Defect: Broken Leaf in Leaf Spring

- a. Look for cracked or broken spring hangers, missing or damaged bushings, and broken, loose, or missing bolts, u-bolts or other axle mounting parts. (The mounts should be checked at each point where they are secured to the vehicle frame and axle(s)).

### 3. Shock Absorbers

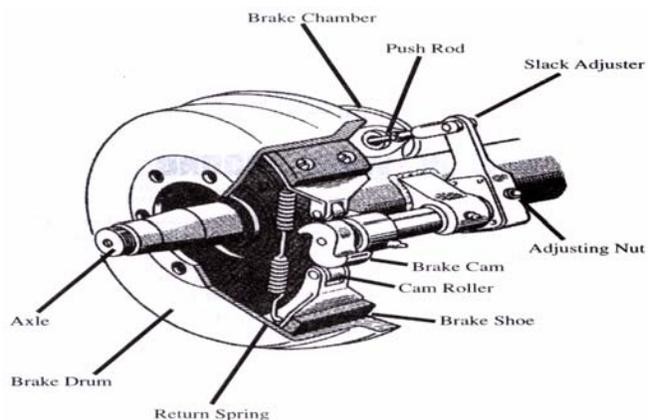
- a. See that shock absorbers are secure and that there are no leaks. Be prepared to perform the same suspension components inspection on every axle.



# Brakes

## 1. Slack Adjusters

- a. Look for broken, loose, or missing parts.
- b. The angle between the push rod and adjustor arm should be a little over 90 degrees when the brakes are released, and not less than 90 degrees when the brakes are applied.
- c. When pulled by hand, the brake rod should not move more than one inch (with the brakes released).



## 2. Brake Chambers

- a. See that the brake chambers are not leaking, cracked, or dented and are mounted securely.

## 3. Brake Hoses and Lines

- a. Look for cracked, worn, or leaking hoses, lines and couplings.

## 4. Brake Drum

- a. Check for cracks, dents, or holes. Also check for loose or missing bolts.
- b. Brake linings (where visible) should not be worn dangerously thin.

## 5. Brake Linings

- a. On some brake drums, there are openings where the brake linings can be seen from outside the drum. For this type of drum, check that a visible amount of brake lining is showing.
- b. Be prepared to perform the same brake components inspection on every axle.

## Wheels

### 1. Rims

- a. Check for damaged or bent rims. Rims cannot have welding repairs.

### 2. Tires

- a. The following items must be inspected on every tire:
  - i. **Tread Depth:** Check for minimum tread depth (4/32 on steering axle tires, 2/32 on all other tires).
  - ii. **Tire Condition:** Check that tread is evenly worn and look for cuts or other damage to tread or sidewalls. Also, make sure that valve caps and stems are not missing, broken, or damaged.
  - iii. **Tire Inflation:** Check for proper inflation by using a tire gauge, or by striking tires with a mallet or other similar device.

### 3. Hub Oil Seals/Axle Seals

- a. See that hub oil/grease seals and axle seals are not leaking and, if wheel has a sight glass, oil level is adequate.

4. **Lug Nuts**

- a. Check that all lug nuts are present, free of cracks and distortions, and show no signs of looseness such as rust trails or shiny threads.
- b. Make sure all bolt holes are not cracked or distorted.

5. **Spacers**

- a. If equipped, check that spacers are not bent, damaged, or rusted through.
- b. Spacers should be evenly centered, with the dual wheels and tires evenly separated.

## **Side of the Vehicle**

1. **Doors and Mirrors**

- a. Check that door(s) are not damaged and that they open and close properly from the outside.
- b. Hinges should be secure with seals intact.
- c. Check that mirrors and mirror brackets are not damaged and are mounted securely.
- d. Check that all emergency exits are clearly labeled and working correctly.

2. **Fuel Tank**

- a. Check that tank(s) are secure, cap(s) are tight, and that there are no leaks from tank(s) or line.

3. **Battery/Box**

- a. Wherever located, see that the battery(s) are secure, connections are tight, and cell caps are present.
- b. Battery connections should not show signs of excessive corrosion.

- c. Battery box and cover or door must be secure.

4. **Doors & Hinges**

- a. Check that doors and hinges are not damaged and that they open, close, and latch properly from the outside.

5. **Drive Shaft**

- a. See that drive shaft is not damaged.
- b. Couplings should be secure and free of foreign objects.

6. **Exhaust System**

- a. Check system for damage and signs of leaks such as rust or carbon soot.
- b. System should be connected tightly and mounted securely.

7. **Frame**

- a. Look for cracks, broken welds, holes or other damage to the longitudinal frame members, cross members, box and floor.

8. **Lights and Reflectors**

- a. Check that all outside lights and reflective equipment is clean and functional. This includes:
  - i. Clearance lights (red on rear and amber elsewhere);
  - ii. Headlights (high and low beams);
  - iii. Taillights;
  - iv. Turn signals;
  - v. Four-way flashers;
  - vi. Brake lights;
  - vii. Red reflectors (on rear) and amber reflectors (elsewhere);

- viii. Strobe light, if equipped;
- ix. Stop arm light;
- x. Alternately flashing amber and red lights.

Note: Checks of brake, turn signal and four-way flasher functions must be done separately.

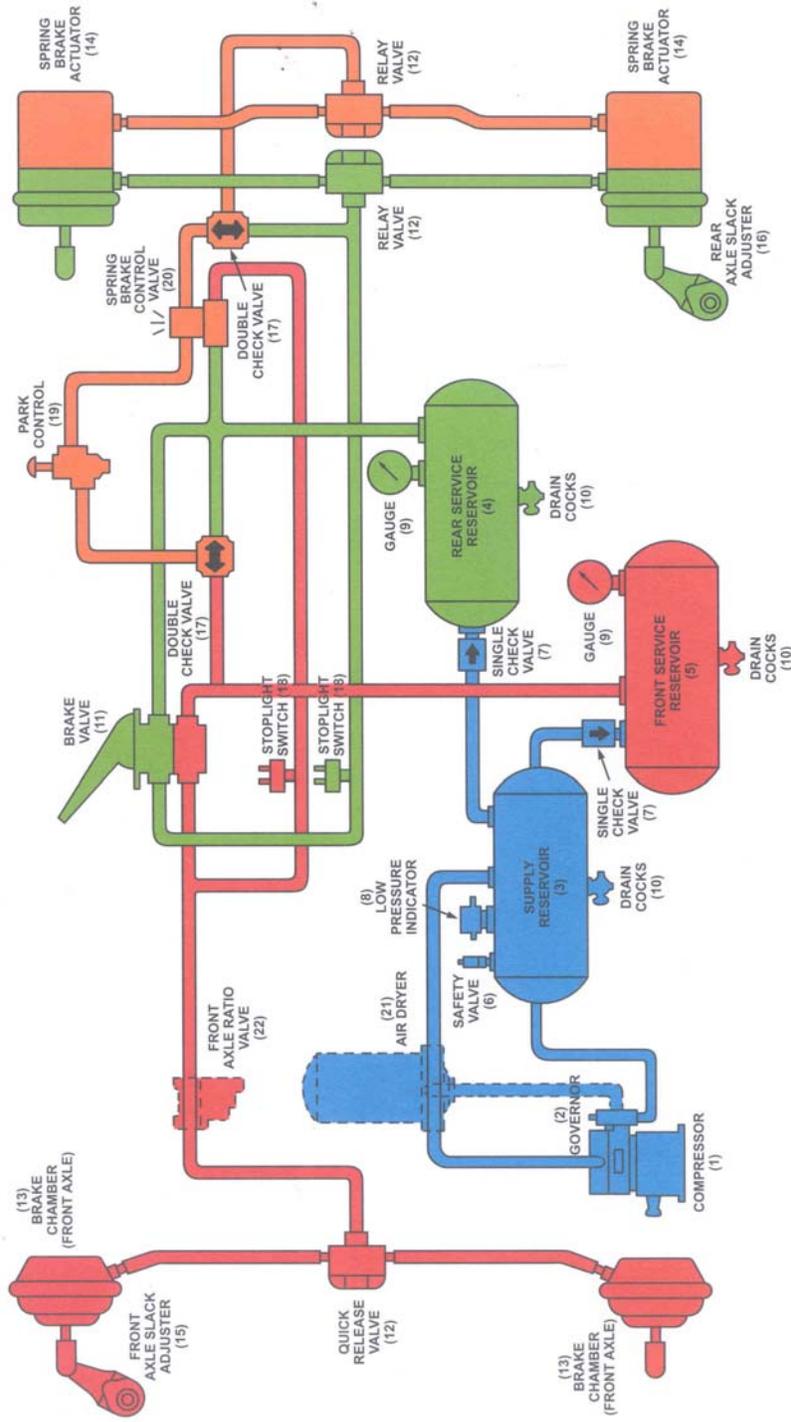
9. **Splash Guards**

- a. If equipped, check that splash guards or mud flaps are not damaged and are mounted securely.

10. **Stop Arm**

- a. Check the stop arm to see that it is mounted securely to the frame of the vehicle and check for loose fittings and damage.

# DRIVER TRAINING SCHOOL BUS AIR BRAKE SYSTEM



- BLUE..... SUPPLY SYSTEM
- RED..... FRONT AXLE SYSTEM
- GREEN..... REAR AXLE SYSTEM
- ORANGE..... PARK/EMERGENCY

Product Keys and additional information on back of page.



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **ACCELERATOR/BRAKE PEDAL**

Accelerator pedal is on the right and makes the vehicle go. Brake pedal is on the left and stops the vehicle. Check that it is connected and functional.

### **AIR BRAKES**

Use compressed air to make the brakes work. Air brakes are a good and safe way of stopping large and heavy vehicles, but the brakes must be well maintained and used properly.

### **AIR COMPRESSOR (Belt)**

Maintains air pressure in air brake system. Identify the belt that drives the air compressor. With the engine off, driver points to, touches, or presses belt to test that it is snug. Note that the belt is not frayed, has no visible cracks, loose fibers, or signs of wear. Push the belt with hand, and if it deflects more than 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch, slippage may occur and the belt should be tightened.

**Note:** Compressor may not be belt driven. Note that the compressor drive appears to be functioning, and is not leaking.

### **AIR LEAKS/LEVEL**

Air brake and suspension systems. Be sure that the vehicle is sitting level (front and rear), and if air-equipped, check for audible air leaks from air brake system or suspension system air bags.

### **ALTERNATOR (BELT)**

Drives the alternator. Identify the belt that drives the alternator. With the engine off, point to, touch, or press the belt to see that it is snug. Note that the belt is not frayed, has no visible cracks, loose fibers, or signs of wear. Push the belt with your hand and if it deflects more than 1/2 or 3/4 or an inch, slippage may occur and the belt should be tightened.

**Note:** Alternator may not be belt driven. Note that the alternator is functioning and mounted securely.

### **AMPETER/VOLTMETER**

Indicates if alternator is properly functioning. Driver checks that the gauge shows that the alternator or generator is charging or the warning light is off. Needle will jump and flutter, then indicate charge. (CDL examiners 4-10) Voltmeter needs to be within normal operating range.

### **ANTI-LOCK BRAKE SYSTEMS (ABS)**

Prevents brakes from locking up. When starting your engine, you should hear “popping noises”—this is an automatic checking system on each tire. If you hear any popping noises, the ABS could be defective. If the ABS is defective, braking will default back to the regular braking system.

## **AXLE SEALS**

Seals for axle/wheel assembly lubrication. Make sure there are no cracks or distortions in wheel/axle mounting, and there are no signs of leaking lubricants. If the axle has a sight glass, driver checks that oil level is adequate.

## **BATTERY/BOX**

The battery and box or cage that holds the battery in place. Wherever located, see that the batteries(ies) are secure, connections are tight, and cell caps are present. Battery connections should not show signs of excessive corrosion. Battery box and cover (or door) must be secure.

## **BRAKE DRUM/LININGS**

Brake shoes and linings that rub on the inside of the drum to slow the vehicle down. Check for cracks, dents, or holes. Also check for loose or missing bolts. Brake linings (where visible) are no thinner than ¼ inch. Check brake drum and linings for contaminants such as grease, oil, etc.

## **BRAKES HOSES/LINES**

Carries air or hydraulic fluid to wheel brake assembly. Check that the hoses/lines can supply air or hydraulic fluid to brakes. Check for cracked, worn or frayed hoses, and that all couplings are secure and not leaking.

## **CLUTCH/GEARSHIFT**

Disengages engine from drive train so vehicle won't move and reduces load on starting motor. Depress clutch before turning on the starter. Keep it depressed until the engine reaches idling speed. On an automatic transmission, place the gear selector in the park or neutral position. On a standard transmission, place gearshift in neutral. Start engine, and then release the clutch slowly.

## **COOLANT/LEVEL**

Cools the engine. Look at sight glass of reservoir, or if the engine is not hot, remove the radiator cap and look to see the level (see note). Adequate level will show in sight glass or be visible in the radiator when the cap is removed.

**Note:** If the engine is hot, do not remove the radiator cap.

## **CROSSING ARM**

Extends out in front of the bus off the right side of the bumper to prevent students from crossing directly in front of the bus. Check to make sure that it activates with red loading lights, and retracts back to bumper fully. Driver may not, at any time, tie arm to bus preventing it from extending out. The crossing arm must always be operational or bus is Out-of-Service, except for special needs buses which are used solely to transport special needs students who are manually loaded/unloaded.

## **DOORS**

Driver and passenger entry, exit doors, rear doors and side doors. Check that door(s) are not damaged and that they open and close properly. Check door window for damage and excessive dirt. Hinges should be secure with seals intact.

## **DOORS, TIE DOWNS AND LIFTS**

Rear and side doors. Wheelchair ties used for loading and unloading students. Check that doors and hinges are not damaged and that they open, close, and latch properly. Check that wheelchair ties are secure. If equipped with a lift, look for leaking, damaged, or missing parts and explain how it should be checked for correct operation. Wheelchair lift must be fully retracted and latched securely.

## **DRIVE SHAFT**

Transmits power from the transmission to the drive axle. Shaft not bent or cracked; shaft couplings appear to be secure; U-brackets for safety appear to be secure.

## **DRIVERS SEAT**

Must be secured to floor and driver must use seat belt.

## **EMERGENCY EXIT(S)**

Bus doors, roof hatches, or push-out windows used for emergency evacuation. Make sure that all emergency exits are not damaged, operate smoothly, and close securely. Check that all emergency exit-warning devices are working and are properly identified.

## **EXHAUST SYSTEM**

External piping for conducting combustion gases from engine. Driver check the outside visible parts are securely mounted; no cracks, holes, or severe dents.

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHER**

First extinguisher must be fully charged and service certificate can not be over 1 year of age.

## **FRAME**

Structural members for supporting vehicle body over the wheels. Driver checks for no cracks or bends in frame members; no loose, cracked, bent, broken or missing cross members. Cracks are most likely to appear midway between points of attachment to vehicle assemblies; for example, near axles or around the engine area. Fuel tank guard, if equipped, is securely mounted.

## **FUEL TANK**

Tank that holds fuel. Check that tank(s) are secure and not leaking, caps are tight, and there are no leaks from tank(s) or lines. Signs of spillage from overfilling a fuel tank are not to be treated as a fuel leak.

## **GLOW PLUG/INDICATOR LIGHT**

The key should be turned to the “on” position and the driver should wait until the glow plug indicator goes out before starting the engine.

## **HEATER/DEFROSTER**

Heats cab or passenger compartment and prevents frost or condensation from forming on windshield. Test that heater and defrosters work on high and low.

**HORN**

Air and/or electrical horns for warning other drivers or pedestrians. Check that air horn and/or electric horn(s) work.

**HUB OIL SEAL**

Seals in lubrication for wheel hub. Driver checks to see that wheel hub oil seal on the front axle is not leaking, and if sight glass is present, that oil level is adequate.

**HYDRAULIC BRAKES**

To check hydraulic brakes (on buses without air brakes), pump brake pedal 3 times, hold down for 5 seconds. Brake pedal should not move (depress) during this time.

**LEAKS/HOSES**

Fluid leaks from the engine. Look for puddles or dripping fluids on the ground under the engine or the underside of the engine and transmission. Inspect engine hoses for condition and leaks.

**LIGHTING INDICATORS**

Dashboard indicator lights for signals, flashers, [and] headlight high beams and lift in use light. Check that dash indicators for turn signals, flashers, headlight high beams, and that fog/driving lights illuminate when corresponding lights are turned on.

**LIGHTS**

Headlights, turn signals, clearance lights, identification lights, brake lights and 4-ways. Driver checks that all lights illuminate and are clean. Headlights function on both high and low beams. Examiner may have driver stay in seat and check all lights at once.

**LOADING LIGHTS**

Strobe light, alternately flashing amber/red lights and alternately flashing red lights on school buses. Check that strobe lights (if equipped) are operational and not broken. Check that alternately flashing amber/red lights (if equipped) are operational and not broken.

**LUG NUTS**

Holds wheel on axle. Driver checks that all lug nuts are present; checks that lugs are not loose (look for rust trails around nuts); no cracks radiating from lug bolt holes, or distortion of the bolt holes.

**MIRRORS**

Side mirrors and passenger entry/exit mirrors. Check for proper adjustment during in-cab inspection. Check that all internal and external mirrors and mirror brackets are not damaged and are mounted securely with no loose fittings. Check to assure that visibility is not impaired due to dirty mirrors.

**OIL LEVEL/DIP STICK**

Dipstick used to measure the oil level for engine lubrication. Check oil level while engine is off. Be able to indicate where dipstick is located. Check that oil level is above the refill mark, in a safe operating range.

## **OIL PRESSURE GAUGE**

Ensures that engine oil pressure is adequate. Check that the oil pressure is building to normal. The gauge shows increasing or normal oil pressure or warning light goes off. Engine oil temperature gauge (if present) should begin a gradual rise to normal operating range.

## **PARKING BRAKE/MAXI BRAKE**

Keeps vehicle from rolling when parked. Check that the parking brake will hold the vehicle by GENTLY trying to pull forward with the parking brake on.

## **PASSENGER ENTRY**

Bus door used for normal entry or exit. Check that the entry door is not damaged, operates smoothly, and closes securely. Check that handrails are secure and the step light is working, if equipped. Check that entry steps are clear with the treads not loose or worn excessively.

## **PASSENGER SEATS**

Passenger vehicle seats and frames. Check that there are no broken seat frames and that the seats are firmly attached to floor.

## **POWER STEERING FLUID/BELT OR GEAR**

Hydraulic fluid for assisting steering wheel action to front wheels. Belt that drives power steering unit. With the engine stopped, check the dipstick and see where the fluid level is, relative to the refill mark. Level must be above refill mark. Identify belt that drives power steering unit. With engine off, driver points to, touches, or presses belt to test that it is snug. Note that the belt is not frayed, no visible cracks, loose fibers, or signs of wear. Push belt with hand, and if it deflects more than 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch, slippage is probably excessive. Drivers should know and mention if pump is belt driven or gear driven.

## **RETARDERS**

Retarders help slow a vehicle, reducing the need to use your brakes. They reduce brake wear and give you another way to slow down. There are many types of retarders (exhaust, engine, hydraulic and electric on the transmission). All retarders can be turned on or off by the drivers. On some the retarding power can be adjusted. When turned "on," retarders apply their braking power (to the drive wheels only) whenever you let up on the accelerator pedal all the way.

## **RIMS**

Tires are mounted on metal rims or bare metal. Check for damaged or bent rims. Rims should not have welding repairs. Check for rust trails that may indicate rim is loose on wheel.

## **SAFETY BELT/EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT**

Safety belt and required emergency equipment. Check for properly secured, mounted, and adjusted safety belt. Check for three red reflective triangles. Check for a properly charged and rated fire extinguisher. Check for spare electrical fuses (if used).

## **SHOCK ABSORBERS**

Gas or hydraulic device that cushions vehicle ride and stabilizes vehicle. See that shock absorbers are secure and that there are no leaks.

## **SLACK ADJUSTER**

Provides a means for adjusting slack in the brake linkage. Check for broken, loose, or missing parts. The angle between push rod and adjuster arm should be a little over 90 degrees when brakes are released and not less than 90 degrees when brakes are applied. When pulled by hand brake rod should not move more than approximately 1 inch.

## **SPACERS**

Axle collar between dual wheels to keep wheels evenly separated. If equipped, check that spacers are not bent, damaged, or rusted through. Check that spacers are evenly centered, with the dual wheels and tires evenly separated.

**Note:** If vehicle is not equipped with spacers, driver must mention this and check between the disc (Budd) wheels for even spacing, damage, and foreign objects.

## **SPLASH GUARDS**

Devices used to prevent road materials from being thrown by vehicle tires. If equipped, check that splashguards or mud flaps are not damaged and are mounted securely.

## **SPRING/AIR/TORQUE**

Leaf or coil springs for damping wheel vibration forces created by rolling over the road surface. Steel bar, torque arm assembly, or air bag that acts as a spring in place of leaf or coil springs. Look for missing, shifted, cracked, or broken leaf springs. Look for broken or distorted coil springs. If vehicle is equipped with torsion bars, torque arms, or other types of suspension components, checks that they are not damaged and are mounted securely. Check air ride suspension for damage and leaks.

## **SPRING MOUNT**

All brackets, bolts, and bushings used for attaching the spring and/or air bag to axle and to vehicle frame. Check that spring attachments (brackets, bolts, bushings) are in place. Check for cracked or broken spring hangers. Check for broken, missing, or loose bolts (including U-bolts). Check for missing or damaged bushings. Check for broken, loose, or missing axle mounting parts.

## **STEERING BOX/HOSES**

Container (and hoses) for mechanism that transforms the steering column action into wheel turning action. Check that the steering box is securely mounted and not leaking. Look for any missing nuts, bolts, and cotter pins. Check for power steering fluid leaks or damage to power steering hoses.

## **STEERING LINKAGE**

Transmits steering action from steering box to wheel. Check that connecting drag link, pittman arm, and tie rod from the steering box to the wheel are not worn or cracked. Check that joints and socket are not worn or loose. Check for loose or missing nuts, bolts, or cotter pins.

## **STEERING PLAY**

Procedure to check for excessive looseness in the steering linkage. For non-power steering, turn steering wheel back and forth and see that there should not be more than 5-10 degrees of free play (approximately two inches at the rim of a 20-inch steering wheel). For power steering, with engine running, turn steering wheel back and forth and sees that there should not be more than 5-10 degrees of free play (approximately two inches at the rim of a 20-inch steering wheel)

## **STOP ARM**

Stop arm and flashing alternative lights on stop arm when student lights are activated. Check the stop arm to see that it is mounted securely to the frame of the vehicle. Check for loose fittings and damage. Check that the stop arm extends fully when operated. Check that stop arm lights are operational.

## **TEMPERATURE GAUGE**

Measures water temperature in the engine cooling system. Make sure the temperature gauge is working. Temperature should begin to climb to the normal operating range or temperature light should be off.

## **TIRES**

Road wheel tires. The following items must be inspected on every tire: No recaps allowed on front tires. Bias and radial tires can not be combined. Tread can not be less than 4/32" when measured on any 2 adjacent major tread grooves at any location on the tire.

**Tread depth:** Check for a minimum tread depth (4/32" or 1/8" on steering axle tires , and 2/32" (1/16" on all other tires).

**Tire condition:** Check that tread is evenly worn and look for cuts or other damage to tread or sidewalls. Also, make sure that valve caps and stem are not missing, broken, or damaged.

**Tire inflation:** Check for proper inflation by using a tire gauge or by striking tires with a mallet or other similar device.

## **WATER PUMP**

Belt for driving engine water pump. Identify the belt that drives the water pump. With the engine off, point to, touch, or press the belt to test that it is snug. Note that the belt is not frayed, no visible cracks, loose fibers, or signs of wear. Push the belt with hand, and if it deflects more than 3/4 of an inch, slippage is likely and belt needs tightened. Drivers should know and mention if pump is belt driven or gear driven.

## **WINDSHIELD**

Check the windshield to make sure it is clear and has no illegal stickers, obstructions, or damage to the glass.

**WIPERS/WASHERS**

Windshield wipers and washers. Check that wiper arms and blades are secure, not damaged, and operate smoothly. If equipped, check for windshield washer fluid and that windshield washers operate correctly.

# CHAPTER 3: DRIVING THE BUS



## INTRODUCTION

In order to drive a school bus, you must have the knowledge and skills necessary to drive the school bus. A school bus is much longer, wider and heavier than a car. Driving the bus requires more preparation, thought and care. This chapter will give you the knowledge and skills to drive the school bus safely.

1. School bus drivers must have knowledge in:
  - a. Inspections;
  - b. School bus inspection and reporting of defects;
  - c. Safe vehicle operation;
  - d. The effects of fatigue, poor vision, hearing and general health;
  - e. The effects of alcohol and drug use;
  - f. Proper use of safety systems, including lights, horns, side and rear-view mirrors, proper mirror adjustment, fire extinguishers and the use of these systems in an emergency;
  - g. Shifting, backing, visual search, communication, speed management, space management, night operation, extreme driving conditions, hazardous conditions, depth perception, emergency maneuvers, skid control; and
  - h. Air brake systems.  
(FMCSA 383.111)
2. School bus drivers must also have the following required skills:
  - a. Basic vehicle control skills (ability to start, stop and move the vehicle safely);
  - b. Safe driving skills (ability to use signals, speed control for weather and traffic conditions, and correctly change lanes or turn);
  - c. Air brake skills (ability to locate and identify air brake operating controls and verify that the air brake system is working correctly);

- d. Be able to pass a skills test on-street conditions or under a combination of on-street and off-street conditions. (FMCSA 383.113)
- e. Proper procedures for loading and unloading students;
- f. Proper use of emergency exits and how to respond in emergency situations;
- g. Proper procedures at railroad crossings; and
- h. Proper braking procedures.

## ON DUTY AND DRIVING TIME

**Driving a school bus is a tremendous responsibility!**

It is important for you to know the laws for “on duty time.” Nevada law limits the number of hours you can drive a school bus before you are required to be “off duty.” This is called “hours of service” or “on duty time.” You can not drive a school bus in excess of 10 hours in any 15- hour period without resting for 10 hours. (NRS 392.360) The following rules apply to your total “on duty” time.

1. On duty time includes:
  - a. All time spent at a facility waiting to be dispatched;
  - b. All time inspecting, servicing or conditioning any school bus;
  - c. All time spent driving a school bus;
  - d. All time spent on the school bus, other than driving time;
  - e. All time needed for loading and unloading, supervising or assisting the loading and unloading of students, and any time waiting for students;
  - f. All the time used for repairing, obtaining assistance, or waiting for assistance to repair a disabled vehicle;
  - g. All the time spent being tested for drugs or alcohol;
  - h. Performing any other work as a common, contracted or private motor carrier;
  - i. Performing any work for a non motor carrier. (FMVSS 395.2)

**You are required to include all duties performed for which you were compensated by any employer**

## MIRROR USAGE

Using your mirrors correctly is one of the most important things you can do to be a safe school bus driver. Most accidents are the result of improper mirror usage. Mirrors act as the driver's eyes for spots that you would not normally be able to see. However, you can hang mirrors all over the bus, but unless you know how to use them correctly, they are useless.

**When checking mirrors, it is important to move your body (rock back and forth) to help you see in your blind spots.**

### Types of Mirrors on School Buses

1. **Overhead Rear View Mirror:** This mirror is mounted directly above the windshield on the driver's side. It is used to monitor student activity inside the bus.

The rear view mirror has limited visibility directly in the back of the bus at the floor and directly behind the bus from the rear bumper to 150 feet behind the bus.

2. **Crossover or Crossview Mirrors:** These mirrors are mounted on the left and right front corners of the bus. They are used to see the area directly in front of the bus from the ground level to at least 6 to 9 feet from the front bumper.

Crossover or crossview mirrors do not accurately reflect size or distance.

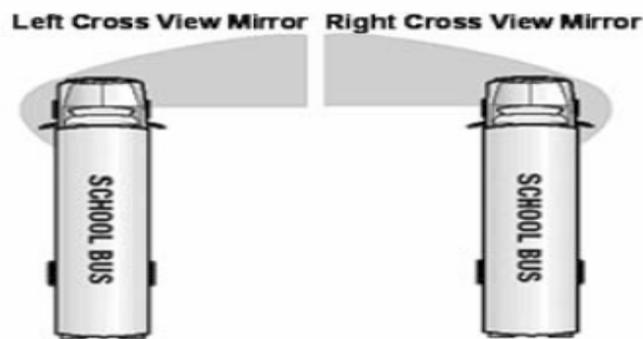


Figure 10.4a

Figure 10.4b

#### 10.1.6 - Overhead Inside Rearview Mirror

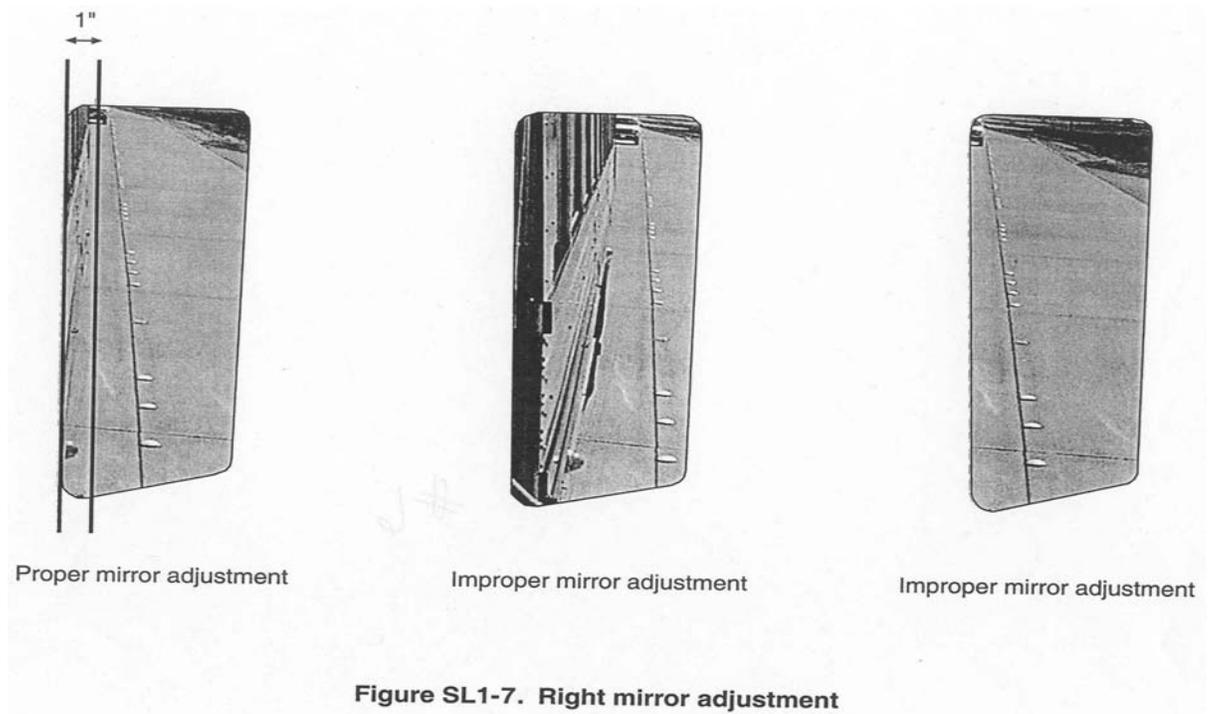
**Never allow students to walk behind the bus.**

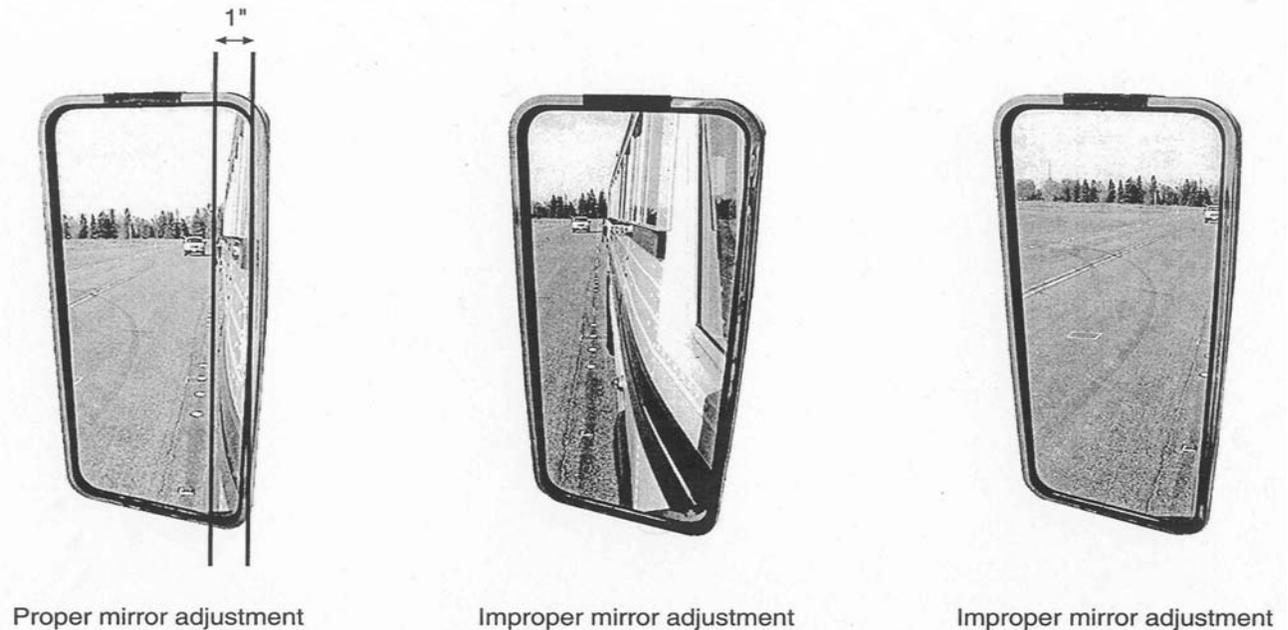
3. **Standard (flat) Mirrors:** These mirrors are mounted at the left and right front corner of the bus. They are used to monitor traffic, clearances and students on the **sides and to the rear** of the bus. They are to view the area in back of the bus **200 feet to the rear, 12 feet perpendicular to the right, and 6 feet perpendicular to the left** in order to monitor traffic entering the rear blind spot area in back of the bus.

Standard (flat mirrors) blind spot is immediately below and in front of each mirror. Another blind spot with this mirror is the area directly in back of the rear bumper that extends 50 to 150 feet to the rear of the bus.

4. **Bottom Convex mirrors:** These mirrors are often mounted on dual brackets with side standard (flat) mirrors. It is used to monitor the left and right sides of the bus at a wide angle. They view the area 12 feet to the side of the bus at a point 32 feet from the front bumper to the rear wheels. It provides a view of traffic, clearances and students at the side of the bus.

Bottom convex mirrors give a distorted view that does not accurately reflect size or distance.





**Figure SL1-6. Left mirror adjustment**

## **Developing Good Mirror Use**

1. Before starting out from any kind of stop, be sure to check all mirrors for traffic, pupils, (on and off the bus), pedestrians and bicycles - anything! Know what's happening around you before you move.
2. Mirrors are essential to use before and during all turns. Check traffic and back swing clearance before turning.
3. As a school bus driver you will find that you will be using mirrors more than in your car. The easiest way to learn good mirror use is to set a pattern so it will become a habit.

## **Five-Count Mirror System**

The five-count mirror system is a good way to recognize and avoid problems. Using the five-count mirror system will reduce accidents. You need to use this system when changing lanes or making a left or right hand turn.

1. On the count of:
  - a. Look in the left flat mirror;

- b. Look in the overhead inside mirror;
  - c. Look in the right-hand mirror;
  - d. Look in the overhead inside mirror;
  - e. Look in the left flat mirror.
2. Includes the front cross-view mirrors to view the blind areas around the bus. Any time students are anywhere around the outside of the bus **be sure** to include the cross-view mirror in the system count.

## DRIVING THE BUS

**"The school bus driver NEVER has the right-of-way!"**

### Approaching the Intersection

Intersections are the most dangerous places on a roadway; more accidents occur at intersections than at any other place. When approaching, entering and exiting an intersection, look left, then right and then left again. Be prepared to stop each time you approach an intersection.

1. **Right of Way:** There are two types of intersections; regulated and unregulated. Regulated intersections have traffic control devices, such as a signal or sign. Unregulated intersections have no traffic signals or signs. When approaching an unregulated intersection, you are bound by law to reduce speed, check traffic to see that you may proceed and continue to move only when you have right-of-way. If another vehicle is already in or very near the intersection, you must yield right-of-way to that vehicle. When two vehicles arrive at an unregulated intersection at the same time, the vehicle on the left always yields right-of-way to the vehicle on the right. Note that the law only names the vehicle that must yield right-of-way; it never states that any vehicle expressly has the right to proceed. Right-of-way laws are designed to prevent collisions by prescribing which vehicle must move last.
2. **Yield Signs:** Regulated Intersection: Because of the restricted visibility, slow acceleration and length of a school bus, you must use extreme caution as you approach a yield sign. Approach the intersection where you must yield at a speed that is reasonable for the existing conditions, drive slow enough to allow you to stop the bus and yield right-of-way to another vehicle in the intersection or to avoid hazard.





3. **Stop Signs:** Regulated Intersection: You must completely stop at every intersection where there is a stop sign for your lane of traffic. Resume travel only when you can move the bus without interfering with the movement of another vehicle. Before proceeding you should look in all directions at least twice to check for approaching traffic. If the intersection is clear, proceed to move ahead or turn with caution.
4. **Uncontrolled Intersections:** Upon approaching an uncontrolled intersection, use extra caution. Check your school district's policy.
5. **Traffic Signals:** Regulated Intersection: Approach each traffic signal (traffic light) expecting that it could change color at any moment. Always obey the color of the traffic signal:



- a. **Red light:** Stop completely and wait. Refer to your school district policy regarding turning on a red light.
  - b. **Yellow light:** Prepare to stop for the red light that will follow.
  - c. **Green light:** Make sure cross traffic has stopped before proceeding across the intersection.
  - d. **Flashing yellow light:** Slowly proceed with caution.
  - e. **Flashing red light:** Stop completely, check for approaching traffic and proceed with caution when it is safe to move. (same as stop sign)
6. **Traffic Officer:** A uniformed officer always has authority over regular traffic signs and signals. You must follow the officer's directions regardless of the traffic devices. When an officer is directing traffic, there is usually a specific problem or hazard. Also be aware of other drivers who might not comply with a officer's instructions.
  7. **Private Drive:** When leaving a driveway, you must always yield the right-of-way to approaching vehicles on the roadway. Check for approaching traffic and proceed with caution when it's safe to move (same as stop sign).
  8. **Crossing Main Highways:** Be very careful when crossing or entering a major highway. When a school bus is moving from a complete stop, it takes at least six seconds to cross and clear an average two-lane highway. Multi-lane highways especially when divided, require even more time.

## Backing up the Bus

**Never back the school bus unless it is absolutely necessary.** Some school districts do not allow you to back-up a school bus under any circumstances. Check your school district policy.

- 1 If you must back the bus up, the following must be done:
  - a. Turn off all noisy equipment and have students be quiet;
  - b. When possible, have another employee or driver monitor the rear of the bus to make sure there is no one behind the bus;
  - c. Honk your horn so that others know you are backing up the bus;
  - d. Check your mirrors using the 5-count mirror check;
  - e. Slowly back up the bus.

## Basic Speed Law

Nevada has a basic speed law, which makes it against the law for you to drive any vehicle:

- 1 At a rate of speed that is greater than reasonable and proper, having due regard for traffic;
- 2 At a rate of speed that could endanger life, limb or property of any person, having due regard for traffic, highway conditions, weather and width of the highway;
- 3 At a rate of speed greater than the posted speed limit. (NRS 484.361)

## Communicating your Presence

1. **When Passing:** Whenever you are about to pass a vehicle, pedestrian, or bicyclist, assume they do not see you. They could suddenly move in front of you.
2. **When It's Hard to See:** At dawn or dusk or in rain or snow, you need to make yourself easier to see. If you are having a hard time seeing other cars, other drivers are having a hard time seeing you. Turn on your headlights to help others see you.

## Driving Around a Curve

Drivers must adjust their speed for curves in the road. If you take a curve too fast, two things can happen. The tires can lose their traction and continue straight ahead, so you skid off the road. Or, the tires may keep their traction and the vehicle rolls over.

Slow to a safe speed **before** you enter a curve. Braking in a curve is dangerous because it is easier to lock the wheels and cause a skid. Slow down as needed. Never exceed the posted speed limit for the curve. Be in a gear that will let you accelerate slightly in the curve. This will help you keep control. (CDL 2-26)

## Intersections

1. When approaching an intersection, you must:
  - a. Check traffic in all directions;
  - b. Decelerate gently;
  - c. Brake smoothly, and, if necessary, change gears;
  - d. Come to a complete stop (no coasting) behind any stop signs, signals, sidewalks, or stop lines;
  - e. Maintain a safe space cushion behind any vehicle in front of you;
  - f. Your school bus must not roll forward or backward.
  
2. When driving through an intersection, you must:
  - a. Check traffic in all directions;
  - b. Decelerate and yield to any pedestrians and traffic in the intersection;
  - c. Do not change lanes or shift gears while going through the intersection;
  - D. Keep both your hands on the wheel.

## Lane Changes

Changing lanes with a school bus is much harder and requires more space to change a lane. It is important to put your turn signal on early so that other drivers can see what you are going to do.

1. When making a **lane change**, you must:
  - a. Make sure there is enough room to change lanes by checking traffic in all directions and using your 5-count mirror check;
  - b. Activate your turn signal at least 100 feet in a business or residential area and at least 300 feet in any other area. (NRS 484.343)
  - c. Check mirrors again by rocking your head and body back and forth to make sure no one has moved into your blind spot;
  - d. Make the lane change, keeping both hands on the steering wheel. Do not turn off your turn signal until the lane change is complete;
  - e. Turn off your turn signal.

**Changing lanes while traveling through an intersection is prohibited.**

## Multi-Lane Travel

When driving in multi-lane traffic, school buses should travel in the right lane when possible, unless otherwise posted or your school district specifies differently.

## Passing



School buses are unusually slow, and school bus drivers should not pass other vehicles. If you must pass another vehicle, be very careful. The driver of a school bus should not pass another school bus unless it is parked. At a multi-lane highway intersection where traffic lanes are designated for left and/or right turns, a bus may pass another bus that is waiting to make such a turn. The school bus driver is much more likely to have trouble with other vehicles passing him. The driver should maintain a regular check of traffic and signal intentions early. **Remember, you can not exceed the maximum 55 mph speed limit** when there are students on board.

## Seeing Ahead

To be a safe driver you need to know what's going on all around you. Not looking far enough ahead is a major cause of accidents.

1. It is important to look far enough ahead because stopping or changing lanes can take a lot of space.
2. Safe drivers look 12 to 15 seconds ahead. That means looking ahead the distance you will travel in 12 to 15 seconds. At lower speeds, that's about one block. At highway speeds it's a quarter of a mile. Looking ahead does not mean not paying attention to things that are closer.
3. Look for vehicles coming onto the highway, into your lane, or turning. Watch for brake lights from slowing vehicles.
4. Look for road conditions like hills and curves. Pay attention to traffic signals and signs. If a light has been green for a long time, it will probably change before you get there. Start slowing down and prepare to stop. (CDL 2-19)

## Seeing to the Sides and Rear

1. Not only is it important to see what is in front of you, but it's also important to know what is going on behind and to the sides of your bus.
2. Mirror adjustment is the most important tool to seeing what is to the sides and rear of your bus.
3. Check your mirrors for vehicles on either side and in back of you. In an emergency you need to know if you can make a quick lane change. Use your mirrors to spot passing vehicles. Since there are "blind spots" that your mirrors can not see, checking your mirrors regularly will let you know if vehicles around you have moved into your blind spot.
4. Check your mirrors to keep an eye on your tires. It's one way to check for a fire or flat tire.

## Speed

Driving too fast is a major cause of fatal accidents. You must adjust your speed to driving conditions. These include traction, curves, visibility, traffic, and hills.

## Speed Limits for School Buses

All school buses shall not exceed the maximum posted speed limit. However, Nevada law states that you can not drive a loaded school bus above 55 mph. (NRS 484.365) Check your school district policy on speed limits while driving a school bus that does not have students on the bus.

## Steering the Bus

To steer your bus, hold the steering wheel firmly with both hands at the “ten and two

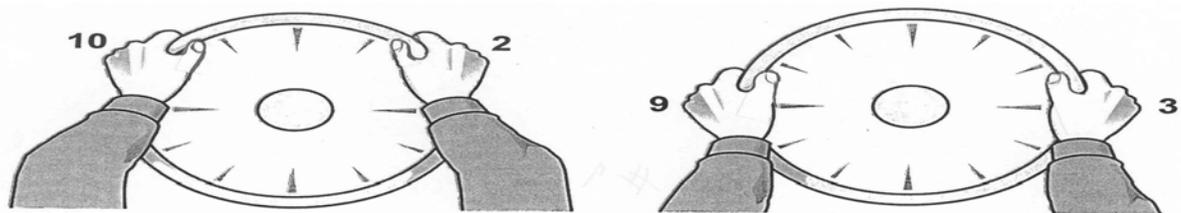


Figure SL1-1. Recommended hand positions on the steering wheel

o'clock” positions with your thumbs on the outside of the steering wheel. Your hands should be on the opposite sides of the steering wheel to prevent the bus from pulling away. Steer smoothly, turning the wheel with a “hand-over-hand” or “push-pull” method, always keeping your thumbs on the outside of the wheel.

## Stopping the Bus

Always use your right foot to brake. A school bus is much heavier than other vehicles, and it requires the driver to begin braking earlier in order to stop smoothly. For a smooth stop, “feather” the brake by slightly reducing pressure on the brake pedal at the instance just before the bus stops rolling. The “feathering” action will release a small amount of brake pressure just before the stop is completed, making a smoother stop. Except in an emergency or to prevent a collision, you should never stop suddenly.

You must always maintain a safe following distance between the school bus and the vehicle traveling in front of you. This following distance should be long enough for you to be able to safely and smoothly stop the bus under any condition.

## Turning the Bus Around

If you must turn the bus around, you should have at least 500 feet of unobstructed visibility in both directions and plenty of clearance for all sides of the bus. Listed below are the 3 methods of turning the bus around:

1. **Forward turn-around:** The safest way to turn around is a forward turn around. Select an area that is large enough to turn around without backing up the bus. Slowly move the bus forward in a wide circle to turn around.
2. **Right side-road turn-around:** The second safest way to turn the bus around is to use a side road on the driver's right side. To do a right side-road turn-around, select a safe, intersecting side road on the right. Drive far enough past the side road to clearly see it behind and to the right of the bus. To turn around, cautiously back the bus onto the side road and then turn into the correct lane of travel.
3. **Left side-road turn-around:** Sometimes you might have no choice for turning the bus around except to use a side road on the left. To perform the left side-road turn-around, make a standard left turn onto a safe, intersecting side road, and then cautiously back onto the main road to turn the bus around. If you must perform this maneuver, move cautiously: Backing onto a main road can be very dangerous.
4. **For safety, remember these important rules for turning the school bus around:**
  - a. Turn around only at places designated by your district transportation department;
  - b. Always keep the bus in the proper lane of travel;
  - c. Observe all the precautions for backing;
  - d. If you must turn the bus around by backing at a passenger stop, make sure all the passengers are on the bus while you are backing. **If you are loading passengers at the turnaround point, load them onto the bus before you back up. If unloading students, you unload them after the turn around point.**
5. **On a divided highway: U-turns on a divided highway are not permitted.**

**Note:** A Divided Highway is defined as a highway divided into two or more roadways by means of a physical barrier or dividing section, constructed so as to impede the conflict of vehicular traffic traveling in opposite directions. (NRS 484.048)

**Note:** This does not include double yellow lines.

6. Inform your school district transportation personnel of any turn-around problems you might notice on your route.

## MANAGING SPACE

To be a safe driver, you need space all around your vehicle. When things go wrong, space gives you time to think and take action. All drivers must manage their space, but it is very important for school buses because they take up more space and require more space for stopping or turning.

### Space Ahead

You need space ahead in case you must stop suddenly. Buses are most often likely to run into the vehicle in front of them. The cause is following too closely. Remember, if the vehicle ahead of you is smaller than yours, it can stop faster than you can.

In order to have enough space ahead, you need at least one second for each 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds below 40 mph. At greater speeds, you must add one second for safety. (CDL 2-27)

To see how much space you have, wait until the vehicle ahead passes a shadow on the road, a pavement marking, or some other clear landmark. Then count off the seconds like this: “1001, 1002, 1003 and so on until you have reached the same spot. Compare your count with the rule of 1 second for every 10 feet of length. If you are driving a 40-foot vehicle and only counted up to two seconds, you are too close. Drop back a little and count again until you have 4 seconds of following distance (or 5 seconds, if you are going over 40 mph).

After some practice, you will know how far back you should be. Remember that the road is slippery, you need much more space to stop. (CDL 2-28)

### Space Behind

You can not stop others from following you too closely. But there are things you do to make it safer.

1. **Stay to the Right:** Heavy vehicles are often tailgated when they can not keep up with the speed of traffic. This often happens when you are going uphill. If a heavy load is slowing you down, stay in the right lane if you can. Going uphill, you should not pass another slow vehicle unless you can get around it safely.
2. **Dealing with Tailgaters Safely:** In a large vehicle, it is often hard to see if a vehicle is close behind you. You may be tailgated:
3. **When you are Traveling Slowly:** Drivers trapped behind slow vehicles often tailgate.

4. **.In Bad Weather:** Many drivers follow large vehicles too closely in bad weather, especially when it is hard to see the road ahead.
5. If you are being tailgated, here are some things you can do to reduce your chances of a crash:
  - a. **Do Not Make Quick Changes:** If you have to slow down or turn, signal early and reduce your speed gradually.
  - b. **Increase Your Following Distance:** Opening up room in front of you will help you to avoid having to make sudden speed or direction changes. It makes it easier for the tailgater to get around you.
  - c. **Do Not Speed Up:** It is safer to be tailgated at a low speed than a high speed.
  - d. **Avoid Tricks:** Do not turn on your taillights or flash your brake lights. (CDL 2-28)

## Space Below

Many drivers forget about the space under their vehicles. That space can be very small when your vehicle is loaded. Railroad tracks can stick up several inches. This is also a problem on dirt roads and unpaved yards when the surface around the tracks can wear away. Do not take a chance on getting hung up halfway across. (CDL 2-29)

## Space Cushion

The term **Space Cushion** refers to the clear area you should have around your vehicle. A space cushion is having an escape route if you need to take evasive action. If you cannot maintain your space cushion in one direction, you should be aware of it and leave yourself an out in another direction.

1. View blind areas, mirror adjustment and mirror usage to monitor traffic.
2. Position your vehicle so that you have the greatest amount of space possible between you and any potential hazards.

## Space Overhead

Hitting overhead objects is a danger. Make sure you always have overhead clearance.

1. Do not assume that the heights posted at bridges and overpasses are correct. Re-paving or packing snow may have reduced the clearances since the heights were posted.
2. If you are not sure you have safe space to pass under an object, go slowly. If you are not sure you can make it, take another route. Warnings are often posted on low bridges or underpasses, but sometimes they are not.
3. Some roads can cause a vehicle to tilt. There can be a problem clearing objects along the edge of the road, such as signs, trees, or bridge supports. Where this is a problem, drive closer to the center of the road.
4. If you have to back into an area, get out and check for overhanging objects, such as trees, branches, or electric wires. It is easy to miss seeing them when you are backing up. (CDL 2-29)

## Space to the Sides

School buses are wide and take up most of a lane. Safe drivers will manage what little space they have. You can do this by keeping your vehicle centered in your lane, and avoid driving alongside others.

1. **Staying Centered in a Lane:** You need to keep your vehicle centered in the lane to keep safe clearance on either side. If your vehicle is wide, you have little room to spare.
2. **Traveling Next to Others:** There are two dangers in driving alongside other vehicles.
  - a. Another driver may change lanes suddenly.
  - b. You may be trapped when you need to change lanes.
  - c. Find an open spot where you are not near other traffic. When traffic is heavy, it may be hard to find an open spot. If you must travel near other vehicles, try to keep as much space as possible between you and them.
3. **Strong Winds:** Strong winds make it difficult to stay in your lane. It is worse for lighter vehicles. It is especially bad coming out of tunnels. Do not drive next to others if you can avoid it. (CDL 2-28)

## Space for Turns

The space around a school bus is important in turns. Because of wide turning and offtracking, large vehicles can hit other vehicles or objects during turns.

1. **Right Turns:** Here are some rules to prevent right turn crashes.
  - a. Turn slowly;
  - b. If your school bus can not make the right turn without swinging into another lane, turn wide as you complete the turn. Keep the rear of your bus close to the curb. This will stop other drivers from passing you on the right.
  - c. Do not turn wide to the left as you start the turn. A following driver may think you are turning left and try to pass you on the right. You may crash into the other vehicle as you complete the turn.
  - d. If you must cross into the oncoming lane to make a right turn, watch out for vehicles coming toward you. Give them room to go by or to stop. Do not back up for them.

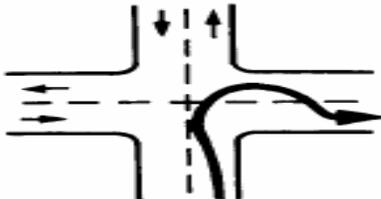


Figure 2-11  
Do This

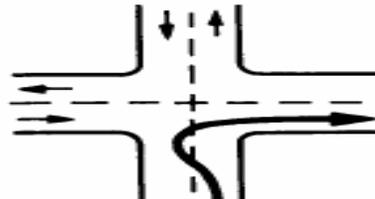


Figure 2-12  
Don't Do This

2. **Left Turns:** On a left turn, make sure you have reached the center of the intersection before you start the left turn. If you turn too soon, the left side of your vehicle may hit another vehicle because of offtracking.
  - a. If there are two turning lanes, always take the right-hand turn lane. Do not start in the inside lane because you may have to swing right to make the turn. Drivers on your left are easier to see. (CDL 2-30)

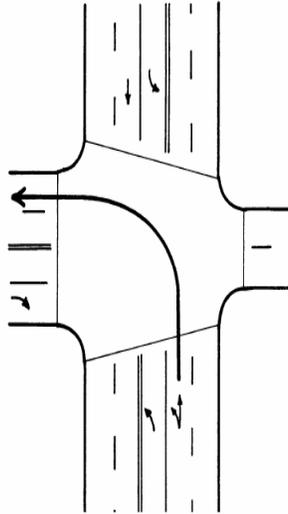


Figure 2-13

If there are two left turn lanes, use the right-hand lane.

## SAFE FOLLOWING AND STOPPING DISTANCES

### Safe Following Distance

Road, weather, and light conditions have a lot to do with safe following distance. As conditions get worse, more stopping distance is needed. If someone is tailgating you, you can increase your own safety by adding a second or two to your count. That protects you from having to make a sudden stop and getting rammed from the rear.

**Following too close is the major cause of accidents and school bus driver tickets.**

### Stopping Distances

There are four things that add up to total stopping distance:

- Perception Distance
- + Reaction Distance
- + Brake Lag Distance (for vehicles with air brakes)
- + Braking Distance
- = Total Stopping Distance

1. **Perception Distance:** This is the distance your vehicle travels from the time your eyes see a hazard until your brain recognizes it. The perception time for an alert driver is 3/4 second. At 55 mph, you will travel 60 feet in 3/4 of a second.
2. **Reaction Distance:** This is the distance traveled from the time your brain tells your foot to move from the accelerator until your foot is actually pushing the brake pedal. The average driver has a reaction time of 3/4 second. This accounts for an additional 60 feet traveled at 55 mph.
3. **Brake Lag Distance:** For vehicles with air brakes, there is approximately a 1/2 second delay in brake response time from the moment when you press the brake pedal to the point when the brakes engage. This delay is caused by the amount of time required for the air to flow through the brake lines. During the average 1/2 second brake lag delay, the vehicle moving at 55 miles per hour will travel an additional 32 feet.
4. **Braking Distance:** This is the distance it takes to stop your vehicle once the brakes are applied. At 55 mph on dry pavement with good brakes it can take a heavy vehicle about 170 feet to stop, about 4 1/2 seconds.
5. **Total Stopping Distance:** Is the total distance it takes to stop your vehicle. At 55 mph it will take about six seconds to stop and your vehicle will travel about the distance of a football field. (60 + 60+ 170=290 feet)
6. **The Effect of Speed on Stopping Distance:** Whenever you double your speed, it takes about four times as much distance to stop and your school bus will have four times the destructive power if it crashes. High speeds increase the stopping distance greatly. By slowing down a little, you can gain a lot in reduced braking distance. (CDL Driver's Manual 2-25)

The Effect of Vehicle Weight on Stopping Distance: The heavier the vehicle, the more work the brakes must do to stop it and the more heat they absorb.

## **TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION DEVICES AND CELL PHONES**

Two-way communication devices are to be used for business purposes only. Prolonged or personal conversations are prohibited.

Talking on cell phones is dangerously distracting. Cell phones are not to be used for personal incoming or outgoing calls. If an emergency occurs and the phone needs to be utilized, the driver must pull over. Refer to your school districts policy on cell phones.

When refueling a bus, there should never be students on board and make sure all electronic communication devices are turned off. (radios, cell phones, pagers)

## **AM/FM RADIOS AND CASSETTE/CD PLAYERS ON THE BUS**

The use of AM/FM radios in a school bus should be minimal. If used, the volume must be kept low enough so that you can hear all that is going on around you. Some school districts have lists of approved radio stations, while some school districts do not permit the use of these devices at all. Be sure to check your school district policy.

When in use, the music shall be for the comfort and calming of your students. The music must be kept at a minimum volume and not be offensive to your students. Refer to your school district policy.

# CHAPTER 4: HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS & DEFENSIVE DRIVING

## INTRODUCTION

Driving is dangerous under the best conditions. There are many hazards that can make your driving conditions dangerous. You need to be aware that light, weather, animals, road conditions, traffic conditions, vehicle condition, and driver condition can lead to accidents. It is important that you drive defensively in order to prevent accidents.

## HAZARDOUS DRIVING CONDITIONS

You can not steer or brake a vehicle unless you have traction. Traction is friction between the tires and the road. There are some road conditions that reduce traction and call for lower speeds.

### Driving in Fog

The best advice for driving in fog, is . You should pull off the road until visibility is better. If you must drive in fog, be sure to:

- 1 Obey all fog related warning signs;
- 2 Slow down before entering fog;
- 3 Turn on all your lights (Headlights should be on low beam);
- 4 Be prepared for emergency stops.



### Driving at Night

Driving at night is hazardous. You can not see hazards as soon as you can in daylight, so there is less time to respond. The problems of night driving involve the driver, the roadway, and the vehicle.

1. **Vision:** People can not see as sharply at night or in dim light. Their eyes need time to adjust to seeing in dim light.
2. **Glare:** Drivers can be blinded for a short time by bright light.
3. **Avoid Blinding Others:** Glare from your headlights can cause problems for

drivers coming towards you. They can also bother drivers going in the same direction as you are, when your lights shine in their rearview mirrors. Dim your lights within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle and following another vehicle within 500 feet.

4. **Avoid glare from Oncoming Vehicles:** Do not look directly at lights of oncoming vehicles. Look slightly to the right at a right lane or edge marking. If other drivers do not put on their low beams, do not try to “get back at them” by putting your own high beams on.
5. **Use High Beams When you Can:** Some drivers make the mistake of always using low beams. This cuts down on their ability to see ahead. Use high beams when it is safe and legal to do so. Use them when you are not within 500 feet of an approaching vehicle.

## DRIVING IN COLD WEATHER



Make sure your vehicle is ready before driving in cold weather. You must perform a pre-trip inspection on your school bus. If you are driving in cold weather, pay extra attention to the following items:

1. **Coolant Level and Antifreeze:** Make sure the cooling system is full and there is enough anti-freeze in the system to protect against freezing;
2. **Defrosting and Heating Equipment:** Make sure the defrosters work. They are needed for safe driving. Make sure the heater is working, and that you know how to operate it;
3. **Wipers and Washers:** Make sure the windshield wiper blades are in good condition. Make sure the wiper blades press against the window hard enough to wipe the windshield clean. Otherwise they may not sweep off snow properly. Make sure the windshield washer works and there is washing fluid contained in the washer reservoir;
4. **Tires:** Make sure your tires are in good working order and have enough tread on your tires;
5. **Tire Chains:** If you need chains, you need to make sure you have the correct number of chains and extra cross-links. Make sure they fit your rear tires. Check for broken hooks, worn or broken cross-links, and bent or broken side chains;
6. **Lights and Reflectors:** Make sure lights and reflectors are clean and working;

7. **Windows and Mirrors:** Remove any ice and snow from the windshield, windows, and mirrors before starting. Use a windshield scraper, snow, brush, and windshield defroster as necessary;
8. **Handholds and Steps:** Remove all ice and snow from handholds and steps to prevent slipping;
9. **Radiator Shutters and Winterfront:** Remove ice from radiator shutters. Make sure the winterfront is not closed too tightly. If the shutters freeze shut or the winterfront is closed too much, the engine may overheat and stop;
10. **Exhaust System:** Exhaust system leaks are especially dangerous when cab ventilation may be poor (windows rolled up, etc.). Loose connections could permit carbon monoxide to leak into the bus. Carbon Monoxide gas will cause you to be sleepy, and in large amounts can kill you. (CDL 2-35)



## DRIVING IN HOT WEATHER

1. **Tires:** Check the tire mounting and air pressure. Inspect the tires every 2 hours or 100 miles. Air pressure increases with temperature. Do not let air out or the pressure will be too low when the tires cool off. If a tire is too hot to touch, remain stopped until the tire cools off;
2. **Engine Oil:** Engine Oil helps keep the engine cool, as well as lubricating it. Make sure there is enough engine oil. Make sure to keep checking oil gauge;
3. **Engine Coolant:** Before starting out, make sure that the engine cooling systems has enough antifreeze according to the engine manufacturer's directions. When driving, check the water temperature or coolant temperature gauge from time to time to make sure it remains in the normal range;

Some buses have sight glasses that permit you to check the coolant level while the engine is hot;

4. **Engine Belts:** Check the conditions of all the belt;
5. **Hoses:** Check the conditions of all belt and hoses;

## Light Conditions

Light problems are the result of too much or too little light. During the daytime there is usually enough light to see well. This is not always true at night. Some areas may have bright streetlights, but many have poor lighting. Less light means you will not be able to see hazards as well as in the daytime. There are many accidents at night involving pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, and animals. Always remember that if you are having trouble seeing other vehicles, other drivers are probably having trouble seeing you.

## Other Hazards

1. **Blocked vision:** People who can't see others are a very dangerous hazard. Be alert for drivers whose vision is blocked. Vans, loaded station wagons, and cars with the rear window blocked are examples. Rental trucks should be watched carefully. Their drivers are often not used to the limited vision they have to the sides and rear of the truck. In winter, vehicles with frosted, ice covered, or snow covered windows are hazards. Vehicles may be partly hidden by blind intersections or alleys. If you only can see the rear or front end of a vehicle but not the driver, then he or she can't see you. Be alert because he/she may back out or enter into your lane. Always be prepared to stop or yield right of way;
2. **Cell phones:** Cell phones are a major distraction for both the driver using the phone and for the other vehicles on the road. Watch for people distracted by a cell phone;
3. **Children:** Children tend to act quickly without checking traffic. Children playing with one another may not look for traffic and are a serious hazard;
4. **Distractions:** People who are distracted are hazards. Watch for where they are looking. If they are looking elsewhere, they can't see you. But be alert even when they are looking at you. They may believe that they have the right of way. Look for people reading, putting on make-up, talking on cellular phones and cars with children in them. They all can be distracted and become a hazard;
5. **Shoppers:** People in and around shopping areas are often not watching traffic because they are looking for stores or looking into store windows;
6. **Talkers:** Drivers or pedestrians talking to one another may not be paying close attention to the traffic;
7. **Workers:** People working on or near the roadway can be a hazard. The work creates a distraction for other drivers and the workers themselves may not see you. (CDL Driver's Manual 2-43)

## ROAD HAZARDS

1. **Accidents:** Accidents cause very hazardous conditions. People involved in the accident may not look for traffic. Passing drivers tend to look at the accident. People often run across the road without looking. Vehicles may slow or suddenly stop;
2. **Animals:** Animals are very hazardous to drivers. You need to watch for animals running into the street. When driving in mountainous areas you need to watch for deer or other animals that cross the highway.
3. **Conflicts:** You are in conflict when you have to change speed and/or direction to avoid a crash. Conflicts occur at intersections where vehicles meet, at merges (such as turnpikes and ramps) and where there are needed lane changes (such as the end of a lane, forcing a move to another lane of traffic). Other situations include slow moving or stalled traffic and accident scenes.
4. **Confused drivers:** Confused drivers often change direction suddenly or stop without warning. Confusion is common near freeway or turnpike interchanges and major intersections. Tourists unfamiliar with the area can be very hazardous. Clues to tourists include car-top luggage and out-of-state license plates. Confused drivers will hesitate, drive slowly, use their brakes often or stop in the middle of the intersection. You may also see drivers who are looking at street signs, maps, and house numbers. These drivers may not be paying attention to you;
5. **Drop Offs:** Sometimes the pavement drops off sharply near the edge of the road. Driving too near the edge can tilt your vehicle towards the side of the road. This can cause the top of your vehicle to hit roadside objects (signs, tree limbs). It can also be hard to steer as you cross the drop off, going off the road, or coming back on;
6. **Delivery Trucks:** Delivery trucks can present a hazard. Packages, or vehicle doors often block the driver's vision. Driver's of step vans, postal vehicles, and local delivery vehicles often are in a hurry and may suddenly step out of their vehicle or drive their vehicle into the traffic lane;
7. **Disabled Vehicle:** Careless drivers changing a tire or fixing an engine often do not pay attention to the danger that roadway traffic presents. Jacked up wheels or raised hoods are keys to these hazards;

8. **Drivers in a Hurry:** Drivers may feel your school bus is preventing them from getting where they want to go on time. Such drivers may pass you without a safe gap in the oncoming traffic, cutting too close in front of you. Drivers entering the road may pull in front of you in order to avoid being stuck behind you, causing you to brake;
9. **Driver Body Movement:** Drivers look in the direction they are going to turn. You may sometimes get a clue from a driver's head and body movements that a driver may be going to make a turn even though the turn signals are not on. Drivers making over-the-shoulder checks may be going to change lanes; (CDL 2-44)
10. **Impaired and Drunk Drivers:** Impaired or drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs are a hazard to themselves and to you. Be especially alert around closing times for bars. Watch for drivers who have a hard time staying in their lane or maintaining speed, stopping without reason, or show other signs of being under the influence;
11. **Foreign Objects:** Watch for things that have fallen on the road. These object can damage your tires, wheel rims, electrical and brake lines. They can get caught between the dual tires and cause severe damage. Some obstacles that appear harmless (cardboard boxes or hoses), but actually contain solid material that can damage your bus;
12. **Ice cream trucks:** Someone selling ice cream can be a hazard. Children may be nearby and may not see you;
13. **Off Ramps/On Ramps:** Freeway and turnpike exits can be hazards for a school bus driver. These ramps often have speed limits posted that are safe for automobiles, but are not safe for school buses. Off ramps that exit downhill and turn at the same time can be especially dangerous. Make sure you are going slow enough before you get to the curved part;
14. **Parked vehicles:** Watch for people who may be getting out of their parked car, or may be entering traffic from a parked spot. Watch for movement inside the vehicle;
15. **Pedestrians and bicyclists:** Pedestrians, bicyclists, walkers and joggers may be on the road with their backs to the traffic, so they can't see you. Sometimes, they wear portable stereos with headsets, so they can't hear you either. This can be dangerous. On rainy days, pedestrians may not see you because of hats or umbrellas. They may be hurrying to get out of the rain and may not pay attention to the traffic;

16. **Poor Lighting:** In the daytime there is usually enough light to see well, This is not true at night. Some areas may have bright street lights, but many areas will have poor lighting. On some roads you may have to depend on your headlights. Drive slower when lighting is poor to be sure you have enough stopping distance;
17. **Slow Drivers:** Driver's who fail to maintain normal speed are hazards. Seeing slow moving vehicles early can prevent a crash. Some vehicles are slow by nature (mopeds, farm machinery, construction machinery, tractors, etc.). Some of these will have the "slow moving vehicle" symbol to warn you.
18. **Stopped buses:** Be careful of a stopped bus. Passengers may cross in front of or behind the bus;
19. **Talkers:** Drivers and pedestrians talking to one another may not be paying attention to the traffic;
20. **Work Zones:** When people are working on the road, it is a hazard. There may be narrower lanes, sharp turns, or uneven surfaces. Other drivers are often distracted and drive unsafely. Workers and construction vehicles may get in the way. Drive slowly and carefully near work zones. Use your four-way flasher or brake lights to warn drivers behind you. (CDL 43)

## SLIPPERY SURFACES

1. **Slippery Surfaces:** It will take longer to stop and it will be harder to turn without skidding when the road is slippery. You must drive slower to be able to stop. Wet roads can double stopping distance. If you are driving 55 mph on a wet road, you need to reduce your speed by 1/3(35 mph). On packed snow or ice, reduce your speed by half or more.
2. **Identifying Slippery Surfaces:** Sometimes it is hard to know if the road is slippery. Here are some signs the road is slippery.
  - a. **Shaded Areas:** Shady parts of the road will remain icy and slippery long after open areas have melted;
  - b. **Bridges:** When the temperature drops, bridges will freeze before the road will. Be especially careful when the temperature drops to 32 degrees;
  - c. **Melting Ice:** Slight melting will make ice wet. Wet ice is much more slippery than ice that is not wet;

- d. **Black Ice:** Black ice is a thin layer that is clear enough that you can see the road underneath it. It makes the road look wet. Anytime the temperatures is below freezing and the road looks wet, watch out for black ice;
- e. **Vehicle Icing:** An easy way to check for ice is to open the window and feel the front of the mirror, mirror support, or antenna. If there is ice on these, the road surface is ~~probably~~ starting to ice up;
- f. **Just After Rain Begins:** Right after it starts to rain, the water mixes with oil left on the road by vehicles. This makes the road very slippery.
- g. **Hydroplaning:** In some weather, water or slush collects on the road. When this happens, your vehicle can hydroplane. It's like water skiing: the tires lose their contact with the road and have little or no traction. You may not be able to steer or brake.

If the rear tires start to skid, push in the clutch to let them turn freely. Hydroplaning can occur at speeds as low as 30 mph if there is a lot of water. Hydroplaning is more likely if tire pressure is low or the tread is worn. Be careful driving through puddles. The water is often deep enough for hydroplaning.

You can regain control by releasing the gas pedal and pushing in the clutch. This will slow the vehicle and let the wheels turn freely. If the bus is hydroplaning, do not use the brakes to slow down! (CDL 2-25)

- 3. When driving on slippery surfaces, do not use cruise control. School buses equipped with cruise control loose control of their bus on a slippery surface.

## **SPEED AND TRAFFIC FLOW**

When driving in heavy traffic, you should drive with the flow of traffic without going over the speed without going over the speed limit. Vehicles going the same direction at the same speed are not likely to run into one another. (CDL 2-26)

## **SPEED ON DOWNGRADES**

Your vehicle's speed will increase on downgrades because of gravity. Your most important objective is to select and maintain a speed that is not too fast for the:

- 1. Length of grade;

2. Steepness of grade;
3. Road conditions;
4. Weather.

Look for warning signs indicating the length and steepness of the grade. You must use the braking effect of the engine to control your speed on downgrades. The braking affect of the engine is greatest when the transmission is in the lowest gears. Shift the transmission to a low gear before starting down the grade and use the proper braking. (CDL 2-26)

## Traffic Factors

The school bus interferes with traffic because of its size, slow speed, and frequent stops in the roadway. When driving in heavy traffic, reduce your speed and increase your following distance.

1. **Emergency Vehicles:** Police cars, ambulances and fire trucks are considered emergency vehicles when they sound a siren and lights. At the approach of an emergency vehicle from the front or rear, slow down, move to the right, and stop. Proceed only after the emergency vehicle has passed or until you are told to proceed by a police officer.
2. **First on the Scene of an Accident Involving Other Vehicles:** If you are the first at the scene of an accident involving other vehicles, and **your bus was not involved** in the accident, continue your route. In cases where no one else is around, notify the proper authorities and report the accident as outlined by your school district policy. Be aware of Nevada's Good Samaritan Law.

### GOOD SAMARITAN LAW

Any person in this state, who renders emergency *aid*, gratuitously and in good faith, is not liable for any civil damages as a result of any act or omission, not amounting to gross negligence, by him/her in rendering emergency care or assistance, or as a result of any act or failure to act, not amounting to gross negligence, to provide or arrange for further medical treatment for the injured person. (NRS 41.500)

# DEFENSIVE DRIVING

## Skid Control and Recovery

A skid happens whenever the tires lose their grip on the road. This is caused in one of four ways:

1. **Over-braking:** Braking too hard and locking up the tires. Skids also can occur when using the speed retarder where the road is slippery;
2. **Over-steering:** Turning the tires more sharply than the vehicle can turn;
3. **Over-acceleration:** Supplying too much power to the drive tires, causes them to spin;
4. **Driving Too Fast:** Most serious skids result from driving too fast for road conditions. Drivers who adjust their speed to the driving conditions over-accelerate and have to over-brake or over-steer.
5. **Rear Tire Skids:** The most common skid is one in which the rear tires lose traction through excessive braking or acceleration. Skids caused by acceleration usually happen on ice, snow, loose gravel or sand. They can be easily stopped by taking your foot off the accelerator.

Rear tire braking skids occur when the rear drive tires lock. Because locked tires have less traction than rolling tires, the rear tires will slide sideways in an attempt to “catch up” with the front tires.

6. **Correcting a Rear-Tire Braking Skid:** To correct a rear-tire skid you need to:
  - a. **Stop Braking:** This will let the rear tires roll again, and keep them from sliding any further. (If using a manual transmission and on ice, push in the clutch to let the wheels turn freely);
  - b. **Turn Quickly:** When a vehicle begins to slide sideways, quickly steer in the direction you want the vehicle to go down the road. You must turn the wheel quickly.
  - c. **Countersteer:** As your vehicle turns back on course, it has a tendency to keep right on turning. Unless you turn the steering wheel quickly the other way, you may find yourself skidding in the opposite direction. When countersteering, do not overcorrect! (CDL 2-50)

**If you have to steer to avoid an accident, brake!**

## **Steering to Avoid a Crash**

Stopping is not always the safest thing to do in an emergency. When you have enough room to stop, you may have to steer to avoid a crash. In many cases you can turn to miss a hazard faster than you can stop. However, top-heavy vehicles such as school buses may turn over. Here are some basic rules if you have to steer to avoid a crash.

1. **Keep both hands on the steering wheel:** To turn quickly you must have a firm grip on the steering wheel with both hands. The best way to have both hands on the wheel in the event of an emergency is to keep them there all the time.
2. **Know How to Turn Quickly and Safely:** A quick turn can be made safely, if it is done the right way. Here are some points that safe drivers use:
  - a. Do not apply the brake while you are turning. It is very easy to lock your wheels while turning. If that happens, you may skid out of control.
  - b. Do not turn any more than needed to clear whatever is in your way. The more sharply you turn, the greater the chances of a skid or rollover.
  - c. Be prepared to “countersteer”, that is, to turn the wheels back in the other direction, once you have passed whatever was in your path. (CDL 2-45)
3. **Know Where to Steer:** If an oncoming driver has drifted into your lane, moving to the right is best. If that driver realizes what has happened, the natural response will be to return to his or her own lane.

If something is blocking your path, the best direction to steer will depend on the situation.

- a. If you have been using your mirrors, you’ll know which lane is empty and can be safely used;

- b. If the shoulder is clear, going right may be best. No one is likely to be driving on the shoulder but someone may be passing you on the left. You will know if you have been using your mirrors;
  - c. If you are blocked on both sides, a move to the right may be best. At least you won't force anyone into an opposing traffic lane and a possible head-on collision.
4. **Leaving the Road:** In some emergencies, you may have to drive off the road. It may be less risky than facing collision with another vehicle.

Most shoulders are strong enough to support the weight of a large vehicle and, therefore, may offer an available escape route. Here are some guidelines to follow if you do leave the road.

- a. **Avoid Braking:** If possible, avoid using the brakes until your speed has dropped to about 20 mph. Then brake very gently to avoid skidding on a loose surface;
  - b. **Keep One Set of Wheels on the Pavement if Possible:** This will help maintain control;
  - c. **Stay on the Shoulder:** If the shoulder is clear, stay on it until your vehicle has come to a stop.
5. **Returning to the Road:** If you are forced to return to the road before you can stop, do the following:
- a. Hold the wheel tightly and turn sharply enough to get right back on the road safely. try to edge gradually back on the road. If you do, your tires might grab unexpectedly and you could lose control.
  - b. When both front tires are on the paved surface, "countersteer" immediately. The two turns should be made as a single "steer-countersteer" move. (CDL 2-45)

## Stopping Quickly

If someone suddenly pulls out in front of you, your natural response is to hit the brakes. This is a good response if there's enough distance to stop and you use the brakes correctly.

You should brake in a way that will keep your vehicle in a straight line and allow you to turn if it becomes necessary. You can use either the “controlled braking” or the “stab braking” method.

1. **Controlled Braking:** With this method, you apply the brakes as hard as you can without locking the wheels. Keep steering wheel movements very small while doing this. If you need to make a larger steering adjustment or if the wheels lock, release the brakes. Re-apply the brakes as soon as you can;
2. **Stab Braking:**
  - a. Apply your brakes all the way;
  - b. Release brakes when wheels lock up;
  - c. As soon as the wheels start rolling, apply the brakes fully again. It can take up to 1 second for the wheels to start rolling after you release the brakes, If you re-apply the brakes before the wheels start rolling, the vehicle won't straighten out.
3. **Jam the Brakes:** Emergency braking does not mean pushing down on the brake pedal as hard as you can. That will only keep the wheels locked up and cause a skid. If the wheels are skidding, you can not control the vehicle. (CDL 2-47)

## Brake Failure

Brakes kept in good condition rarely fail. Most hydraulic brake failures occur for one of two reasons: Loss of hydraulic pressure and brake fade on long hills.

1. **Loss of Air Hydraulic Pressure:** When the system won't build up pressure, the brake pedal will feel spongy or go to the floor. Here are some things you can do:
  - a. **Downshift:** Putting the vehicle into a lower gear will help to slow the vehicle.
  - b. **Pump the Brakes (for hydraulic brakes only):** Sometimes pumping the brake pedal will generate enough hydraulic pressure to stop the vehicle.

- c. **Use the Parking Brake:** The parking or emergency brake is separate from the hydraulic brake system. Therefore, it can be used to slow the vehicle. However, be sure to press the release button or pull the release lever at the same time you use the emergency brake so you can adjust the brake pressure and keep the wheels from locking up.
- d. **Find an Escape Route:** While slowing the vehicle, look for an escape route such as an open field, side street, or escape ramp. Turning uphill is a good way to slow and stop the vehicle. Make sure the vehicle does not start rolling backward after you stop. Put it in low gear, apply the parking brake, and, if necessary, roll back into some obstacle that will stop the vehicle.
- e. **Brake Failure on Downgrades:** Going slow enough and braking properly will almost always prevent brake failure on long downgrades. Once the brakes have failed, however, you are going to have to look outside your vehicle for something to stop it.
- f. **Escape Ramps:** Your best hope is an escape ramp. If there is one, there will be signs telling you about it. Use it. Ramps are usually located a few miles from the top of the downgrades. (CDL 2-48)

## Tire Failure

It is important that you recognize tire failure quickly because you only have a few seconds to react. The major signs of tire failure are:

1. **Sound:** The loud “bang” of a blowout is an easily recognized sign. Because it can take a few seconds for your vehicle to react, you might think it some other vehicle. But any time you hear a tire blow, you must assume it is yours and prepare to stop;
2. **Vibration:** If the vehicle thumps or vibrates heavily, it may be a sign that one of the tires has gone flat. With a rear tire, that may be the only sign you get;
3. **Feel:** If the steering feels “heavy,” it is probably a sign that one of the front tires has failed. Sometimes, failure of a rear tire will cause the vehicle to slide back and forth or “fishtail.” However, dual rear tires usually prevent this.

**If you have tire failure, do not brake!**

If any of these warning signs occurs, you could have tire failure. You should do the following things:

1. **Hold the Steering Wheel Firmly:** If a front tire fails, it can twist the steering wheel out of your hands. The only way to prevent this is to keep a firm grip on the steering wheel with both hands at all times.
2. **Stay Off the Brake:** It's natural to want to brake in an emergency. But, braking when a tire has failed could cause loss of control. Unless you are about to run into something, stay off the brake until the vehicle has slowed down.
3. **Check the Tires:** After you have come to a stop, get out and check all the tires. Do this even if the vehicle seems to be handling all right. If one of the dual tires goes, the only way you may know is by getting out and checking yourself.

## RAILROAD CROSSINGS

In 2006 alone, there were 2,897 highway-rail grade crossing collisions in the United States. Every 90 minutes a vehicle and train collide in the United States. A motorist is 30 times more likely to die in a crash involving a train than in a collision involving another car and over 50 percent of crashes at public grade crossings occur where active warning devices (gates, lights, bells) exist. (Operation Lifesaver 3)



### Disqualification for Railroad-Highway Crossing Violations

A driver will be disqualified for not less than 60 days if the driver is convicted of a first violation of a railroad highway grade crossing violation, 120 days if during any three year period for a second violation and one year if during any three year period for a third or subsequent railroad highway grade crossing violations in separate incidents. (CDL 1-3)

**All school buses must stop at all railroad crossings, except exempt crossings!**

## Types of Railroad Crossings



1. **Passive (Uncontrolled) Crossings:** This type of crossing does not have any type of traffic control device. You must stop at these crossings and follow proper procedures. Passive crossings require you to recognize the crossing, search for any train using the tracks and decided if there is sufficient space to cross safely. Passive crossings have yellow circular advance warning signs, pavement markings and crossbucks to help you recognize that it is a crossing. The passive crossbuck sign is the most common sign at public highway-rail intersections. It has two crossing white boards with the words railroad crossing.
2. **Active (Protected) Crossings:** This type of crossing has a traffic control device installed at the crossing to regulate traffic. These active devices can include flashing red lights, flashing lights with bells or flashing red lights with bells and gate. (CDL 10-7)
3. **Exempt:** The exempt crossing sign placed below the crossbuck informs drivers of school buses that a stop is not required, except when a train is coming or occupying the crossing.

**NEVER attempt to race a train to a crossing.  
It is easy to misjudge a train's speed and distance, making it  
appear to be moving more slowly than it actually is.**

## Advance Signs of Railroad Crossings

These signs warn the motorist that the road crosses a railroad track ahead.

1. **Advance Warning:** A yellow circular ADVANCE WARNING sign warns drivers that the road crosses railroad tracks ahead. It reminds you to slow down and prepare to stop.
2. **Pavement Markings:** On paved roads, the yellow circular Advance Warning Sign also alerts drivers that the road crosses railroad tracks ahead. (Operation Lifesaver)

## Procedures for Crossing Railroad Tracks

A school bus is one of the safest vehicles on the road, but it does not have a chance against a train. Because of the train's size and weight, it can not stop quickly. A driver shall not cross a railroad track unless you first:

## Approaching the Crossing

1. Scan your surroundings and check for traffic behind you. Observe traffic far enough in advance to avoid trapping cars or rear-end collisions with the bus.
2. **Slow Down:** Move to the farthest right as possible without leaving the roadway. If there is a pullout lane use it. Reduce your speed and activate your turn signal at least 200 feet prior to reaching the track. Check your school district policy!
3. Activate your hazard lights approximately 200 feet before the crossing.

## At the Crossing

1. **Bring the bus to a full and complete stop** no less than 15 feet and no more than 50 feet from the closest rail.
2. Turn off all noisy equipment (fans, 2 way radios, am/fm radios), and have the students be quiet.
3. **Open the service door and driver's window**, and **LOOK** and **LISTEN in both directions** along the track or tracks for approaching trains.
4. If the view of the track or tracks for a distance of 1000 feet in either direction is not clear or is obstructed in any way, you may not proceed across the tracks until the driver has made sure no train is approaching.
5. In the event that a train has passed over the crossing, a bus driver shall not drive the bus onto the track or tracks until the train has sufficiently cleared the crossing, and the driver is certain there are no trains approaching on an adjacent track.

## Crossing the Track

1. Close the service door, while continuing to look and listen for an approaching train;
2. Cross the tracks in a low gear as quickly as possible. Do not change gears or stop while crossing;
3. Turn off your hazard lights.

## Special Situations at Railroad Crossings

1. **Bus Stalls on Tracks:** If your school bus stalls or is trapped on the tracks, get everyone out of the bus and off the tracks immediately. Move everyone far from the bus at an angle, which is both away from the tracks and towards the train.
2. **Police Officer or Flagger at the Crossing:** If a police officer or flagger is at the crossing, obey their directions. If you believe the signal is malfunctioning, contact your dispatcher.
3. **Obstructed View of Tracks:** Do not cross the tracks unless you can see far enough down the track to know for certain that no trains are coming. Be especially careful of “passive” crossings. Even if there are active railroad signals that indicate the tracks are clear, you must look and listen to be sure it is safe.
4. **Containment or Storage Areas:** If the bus won't fit, commit! Know the length of your bus and the size of the containment area at highway-rail crossings on the school bus route, as well as any crossing you encounter in the course of a school activity trip. When approaching a crossing with a signal or stop sign on the opposite side, make sure there is enough room to completely clear the railroad tracks before crossing. (CDL 10-9)
5. **Weather conditions:** During wet, stormy or foggy weather, before placing part of the bus on the tracks, the driver must know for sure that the crossing can be made safely. Any use of flares, etc., in addition to warning signals or devices maintained at such railroad crossings, must be taken as an additional warning of danger.
6. **Management of passengers:** When any school bus must stop to cross any railroad track, all passengers must be silent until the crossing is complete. The driver in whatever manner deemed suitable shall give a signal for silence.
7. **Never drive onto a track until you can drive all the way across.**
8. **Never stop the bus on the track for any reason.**

**NEVER drive on a railroad track until you can drive all the way across, and NEVER stop the bus on the track!**

## THE SMITH SYSTEM

The Smith System is a five step program that has been proven to be very effective in preventing accidents.

1. **Aim High in Steering:** The development of proper seeing habits is the key to making appropriate decisions. The 15-second eye-lead time is the distance ahead that your eyes see a hazard. Even though as a school bus driver, you sit high, this does not automatically lead to aiming high with your eyes. High aim steering involves distance, not height. It's a conscious, constant habit of scanning far ahead.

**The average driver looks only three to six seconds ahead. This is low aim steering, which does not give enough** time to acquire information, make decisions and respond to hazards. Low aim steering deals exclusively with the nearest objects, which makes bad driving habits like tailgating, last-second lane changes and excessive braking very hazardous.

2. **Get the Big Picture:** The Big Picture includes everything you can see ahead, to the rear, and to the sides during every second of your progress. Proper seeing include frequent use of your mirrors. By getting the big picture, you can avoid vision barriers that may interrupt your view ahead.

Although increasing your following distance creates opportunities for other vehicles to cut in front of you, letting others have that space, has little if any impact on your schedule.

3. **Keep your eyes moving:** Many drivers do not get the "big picture" because they use their full seeing capabilities. Peripheral vision allows most people to see 90 degrees to each side, while central vision only allows us to see 3 degrees directly to the front. This 3 degrees of central vision is what we see clearly, while the remainder is not in sharp focus. In order to see the peripheral area, you must keep your eyes moving. Frequent eye movement lets you take maximum advantage of peripheral vision.
4. **Leave yourself an out:** The first 3 items have no value unless you have a way to escape from a hazard. So, make sure to leave yourself an out. Having a space cushion requires planning and adjustment to change as you move through traffic. The safest position in traffic is where few or no objects surround you. The objective is to surround yourself with space. If a four-sided cushion is impossible, work to keep at least the front open. Then try to re-open at least one side to maintain maneuvering room. On streets with parked vehicles at curbside, use the lane nearest to them if an alternative lane is available. If you must travel in the lane next to an occupied curb, scan for signs of danger. The size of your bus may allow small vehicles too follow too closely. Encourage them to pass. When stopped behind

another vehicle, stay about 20 to 25 feet back. This allows you to pull away without backing up if a vehicle ahead of you stalls.

5. **Make Sure They See You:** The Big Picture includes people who may not be aware of your presence. You must establish eye contact at the earliest possible moment in order to make your presence known. Although eye contact is emphasized, it does not guarantee safety. It indicates that people see you, but it does not promise that they will do what you want them to do.

(Smith System Is no Accident. Driver Guide)

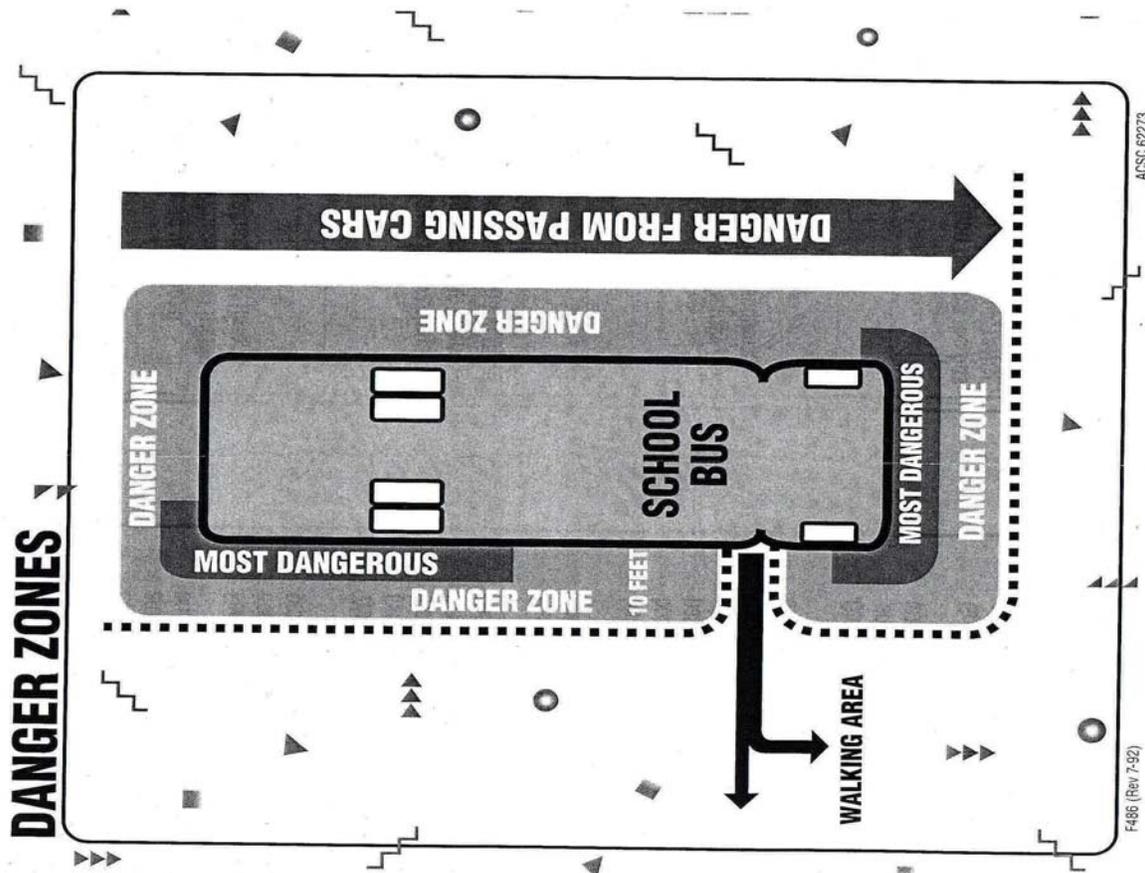
# CHAPTER 5: LOADING AND UNLOADING



## DANGER ZONES

School buses are the safest form of transportation. Children are safest on the school bus, but are at a greater risk of being struck in the loading and unloading zone. The area surrounding the school bus is known as the **DANGER ZONE/DEATH ZONE** because it is the area where children entering and exiting the school bus are at greatest risk of being hit by a motor vehicle, or accidentally run over by their bus driver.

Educating children on how to be safe pedestrians is fundamental to school bus safety. Beginning with their first step onto a school bus, children must learn how to safely arrive at the school bus stop, board the bus, behave during the bus ride, exit the bus, and arrive home safely. (NHTSA: School Bus Safety 5 and 7)



## SYSTEM OF LIGHTS, CROSSING ARM AND STOP ARMS

Every school bus must be equipped with a system of flashing red lights that the driver shall activate when the bus **is stopped** to load or unload pupils.

Every school bus must be equipped with a crossing control arm which is attached to the front of the bus and causes students to walk far enough in front of the bus so the bus driver can easily see them. The driver shall activate the device when the bus is stopped to load or unload pupils. (NRS 392.410)

**Note:** Crossing arms are not required for a school bus, which is **used solely** to transport pupils with special needs who are individually loaded and unloaded in a manner, which does not require them to walk in front of the bus. (NRS 392.410)

## SCHOOL ZONES AND SCHOOL CROSSING ZONES

### School Zones

A school zone is a section of street or streets, which are adjacent to school property. (NRS 484.149)

### School Crossing Zones

A school-crossing zone is the section of streets **not** adjacent to school property that pupils cross while following a designated walking route to school. (NRS 484.1485)

1. A person shall not drive a motor vehicle at a speed in excess of 15 mph in an area designated as a school zone except:
  - a. On a day on which school is not in session;
  - b. During the period from a half hour after school is no longer in operation to a half hour before school is next in operation;
  - c. If the zone is designated by an operational speed limit beacon, during the hours when the pupils of the school are in class and the yellow lights **are not** flashing in the manner which indicates that the speed limit is in effect. (NRS 484.366)

## SCHOOL BUS STOPS

Any driver of a vehicle, when meeting, from either direction, a school bus whose system of flashing lights and crossing arm have been activated for the purpose of loading or unloading students, shall bring his vehicle to an immediate stop and shall not attempt to proceed until the school bus has turned off the system of flashing lights and crossing arm.



## **When Drivers are Required to Stop for the School Bus**

1. The driver of a vehicle on a divided highway with a physical barrier need not stop when meeting a school bus on the opposite side of the road. The driver of a vehicle need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus where traffic is controlled by a traffic officer;
2. Any person who violates this law is guilty of a misdemeanor, and for a third or subsequent offense within 2 years, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 and your driver's license must be suspended for not more than 1 year. For a second offense within 1 year, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$250 nor more than \$500 and your driver's license must be suspended for 6 months. (NRS 381.357)

## **LOADING PROCEDURES**

### **Approaching the Stop**

When approaching a school bus stop, you must follow these procedures:

1. Each school district establishes official routes and official school bus stops. You shall not change the location of a bus stop without written approval from your school district.
2. Evaluate the stop as far back as possible and approach at a slow rate using extreme caution. Look for pedestrians, traffic, or people who may not belong at the school bus stop;
3. Activate amber loading lights and begin slowing the bus 300 feet before the loading zone;
4. Approach students with care, giving due consideration to the surface on which you are going to stop.
5. Start Five-Count Mirror check, starting and ending on traffic side about 75 to 100 feet before stop;
6. Bring the school bus to a full stop with the front bumper at least 10 feet away from the students. This forces the students to walk to the bus so you have a better view of their movements;
7. Set brake, place transmission in neutral-cover service brake with foot, open door to activate the red lights, stop arm and crossing control arm;

8. If you have a manual door, you will need to open the door;
9. Check mirrors once again to assure that all traffic is stopped using Five-Count Mirror system check;
10. Signal students to begin loading the school bus. Make sure to count all the students while loading;

## Loading Procedures

**When in doubt, check it out!**

1. Perform a safe stop as described above. Students should wait in a designated location for the school bus, facing the bus as it approaches;
2. When you are ready to begin loading, the bus driver signals the students to being boarding;
3. Continue to check mirrors, using 5 count mirror check;
4. Have students board the bus slowly, in single file, and using the handrail. The dome light should be on when loading in the dark;
5. Wait until all students are seated and facing forward before moving the bus; (NRS 392.400)
6. Check mirrors once again to assure that all traffic is stopped, using Five-Count Mirror check;
7. When all students are accounted for, prepare to leave by:
  - a. Close the door, which turns off the red lights, stop arm and cross arm;
  - b. Place the bus in gear and release the parking brake;
  - c. Check mirror once again, using the 5-Count mirror check;
  - d. When safe, activate your turn signal and move the bus back into traffic and continue your route. (CDL 10-4)

**Students are not permitted to cross behind the bus.**

## Unloading Procedures



Unloading students is far more dangerous than loading them. You must make sure that all your students get safely across the street and out of the danger zone. Unloading procedures are similar to loading procedures except for the following differences listed below:

1. Have the students remain seated until told to exit by the driver;
2. Have students exit in an orderly fashion, counting them as they exit;
3. Observe students as the step from the bus to see that all move promptly away from the danger zones;
4. Check mirrors to make sure that students are not returning to the bus;
5. If you can not account for a student outside the bus, secure the bus and get out and check around and underneath;
6. If a student must cross the street, instruct them to wait 10 feet to the right front of the bus until the bus driver has checked all the mirrors for oncoming traffic. Signal students by a sweeping motion of your arm, that it is safe to cross the street. Make sure they cross in a straight line, not at an angle until they are safely across the street. Continually instruct your students on safe crossing procedures;

**A driver's supervision doesn't just start when students are on the bus!**

## Special Dangers of Loading and Unloading Zones

1. **Dropped or Forgotten Objects:** Always focus on students as they approach the bus and watch for any who disappear from sight. Students may drop an object near the bus during loading and unloading. Stopping to pick up the object, or returning to pick up the object, may cause the student to disappear from the driver's sight at a very dangerous time. Students should be told to leave any dropped items and move to a safe place out of danger and attempt to get the driver's attention to retrieve the object;
2. **Handrail Dangers:** Students have been injured or killed when clothing, accessories, or even parts of their body gets caught in the handrail or door as they exit the bus. You need to closely observe all students exiting the bus to confirm that they are in a safe location prior to moving the bus;

3. **Schools:** Another area where accidents happen is the loading and unloading zones at the schools. You as a driver must train your students not to push and shove other students when they get on or off the bus. Teach the students to use handrails and go directly to their seats and face forward at all times;
4. **Students Left on the Bus:** If you leave a student on your bus at the end of your route, you will be subject to disciplinary action and possible termination. Make sure to walk your bus and check for sleeping or hiding students before you return to the bus yard.

**After your last stop,  
proceed out of the danger zone  
to a safe area  
and  
completely check bus for students!**

# CHAPTER 6: STUDENT MANAGEMENT



## INTRODUCTION

As a professional school bus driver, your job involves more than just operating the bus and transporting students. You are also responsible for monitoring the behavior of students. Student management on the school bus has fast become the largest problem confronting school bus drivers today. You can help maintain a safe and positive atmosphere in your bus by treating students courteously and with respect, knowing how to handle discipline situations effectively, and by observing and teaching students the basic rules for safety on or near the school bus.

An effective student management program is a collaborative effort between parents, students, school bus drivers, school administrators, law enforcement and social service agencies.

## THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER'S ROLE

**Since you are often the only adult with whom students have regular contact with while riding the bus, your words and actions can have a tremendous influence.** If you behave in a friendly but dignified manner, you can establish a positive relationship. **Know your students individually and learn their names.** Your interest in the children will help you gain the confidence of your riders and their parents. If you are firm, but fair in your treatment of students, your students will trust you and respect your authority.

As a school bus driver, you are in the people business. Children are unpredictable and often possess personality characteristics that are part of their home environment. It is imperative that you set an example for your children.

Student supervision and management is one of the major tasks of a school bus driver. You must be able to recognize potential problems and take quick, effective action. If you overlook the violations of one student, you will lose the respect of the other students. You must learn to find the desirable medium between being too lenient or overly harsh.

### School Bus Driver Responsibility

1. Be familiar with and abide by all rules, policies and procedures relating to pupil transportation;
2. Be familiar with all assigned routes and designated school bus stops;

3. Recognize the importance of establishing rapport with students, parents, supervisors, and school administrators when working to ensure proper student conduct;
4. School bus drivers must conduct themselves in a professional, dignified and respectable manner;
5. Drivers should never become closely acquainted with students. You must maintain a friendly, but firm adult/student relationship. You should never put your hands on a student, nor should you grab, slap or shake a student;
6. **Sarcasm is not** an effective tool for passenger control;
7. Drivers need to instruct students on proper behavior, consequences of improper behavior, general policies regarding riding the bus, and emergency evacuation drills;
8. Drivers need to maintain order, safety, and be sure to secure the rights of others on the school bus and at the school bus stop. You can do this by:
  - a. Minimizing interior noise;
  - b. Controlling passenger movement;
  - c. Requiring an orderly entrance and exit;
  - d. Eliminating movement or potential movement of objects;
  - e. Requiring silence at railroad crossings;
  - f. Prohibiting transportation of unauthorized materials.
9. Drivers need to handle minor infractions with school district approved discussions and consequences. In instances of serious or recurring misconduct, follow school district policy;
10. Be aware that you represent the school system, and you should present a positive image in **DRESS, HYGIENE, LANGUAGE AND MANNER** while on duty;
11. Be considerate and patient with all children, especially the young or special needs students. These children are usually entering school for the first time and they are usually frightened by all the new experiences. It is important to make these children feel safe;

**Maintain your  
sense of humor!**

12. Drivers are responsible for keeping the bus clean. This includes route and extra-curricular trips;
13. It is highly recommended that you keep a daily log of events;
14. Be aware of your school districts policy.



## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Since poor student behavior on the school bus can be distracting to the driver and contribute to accidents, it is important to establish rules for the student to follow. It is important that all students and parents know and understand the rules. They need to understand that these rules were established for the safety of the students who ride the bus. Students and parents must not only understand the rules, but also understand the consequences of unacceptable behavior.

1. Students must:
  - a. Know the rules and know they are responsible for their actions;
  - b. Be respectful of the rights of other students;
  - c. Be aware that transportation can be denied to students who act inappropriately.
  - d. Be aware of the dangers involved in the loading & unloading zone, including the dangers involved with loose clothing, clothing accessories and personal items that can drop under the bus;
  - e. Go directly to their seats and remain seated until instructed to stand and unload the school bus;
  - f. Refrain from loud conversation, unnecessary noise and boisterous conduct;
  - g. Profanity, eating, drinking, tobacco use, glass containers, weapons, drugs, alcohol, or any other items that could distract the driver are prohibited;
  - h. Keep all body parts inside the school bus;
  - i. Athletic footwear equipped with metal cleats or spikes **cannot** be worn on the school bus;
  - j. Face forward and keep their feet on the floor in front of their seats;

- k. Never tamper with or block emergency exits;
- l. Keep their hands off other children and their possessions. Hitting, pushing, spitting, biting and rough behavior will not be tolerated;
- m. **Keep the aisle clear at all times.** Books, lunch boxes, instruments and book bags must be placed under the seat, on the students lap or on the seat next to them;
- n. Tampering or destruction of school property is prohibited and that students can be prosecuted;
- o. Remain absolutely silent while the school bus is stopped at railroad crossings.

As a new school bus driver you will learn that the after school run is generally more demanding on the driver when compared to the morning run. After being in a classroom all day, students will have a desire to release tension. You will need to develop a higher tolerance for the after school run, without allowing flagrant abuse of the privilege to ride the school bus.

## PARENT AND GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES



- 1. Understand and support district rules and policies, regulations and school bus safety;
- 2. Assist children in understanding safety rules and encourage them to abide by them;
- 3. Recognize their responsibilities for the actions of their children;
- 4. Support safe riding practices and reasonable discipline efforts;

## QUIET TIME

The practice of “Quiet Time” is a great way to start off your route. “Quiet Time” is usually observed for a short period of time in the morning before arriving at school, and in the afternoon while pulling away from the school. The driver usually determines the length of “Quiet Time”. There are other reasons “Quiet Time” can be observed:

- 1. In emergency situations a driver may call “Quiet Time” in order that the students can hear important instructions;
- 2. Students generally will load a school bus in a more controlled manner during Quiet Time, and it also helps to ensure that the trip starts off in a calm manner.

## **VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEMS**

Many school districts now utilize video monitoring systems in order to protect students and drivers. It should not replace the discipline policy, the authority of the driver, or the responsibility of school officials. It is simply a tool to aid the driver and district administrators.

If there is a video monitoring system in your school bus, you must:

1. Provide ongoing notification that students and drivers are subject to being videotaped on the school bus to monitor student and driver behavior;
2. Provide notification to parents that ~~of~~ all students are subject to videotaping by the school district.
3. Cameras should be scheduled on a rotation basis so as not to select only certain buses. Based on the number of incidents, misconduct or the seriousness of these reports, video monitoring of a bus route may be done more frequently. The transportation supervisor may decide if more frequent monitoring is needed;
4. When action is taken as a result of information obtained from videotape, the driver, supervisor, school administrator, student, and parents will be contacted. A meeting regarding the incident may be necessary. The videotape can be used as evidence in that meeting. All requests for review shall be made in writing.

## **GANG AWARENESS**

Gangs have become commonplace in most cities. Kids are entering gangs as early as elementary school. A gang consists of 2 or more people who commit crimes for the gang, in the name of the gang, and for the benefit of the gang.

The school bus and school bus stop can be dangerous areas. Several gang members can be in the same space with each other. As a driver, it is your job to assure that every student who rides the school bus arrives at their destination safely. So it is important that you have some basic information about gangs.

### **Why Kids Join Gangs**

The primary reason kids join gangs is “peer fear.” Kids are afraid, they join a gang to have “back-up” in case someone is after them. They join to gain what they believe will be respect. They join because they believe the lifestyle is glamorous. They join because they are longing for attention and love.

Some kids will claim affiliation to a gang in their neighborhood but not at school, and others will claim affiliation at school but not in their neighborhood. Kids gravitate towards the group of kids that appeal to them most, as did generations past. The social groups are turf gangs, taggers, skaters, stoners, smokers, rebels, tagbangers, crews, gothics, white supremacist, skinheads, occult, drinkers, straight edge, and other kids who do not join any of the above. All kids want to identify with someone or something.

## **Taggers**

Taggers are kids that go around writing graffiti on walls. Their “artwork” is very distinctive with bubble style letters and lots of color. The “piece” is usually very artistic and can cover entire walls. Taggers may dress like gangsters, but they do not commit the same type of crimes as street gangs. They generally are not violent and do not fight rival taggers. They tend to be middle or upper class students. They’re “artwork” will usually have “Sur 13” or “Sur XIII” somewhere with the graffiti. There will usually be a “Mickey Mouse style roll call” with the names of the fellow gang members as part of the graffiti.

## **Gang Colors**

You would need to be an expert on gangs in order to identify one by dress. Since most people have intricate knowledge of gangs and what they wear, assumptions are often made regarding how a gang member dresses. For instance, most people believe all kids who wear baggy or “sagging” pants are gang members, or kids wearing Oakland Raiders or Chicago Bulls jackets. The truth is, baggy pants and oversized shirts are the fad now. The same holds true for kids wearing “brown pride” style shirts, or shirts that have “Northside,” “Westside,” “Southside” or “Eastside” on them. None of this is truly gang affiliated clothing. Most people believe any kid who wears a hairnet or a female nylon stocking on his head is a gang member.

## **What Do Gang Members Wear**

Nearly all kids know what a true gang member wears. They know how a real gang member wears their clothes. Kids who are not in gangs know how far to go before another gangster labels them as a gang member.

1. Although the examples listed below are good indicators of a gang member, be careful not to stereotype:
  - a. Gang members will wear a cloth-type belt with the initial of the gang they are in on the belt buckle;
  - b. Some gangs shave their heads;

- c. Gang members wear “locs” (50’s style sunglasses) with the initials of their gang on the lenses of the glasses. They then will put white-out on the lens part that was carved. The writing may be the name of their gang, initials of the gang, “Sur 13” or “Sur XIII,” or their monikor (street name);
- d. Gang members tattoo themselves with the same;
- e. Gang members will graffiti their notebooks, school papers, etc.;
- f. Nearly all gangs have a monikor (street name) they go by;
- g. Gang members will generally flash hand signs to rival gang members;
- h. Gang members exclusively wear the colors of their gang. Their entire wardrobe consists of the colors of the gang. i.e.; wear nail polish reflecting the color of their gang on their pinky finger, wear shoe laces the color of their gang on their tennis shoes or shave small lines in only one of their eyebrows;
- i. Female gangsters will wear beads corresponding with the color the gang uses to identify itself with. They may also wear the exclusive colors of their gang day after day. Their entire wardrobe consists of the colors of the gang;
- j. Hispanic gangsters wear predominately black colors with the other color of their set. Black gangsters generally wear either red, blue, or green depending on if they are showing affiliation to the West Coast influences. The red showing affiliation to a “blood” set, and blue showing allegiance to a “crip” set. Just about every color imaginable is symbolic to a particular gang.

What is important to remember is that one or two of the mentioned items DOES NOT mean that the person is in a gang. Gangs have three non-verbal forms of communication; hand signs, graffiti and tattoos.

## **Gangs and the Bus Driver**

Gang members generally bother kids who are not in gangs. Gang members are usually more interested in fighting rival gangsters. They usually associate only with fellow gang members. So it is important to set and enforce rules on the school bus and at the school bus stop. Gang members need to know that the school and school bus stop are neutral zones and that gang violence will not be tolerated.

When speaking to a suspected gang member, do not disrespect the gang, their family members or friends. Speak one on one with the student and do not belittle them. Treat them with the same respect all students deserve.

Make sure that you report all incidents that appear to be suspicious to the proper school district official. Listen to the kids on your bus, they often know what is going to happen long before the school district official or police are made aware of a problem. Many school districts also have 24 hour tip lines that students should be aware of if they are afraid to come to you.

## **TRANSPORTATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN**

### **The McKinney-Vento Act**

The McKinney-Vento Act addresses the issue of homeless Children. It requires school districts to provide transportation to school for students experiencing homelessness in three situations.

1. School districts must provide transportation to the school of origin upon the request of a parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, upon request of the liaison. This is true no matter if the district provides transportation for other students or in other circumstances;
2. Requires districts to provide transportation comparable to that provided to housed students;
3. School Districts must eliminate barriers to school enrollment and retention of students experiencing homelessness.

**Drivers need to be sensitive to homeless children  
and keep their living conditions confidential.**

## **Who is Considered Homeless**

1. Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
2. Children who share housing with others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
3. Children living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative housing;
4. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
5. Abandoned in hospitals
6. Awaiting foster care placement;
7. Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live;
8. Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations;
9. Migratory children living in any of the above circumstances.

## **Homelessness and Mobility**

High mobility caused by loss of housing, limits on length of stay in shelters; lack of shelter space, bad living arrangements and domestic violence. The impacts of mobility are:

1. Harmful to the student academically, socially, emotionally and affects their psychological well being;
2. The average income for homeless families is 46% of the poverty line. Families can not afford transportation;
3. Youth on their own also lack transportation;
4. School and school buses are a safety net for these students. It offers stability, normalcy, skills for avoiding homelessness as adults.

# CHAPTER 7: EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY AND FIELD TRIPS

## INTRODUCTION

Athletic events and field trips are different from your regular daily routes so you will need to make special preparations and follow different procedures.

## REGULATIONS FOR DRIVE TIME

Nevada Revised Statutes (392.360) require that a driver shall not operate a vehicle for more than 10 hours in a 15-hour period. The time spent operating, inspecting, loading, unloading, repairing and servicing the vehicle and waiting for passengers must be included in determining the 15-hour period. After 10 hours of operating a vehicle, the driver must rest for 10 hours before he again operate a vehicle. Federal regulations require that you include all duties performed for which you are compensated as on duty-time. (FMVSS 395.2.9)

## DRILLS TO PRACTICE EVACUATION

Nevada requires that emergency evacuation drills be conducted twice each year. However, if you are driving a school bus for a field trip or extra curricular activity by school bus, you must conduct an emergency evacuation drill at the beginning of each such trip by school bus.

1. When conducting the emergency evacuation drills you must instruct chaperones, parents and students on:
  - a. The responsibility of a passengers on a school bus, including where and how to use the emergency exit doors and windows during an evacuation;
  - b. Procedures to safely enter and exit a school bus;
  - c. Appropriate behavior and conduct while on a school bus;
  - d. The location of emergency equipment on a school bus;
2. Any regularly scheduled extra-curricular or sports trip where the same students are in attendance each time are only required to conduct an emergency evacuation drill at the beginning of the first trip;

3. Each school district shall adopt regulations regarding the practice of emergency evacuation procedures and safety programs, including the practices and participation in such programs at the beginning of any field trip by school bus. (NRS 392.375)

## **ON-DUTY AND DRIVING TIME**

On-duty time is all the time a driver begins to work or is required to be in readiness to work, until the time you are relieved from work.

1. On duty time shall include:
  - a. All time at a facility or on any public property, waiting to be dispatched;
  - b. All time inspecting equipment, servicing or conditioning any commercial motor vehicle;
  - c. All driving time. Defined as all time spent driving a commercial motor vehicle;
  - d. All time, other than driving, in or upon any commercial motor vehicle;
  - e. All time needed for loading and unloading, supervising or assisting the loading and unloading of students, and any time waiting in readiness to operate the commercial motor vehicle;
  - f. All the time used for repairing, obtaining assistance, or remaining in attendance upon a disabled commercial motor vehicle;
  - g. All the time spent providing a breath sample or urine specimen, including travel time to and from the collection site, in order to comply with a random or post-accident testing;
  - h. Performing any other work in the capacity of, or in the employ or service of, a common, contracted or private motor carrier.
2. FMVSS standards do not permit you to be on duty for more than 60 hours in 7 consecutive days. (FMVSS 395.2)

## **INFORMATION YOU'LL NEED**

Listed below is information you will need to know from your district office before taking an extra-curricular trip:

1. **Be familiar with the bus:** Make sure you are familiar with the bus you are taking on the trip and be sure to do a thorough pre-trip inspection prior to departing;
2. **Location:** Make sure to know the location where you are going and the location where you are picking up passengers. Get there early for equipment loading and last minute instructions. Get to know your passengers;
3. **Time of departure and arrival:** Know the time you are departing and when you are scheduled to arrive at your destination. Remember that you cannot drive a loaded school bus faster than 55 mph, no matter what state you travel too. Communicate this to your passengers;
4. **Chaperone(s):** Know who your chaperones will be. Explain the safety and discipline rules on the bus. Make sure your chaperones are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures, you'll need their help in the event of an emergency. Chaperones should convey this information to their students and aides. **However, as the driver, you are the final authority on the bus.** If anything goes wrong on the bus, submit a written report to your supervisor;
5. **Passengers:** You will need a list of names, addresses, date of birth and phone numbers, provided by your school, of everyone you are transporting. In case of accident, the police will require this information;
6. **Extra Equipment:** Know what type of extra equipment the trip requires you to carry. Since some school buses have luggage racks and state law does not allow you to block an aisle, you will need to be sure that you have proper storage space for extra equipment. Drivers shall not permit any greater quantity of freight, express, or baggage in vehicles than can be safely and conveniently carried without causing discomfort or unreasonable annoyance to passengers. **In no event shall aisles, doors, steps, or emergency exits be blocked;**
7. **Route to be followed:** Get maps, let your district personnel know the route you'll be taking and your estimated time of arrival. Make sure someone is expecting you at your destination. Check on weather conditions;
8. **Rest Stops:** During your trip you should attempt to stop every 2 hours to refuel, allow your students to use the restroom or to eat. Every time your passengers leave the bus, arrange a time and place for re-boarding. Make sure to account for all passengers prior to departure. Inspect your school bus to make sure it is in safe operating condition. **If you leave the bus unattended it is important to check for vandalism.** Check for cut tires, sharp objects under the tires, severed brake lines, spark plug wires crossing, broken light bulbs, etc.;
9. **Stop at all inspection stations:** You are required to stop at all inspection stations even though your school bus is inspected by the Nevada Highway Patrol twice a year. Be prepared to show that you conducted your pre-trip inspection;

10. **Check yourself:** Make sure to check yourself throughout the trip to make sure you are in safe operating condition. Never exceed your own ability to operate the bus for your passengers are much too precious to endanger by pressing to finish a trip on schedule. Remember you can only operate a bus 10 hours in a 15-hour period, then you are required to rest for 10 hours.

## **PROBLEMS THAT CAN OCCUR ON EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY OR FIELD TRIPS**

As a driver, you may be called upon to drive special trips with various groups. These may occur between regular home-to-school routes, late afternoon, evenings, or on weekends. Driving extra-curricular activity or field trips can present problems that are different from regular home-to-school routes.

1. Here is a list of just a few things that you should consider before being assigned a field trip:
  - a. Being assigned to drive a bus that you are not used to driving;
  - b. Transporting different age groups;
  - c. Driving long periods at one time;
  - d. Driving roadways and freeways and in and out of cities that you may not be familiar with;
  - e. Driving at night;
  - f. Driving in all kinds of weather and road conditions;
  - g. Transporting extra equipment;
  - h. Working with chaperones, teachers, and coaches;
  - i. Adjusting to the activities and the spirit of the trip;
  - j. Handling emergencies that may occur away from home;

**Never fuel a bus with passengers on board and turn off all electronic communication devices.**

2. Federal school bus accident reports of field trips indicate that over 50% of major accidents involving fatalities occur as a result of:
  - a. Drivers unfamiliar with the bus;
  - b. Drivers unfamiliar with the route being traveled;
  - c. Misuse of braking system descending grades;
  - d. Drivers' fatigue;
  - e. Faulty equipment;
3. Whether a field trip is wonderful or dreadful depends largely upon how well it is planning. The longer the trip, the longer it takes to properly plan.
4. Remember that you are the final authority on the bus and the responsibility is yours. Never place the bus in an area which is unsuitable or tolerate any behavior which would interfere with the safe operation of the bus.

**School bus drivers are ultimately responsible for the bus. You have the final authority and responsibility for the safe operation of the school bus and the safe arrival of your students.**

# CHAPTER 8: EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND FIRST AID

## INTRODUCTION

You never know when an accident will occur. It is always best to be prepared for any emergency. Basic First-Aid is important information for any school bus driver. The immediate care given to the victim of an accident until professional medical assistance is available can save lives.

You are not expected to be a paramedic; however, all of us should take first aid courses when available. It is your responsibility to check the First-Aid Kit and Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit on a regular basis to assure that it is present and sealed. Make sure to familiarize yourself with it's contents and how each item is used. If you feel the medical emergency is beyond your knowledge, call for emergency assistance.

## GENERAL SAFETY RULES

No given procedure can cover every type of emergency that may arise. However, the procedures given here should be followed as closely as possible:

1. Get students completely out of danger before attempting any other action;
2. Do not endanger yourself by fighting a fire, follow your training to the fullest;
3. Do not allow students to re-enter the bus until the fire department has checked the bus and assured you that the fire, minor or not, has been extinguished;
4. If a mechanical failure results in a breakdown or possible Out-of-Service, do not take the mechanics word;
5. Do a pre-trip inspection;
6. If told to do so by the proper authority, move the bus;
7. Make sure the bus is empty of passengers when fueling.

## EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES

Each school bus in Nevada is required to carry the following equipment in case of an emergency.

### Flashing Red Lights

every school bus operated for the transportation of pupils to and from school bus be equipped with a system of flashing red lights that the driver shall operate when the bus is stopped to load/unload pupils, and in times of emergency or accident. (NRS 392.410)

### First-Aid Kit

Each school bus must have a removable moisture-proof first-aid kit in a readily accessible place in the driver compartment. It shall be properly mounted (and secured) and identified as a first-aid kit. The location for the first-aid kit shall be marked.

Minimum contents include:

- 2- 1 inch x 2½ yards adhesive tape rolls
- 24- Sterile gauze pads 3x3 inches
- 51- 3/4x3 inches adhesive bandages
- 8- 2 inch bandage compress
- 10- 3 inch bandage compress
- 2- 2 inch x 6 feet sterile gauze roller bandages
- 2- Non-sterile triangular bandages minimum 39x 35x 54 inches with safety pins
- 2- Sterile gauze pads 36x36 inches
- 3- Sterile eye pads
- 1- rounded-end scissors
- 1- Pair medical grade gloves
- 1- Mouth-to-mouth airway.

**Note:** Your school district will provide you with a box of regular bandages to use for those minor injuries. This prevents unnecessary opening of the first aid kit. (Nevada School bus Standards, page 26)

### Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit

Each school bus shall have a removable and moisture-proof body fluid clean-up kit accessible to the driver. It shall be properly mounted and identified as a body fluid clean-up kit.

Minimum contents include:

- 2- Packet of a solution that contains a red-10 dye and that is used to solidify bodily fluids
- 2- Antiseptic wipes or antiseptic liquid
- 2- Antimicrobial wipe
- 2- Disposal germicidal wipe
- 1- Pair of medical grade gloves
- 1- Safety shield;
- 1- \*Red bag that is marked “biohazard;” and
- 1- Scrapper/scooper.

\* **Note:** As used in this section, “biohazard” means a biological agent that may be hazardous to the person or the environment. (Nevada School Bus Standards, page 26)

## **Emergency Warning Devices**

Each school bus shall contain at least three (3) reflectorized triangle road-warning devices mounted in an accessible place. These devices must meet requirements in FMVSS 125. (Nevada School Bus Standards, page 25)

## **Fire Extinguisher**

1. The bus shall be equipped with at least one 5 or 6 pound UL-approved pressurized, dry chemical fire extinguisher. Extinguisher shall be mounted (secured) in a bracket, located in the driver’s compartment and readily accessible to the driver and passengers and have a current certification tag. A pressure gauge shall be mounted on the extinguisher and be easily read without moving the extinguisher from its secured position;
2. The fire extinguisher shall have a total rating of 2A10BC or greater. The operating mechanism shall be sealed with a type of seal that will not interfere with the use of the fire extinguisher. (Nevada School Bus Standards, page 25)

## **Belt Cutters**

Each school bus that is set up to accommodate wheelchair/mobility aids or other assistive restraint devices that utilize belts, shall contain at least one belt cutter properly secured in a location within reach of the driver while belted into his/her driver’s seat.

## **Spare Fuses**

When required, at least 1 spare fuse or other loaded protective devices, if the devices used are not of a reset type of each kind and size used.

## Storage of Emergency Equipment

Any of the emergency equipment may be mounted in an enclosed compartment, provided the compartment is labeled in not less than 1 inch letters, identifying each piece of equipment. (School Bus Standards, page 27)

## How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

1. **Engine Fires:** With an engine fire, turn off the engine as soon as you can. **DO NOT** open the hood if you can avoid it. Shoot extinguishers through louvers, radiator, or from the underside of the vehicle.
2. **Other fires:** Here are some rules to follow when putting out a fire.
  - a. Only try to extinguish a fire if you know what you are doing and it is safe;
  - b. When using the extinguisher, stay as far away from the fire as possible;
  - c. Point the fire extinguisher at the base of the fire and use a sweeping motion. Do not aim the extinguisher at the flames;
  - d. Position yourself upwind. Let the wind carry the extinguisher to the fire rather than carrying the flames to you;
  - e. Continue until whatever was burning has been cooled. Absence of smoke or flame does not mean the fire is completely out or cannot restart.

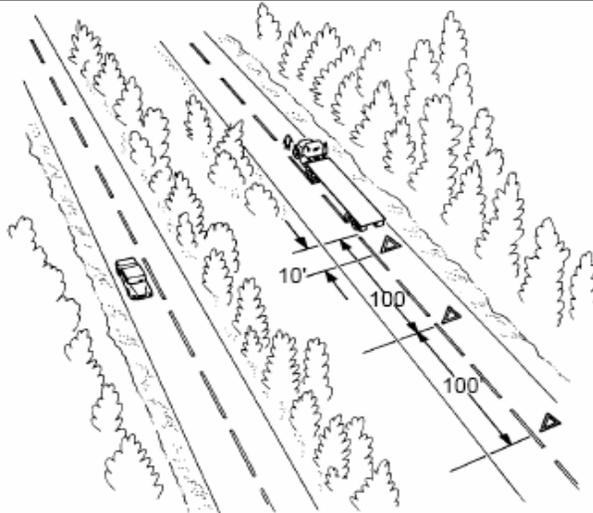
## Placement of Emergency Warning Devices

Each school bus must be equipped with at least three warning devices that are secured and in an accessible place in the school bus. Any emergency equipment stored on a school bus must be in an enclosed compartment and if the compartment is labeled with letters that are not less than 1 inch in height and that indicate the contents of the compartment.

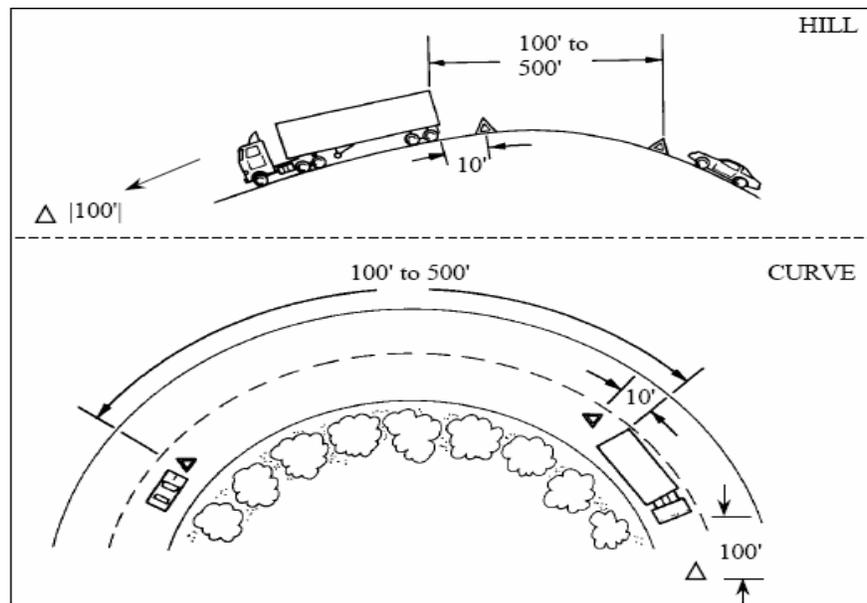
Federal law requires that whenever a school bus is stopped on the highway or shoulder of a highway for any cause other than necessary traffic stops.

1. If you must stop on a road or the shoulder or any road, you must put out your emergency warning devices within ten minutes. Place your warning devices at the following locations.
  - a. If you stop on a two-lane road carrying traffic in both directions or an undivided highway, place warning devices within 10 feet of the front or rear corners to mark the location of the vehicles and 100 feet behind and ahead of the vehicle, on the shoulder or in the lane you stopped in; (See figure 1)
  - b. Back beyond any hill, curve, or other obstruction that prevents other drivers from seeing the vehicle within 500 feet (Figure 2).
  - c. If you must stop on or by a one-way or divided highway, place warning devices 10 feet, 100 feet and 200 feet toward the approaching traffic. (CDL 2-22)

***Figure 1***  
***Warning Device Placement-Two Lane Traffic in Both Directions***



***Figure 2***  
***Warning Device Placement-Obstructed View***



## EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

### Reasons for Emergency Evacuations

There are few situations you may encounter that would require the emergency evacuation of the school bus. Listed below are some reasons that would require an actual emergency evacuation:

1. **Unsafe position:** When the bus is stopped because of an accident, mechanical failure, road conditions, or human failure, the driver must determine, based on road and weather conditions, whether it is safer for pupils to remain on or evacuate the bus;
2. **In the path of a train:** If the final stopping point is the path of a train or adjacent to railroad tracks;
3. If the bus stops in a position where there's **a risk that the bus may change position** and increase the danger. (A bus coming to rest near a body of water or a spot where it could go over a cliff.) The driver must be certain that the evacuation is carried out in a manner which affords maximum safety for the pupils;
4. The position of the bus is such that there is **danger of collision**;

5. **Sight Distance:** If the stopped position of the bus is not visible for a distance of 300 feet or more. A position over a hill or around a curve where such visibility does not exist.

## Emergency Evacuation Instruction and Drills

At least twice each school year, a school district shall practice the evacuation of a school bus and to receive instruction in the responsibility of a passenger of a school bus to use the emergency exit doors on the bus during an evacuation.

## Evacuation Procedures

The bus driver must quickly evaluate any emergency situation and determine the immediate steps to be taken. In some instances, it may be best to keep passengers on the bus. Fire, a traffic accident, or another serious incident may require that all persons riding on a school bus leave the bus as soon as possible. To prevent injury or lessen the chance of further injuries, every rider of a school bus must be trained in emergency evacuation procedures.

1. The school bus driver must always be obeyed in carrying out drills or a real evacuation. Here are some suggested evacuation procedures:
2. Park the bus as close to the shoulder of the road as possible;
3. Set the parking brake, turn off the engine, and activate the hazard lights;
4. Stand facing the rear of the bus;
5. Give the command “remain seated” and “prepare to evacuate;”
6. Turn toward the front of the bus;
7. Move backward to the first occupied seats;
8. Starting with either the left or the right seat;
9. Touch the shoulder of the person nearest to the aisle to indicate that the passengers in that seat are to move off;
10. Keep the passengers in the opposite seat seated by holding your hand, palm out in a restraining gesture, until the aisle is clear;
11. Move out the passengers in the opposite seat, using the same signal;

12. Move backward up the aisle, repeating this procedure at each seat until the bus is empty;
13. Check the bus from the very back seat to the front, making sure it is empty;
14. Have evacuating students move to a safe distance at least 100 feet from the vehicle and keep them there as a group, away from any dangerous area;
15. Continue to check for students while removing the fire extinguisher or first-aid kit, if needed;
16. Contact the proper authorities and your school district supervisor.

## **Emergency Evacuation Procedures for a Fire at the Front of the Bus**

A fire at the front of the bus may make the regular entrance unusable and an alternative route of evacuation necessary. Normally the front entrance will be available, but the emergency door can be used as the primary exit. Evacuation through both doors is fastest, with the rear monitor working forward seat by seat and the driver working backward seat by seat. Newer buses also have emergency window exits in the middle of each side and an emergency door exit on the left and right side. The windshield and also be pushed out to facilitate evacuation. If the bus



rear windows can  
is on its side, roof

## **ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

1. Although accidents are supposed to be rare, when they occur it is important to follow certain procedures. The driver must know and take steps to avoid further confusion, injury and property damage in the event of an accident. Procedures may vary according to the situation, so remember to be flexible.
  - a. Stop the bus and do not move it without permission of the investigating officer;
  - b. Set the brake, turn off ignition and activate hazard lights;
  - c. Remain calm and survey the scene;
  - d. Account for all students and render first aid as required;
  - e. Notify the proper authorities;

- f. Evacuate bus if necessary;
- g. Place emergency warning devices;
- h. Secure the scene;
- i. Collect the names of students and establish a seating chart. Law enforcement officials will require a seating chart at the time of the accident;
- j. Do not discuss the accident;
- k. Do not release any of your students unless authorized.

**Remain calm, and  
DO NOT MOVE  
THE BUS!**

**Any statement you make about the collision can be used in court. Do not discuss causes of the crash with others involved. Do not admit guilt; let the case be handled by the proper authorities.**

## BREAKDOWNS

Despite the best preventative care your school district mechanics provide, breakdowns cannot always be avoided. If these breakdowns occur while school children are on board, it can be especially dangerous. The most important thing to remember is to not leave the bus while there are children on board.

1. If you experience a breakdown, you should:
  - a. Slow down, activate your turn signal, move to the far right lane if possible. You can also pull off onto a shoulder in order to prevent an accident;
  - b. Set the parking brake, turn off the ignition, set hazard lights, and remove the keys;
  - c. Evacuate the bus only if necessary; (See emergency evacuation in this chapter)
  - d. Contact the appropriate official as outlined by your school district;
  - e. Place emergency warning devices as described in “Emergency

Warning devices” later in this chapter;

- f. Follow school district official instructions.

**Never leave students unattended to seek assistance**

## DUTY TO RENDER AID

1. Nevada requires the driver of any vehicle in an accident resulting in injury, death, or damage to any vehicle or property, shall:
  - a. Give his name, address and the registration number of the vehicle he is driving, and upon request, provide his license to any person injured in such an accident;
  - b. Give such information and upon request, surrender such license to any police officer at the scene of the accident or who is investigating the accident;
  - c. Render to any person injured in such an accident reasonable assistance, including the carrying, or the making of arrangements for the carrying, of such person to a physician, surgeon or hospital for medical or surgical treatment if it is apparent that such treatment is necessary, or if such carrying is requested by the injured person; (NRS 484.223)
  - d. School bus drivers may not be required to render aid unless they are involved in the accident. Check your school district Policy.

**In an emergency situation, your bus may be commandeered by law enforcement.**

## NEVADA'S GOOD SAMARITAN LAW

Nevada law states that any person, who renders emergency aid, gratuitously and in good faith, is not liable for any civil damages as a result of any act or omission, not amounting to gross negligence, by him/her in rendering the emergency care or assistance, or as a result of any act or failure to act, not amounting to gross negligence, to provide or arrange for further medical treatment for the injured person. (NRS 41.500)

**Thorough hand washing is the best tool to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.**

## UNIVERSAL STANDARDS

### First Steps in Providing First-Aid

In order to provide appropriate care in an emergency situation you must first survey the situation and provide first aid to those who need it most. The accident can involve one or more persons and can range in levels of seriousness. The first step is to survey the situation and provide appropriate first-aid to those who need it, while contacting officials for professional assistance.

### Universal Standards for the Spread of Infectious Diseases by Body Fluids

Every school bus driver needs to be aware of universal precautions, which considers every person, all blood and most body fluids to be potential carriers of infectious diseases.

Mouth-to-mouth airways are designed to isolate you from contact with a victim's saliva and body fluids. Avoid using unprotected mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

### Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit

Each School Bus shall have a removable and moisture proof body fluid clean-up kit accessible to the driver. It shall be properly mounted and identified as a body fluid clean-up kit. (See Emergency Equipment)

### Cleaning Body Fluid Spills

When cleaning up body fluid spills, you need to do the following:

1. **Wear disposable gloves:** You need to wear disposable gloves whenever you might come in contact with blood or potentially infectious materials. If gloves are not available, or unanticipated contact occurs, hands and other affected areas should be washed with soap and running warm water immediately after contact. If not possible, wipe your hands thoroughly with the germicidal wipe provided in the Body Fluid Clean-Up kit;
2. **Small spills can be cleaned with paper towels or tissues:** After the bodily fluid is removed, use clean paper towels, soap and water or disinfectant wash to clean the area. For larger spills you can use the packet of solution to solidify body fluids in your Body Fluid Clean-Up kit;

3. Remove gloves and place into the plastic bag with the waste and other cleaning materials. Upon returning to the bus garage, remove the plastic bag and dispose in accordance with school district policy;
4. The driver must wash their hands with soap and running warm water for at least 30 seconds.
5. It is always a good idea to carry hand sanitizer, extra gloves, kitty litter and band aides.

**You may not know if a student has an infectious disease because state law prohibits disclosing the name of anyone with an infectious disease.**

## **FIRST-AID**

The ability to apply proven first-aid procedures could be vital to the life and emotional well-being of someone who is injured or illness. It is strongly suggested that you complete the American Red Cross/American Heart Association course in first-aid or certified CPR course.

In an emergency situation, students relate bleeding to death. Take immediate action to reduce fear and cover any bleeding wound from the student's vision. Take control of the situation by staying calm, using simple language and soft speech, giving directions to students and projecting a caring, reassuring attitude towards all students.

### **First-Aid Kits**

Each school bus must have a removable, moisture-proof first aid kit in a readily accessible place in the driver's compartment. It must be properly mounted, secured and identified as a first-aid kit. The location for the first-aid kit must be marked. See Emergency Equipment for required first aid kit contents. If you must open a first aid kit, it is your responsibility to have the kit restocked and resealed.

**Extra bandages and hand sanitizer should be kept separate from the First Aid Kit**

# MEDICAL SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENTS

## Asthma

Asthma is a respiratory condition in which the student suffers constricted passages in the lower airway and it becomes progressively more difficult to breathe. Asthma can be a life threatening condition that may develop suddenly, or over several days.

Students with asthma are subject to unexpected severe attacks. Minor respiratory infections such as colds, flu and seasonal changes can cause the condition to worsen. Treat the condition with care, as the effects are sudden and serious.

### 1. Signs and symptoms:

- a. Pale, cool, clammy skin;
- b. Shortness of breath, using all the chest and diaphragm muscles to breathe;
- c. Wheezing-a high pitched raspy sound when breathing;
- d. Anxiety, exhaustion, a rapid or weak pulse;
- e. Severe asthma attack-collapse, leading to eventual respiratory arrest.

### 2. Care and treatment:

- a. Sit the person comfortably upright;
- b. Be calm and reassuring;
- c. Assist the student with locating their inhaler. Allow student to use inhaler if they are able;
- d. Place mouthpiece in person's mouth and fire 1 puff into mouth;
- e. Ask the person to breath in and out normally for about 4 breaths;
- f. Wait 4 minutes. If there is little or no improvement, repeat the above steps.

## **Bites and Stings**

Bites and stings are ingested poisons. Snakes, bees, spiders and wasps are some of the creatures that can bite or sting a student. These bites and stings can sometimes cause violent reactions in some students who may be allergic to them.

### **1. Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Puncture marks;
- b. Anxiety;
- c. Pale, cool skin with progressive onset of sweating;
- d. Rapid, weak pulse;
- e. Rapid, shallow breathing or breathing difficulties;
- f. Difficulty swallowing and speaking;
- g. Blurred vision;
- h. Abdominal pain;
- i. Nausea and/or vomiting;
- j. Headache;
- k. Intense pain at site of bite;
- l. Localized redness and swelling;

### **2. Care and treatment:**

- a. Apply direct pressure over bitten area;
- b. Find out if the student has any allergies to stings or bites;
- c. Use cold compress, if available, to reduce swelling.

## Bites

Bites from other children are one of the most common first-aid problem. For care and treatment:

1. Clean bite with antiseptic wipe and place a band aide on the bite;
2. Report biting incident to your supervisor.

## Bleeding

There are several types of bleeding that occur. External bleeding is associated with wounds that are caused by cutting, perforating or tearing the skin. Serious wounds involve damage to blood vessels.

1. **Types of wounds:**
  - a. **Incision:** Is the type of wound made by ‘slicing’ with a sharp knife or sharp piece of metal;
  - b. **Laceration:** Is a deep wound with associated loss of tissue – the type of wound barbed wire would cause;
  - c. **Abrasion:** Is a wound where the skin layers have been scraped off;
  - d. **Puncture:** Wounds are perforations, and may be due to anything from a corkscrew to a bullet;
  - e. **Amputation:** Is the loss of a limb by trauma.
2. **Care and treatment:**
  - a. Use universal precautions;
  - b. Apply pressure to the wound to stop bleeding by using a sterile bandage;
  - c. Raise and support the injured part above the level of the heart. Elevation of an injured limb forces the blood to flow to the heart and keeps the blood from pooling in the lower part of the affected limb.

3. **Internal bleeding:** Internal bleeding can be visible or concealed. If there is no evidence of bleeding, this can be very serious and medical attention is required immediately.

a. **Visible internal bleeding:**

- i. **Bleeding in the lungs:** Frothy, bright red blood coughed up by the student;
- ii. **Anal or vaginal bleeding:** Usually red blood, mixed with mucous;
- iii. **Bleeding in the stomach:** May look like dark coffee grounds or red blood in vomit;
- iv. **Bowel, or intestinal bleeding;** Dark, loose, foul smelling stools;
- v. **Bleeding in the urinary tract:** Dark or red colored urine.

b. **Signs and symptoms:**

- i. Pale, cool, clammy skin;
- ii. Thirst;
- iii. Rapid, weak pulse;
- iv. Rapid, shallow breathing;
- v. Guarding of the abdomen, in fetal position;
- vi. Pain or discomfort;
- vii. Nausea and/or vomiting;
- viii. Swelling.

c. **Care and treatment:**

- i. Position the student on back, elevate legs if possible;

- ii. Give nothing by mouth.

## **Choking**

Children are always putting things in their mouth. Choking is easy to treat. The first sign may be coughing. Coughing with an object in the airway, will generally dislodge. If you have a student who is choking, do not slap them on the back.

1. **Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Difficulty or absence of breathing;
- b. Inability to speak or cough;
- c. Agitation and distress – grabbing the throat; cyanosis and eventual collapse.

2. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Check mouth and clear any obstructions that may have come loose;
- b. Stand behind the student and wrap your arms around the student's waist;
- c. Make a fist with one hand;
- d. Place the thumb side of the fist against the student's abdomen in the midline and slightly above the navel;
- e. Grasp the fist with the other hand and press the fist into the student's abdomen with a quick upward thrust;
- f. Each new abdominal thrust should be a separate and distinct movement.
- g. Repeat thrusts until victim expels the obstruction.

3. **Head tilt/chin lift maneuver: (remember safety shield)**

- a. Make sure to provide adequate neck and head extension;

- b. Turn student carefully without twisting the body, neck or head, onto the back;
- c. Place one hand on the student's forehead and apply a firm backward pressure with palm to tilt head back;
- d. Place fingers of the other hand under the bony part of the lower jaw near the chin and lift to bring the chin forward;
- e. Never press deeply into the soft tissue under the chin. This might obstruct the airway;
- f. The thumb should never be used for lifting the chin;
- g. Look for obstruction. If foreign matter is visible, remove it with a hooked index finger;
- h. Gently pinch the nose closed with the hand that had been on the victim's forehead and administer two full breaths by:
  - i. Taking a deep breath and sealing your mouth around the student's mouth;
  - j. Adequate time is about 1 ½ seconds per breath;
  - k. Take a breath after each ventilation;
  - l. If two breaths work, give the victim six to eight abdominal thrusts.

## **Defibrulators**

Check your school district for locations of defibrulators. Do not use one if you are not certified.

## **Dehydration**

Dehydration is a condition caused by the loss of fluids from perspiration and prolonged exposure to heat and humidity. When fluid loss exceeds input through drinking, dehydration occurs. Prolonged dehydration will lead to shock and could be fatal.

1. **Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Pale, cool, clammy skin;
- b. Rapid breathing;
- c. Profuse and prolonged sweating;
- d. Thirst;
- e. Loss of skin elasticity;
- f. Sunken eyes in children.

2. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Complete rest indoors or in the shade;
- b. Remove unnecessary clothing;
- c. Give cool water to drink.

## **Diabetes**

Diabetes is a condition which is caused by an imbalance of sugar, or glucose, in the blood. Because all human cells require sugars as food, the body takes in complex sugars in a normal diet. So that the body's cells can use these sugars, the body, through an organ called the pancreas, secretes a protein hormone, called insulin, which attaches to the sugars. This allows the cells to recognize the sugars as food, and absorb the necessary glucose.

1. **Signs and Symptoms:**

- a. Hot, dry skin;
- b. Smell of acetone (nail polish remover) on the breath;
- c. Drowsiness;
- d. Unconsciousness, progressing to coma;
- e. Profuse sweating;
- f. Pallor;

- g. Hunger;
- h. Confused or aggressive behavior;
- i. Rapid pulse;
- j. May appear drunk;
- k. Seizures.

2. **Care and treatment:**

- a. If conscious, give sweet drink; (avoid diet sodas)
- b. Repeat if student responds;
- c. Assist with medication and encourage ingestion of food high in carbohydrates;
- d. **DO NOT** attempt to give insulin injection;
- e. Avoid putting fingers in student's mouth;

## **Epilepsy**

Epilepsy is a disorder that briefly interrupts the normal electrical activity of the brain. Normally, neurons, which are cells that carry electrical impulses, form a network, allowing communication between the brain and the rest of the body. In epilepsy, neurons “fire” or send electrical impulses toward surrounding cells, stimulating neighboring cells to fire at one time, causing an “electrical storm” within the brain, which results in physical changes called seizures. There are many different types of seizures.

1. **Types of seizures:**

- a. Tonic clonic, or “fits,” so known as grand mal, are readily identified by the uncontrolled body spasms;
- b. Absence, also known as petit mal, causes the person to lose contact with his or her surroundings for a few minutes. They may appear like they are daydreaming or in a trance with little or no outward sign that anything is wrong;

- c. A complex or partial, which is also known as psychomotor or temporal lobe, is accompanied by impaired consciousness and recall. It may also involve staring, automatic behavior such as lip smacking, chewing, tumbling, walking, grunting, repetition of words or phrases, or other symptoms and signs;
- d. A simple partial produces a sudden shock-like jolt to one or more muscles that increases muscle tone and causes movement. These sudden jerks are like those that occur in healthy people as they fall asleep.

2. **Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Fixed stare or apparent doze; Very young epileptic suffers may drool;
- b. No reaction to stimuli;
- c. Rapid return to normal after two or three minutes.

3. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Reassurance.

4. **Seizures:**

- a. The epileptic may have a feeling of light headedness;
- b. Seizure usually starts with a cry as the diaphragm spasms and forces air from the lungs;
- c. Collapse and momentary rigidity;
- d. Uncontrolled spasmodic movements of head, limbs and body with blue or purple color to the skin;
- e. Cyanosis – the casualty is not breathing;
- f. May be loss of bladder and/or bowel control;
- g. Spasms usually subside after three minutes – student regains control of the tongue and commences breathing normally;

- h. Student remains in a drowsy state for a period of time after the seizure.

5. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Protect the student from injury by moving any possible objects that the student could injure themselves on, and pad the head;
- b. Allow the seizure to run its course;
- c. When the seizure subsides, check the airway and breathing;
- d. Place student in the recovery position on their side. Let them sleep if they wish;
- e. Do not put anything, including fingers, into the student's mouth;
- f. Avoid well-meaning bystanders who will insist on pulling the tongue out to avoid "swallowing the tongue." Epileptics cannot swallow their tongues;
- g. If seizure lasts more than 3 to 4 minutes, call for medical assistance.

## Fractures

When a bone is broken, or fractured, it affects not only blood production and function, but there are also complications associated with the muscles, tendons, nerves and blood vessels which are attached, or are close, to the bone.

1. **Types of fractures:**

- a. **Open:** Where the bone has fractured and penetrated the skin leaving a wound;
- b. **Closed:** Where the bone has fractured but has no obvious external wound;
- c. **Complicated:** May involve damage to vital organs and major blood vessels as a result of the fracture.

2. **Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Pale, cool, clammy skin;
- b. Rapid, weak pulse;
- c. Pain at the site;
- d. Tenderness;
- e. Loss of power to limb;
- f. Associated wound and blood loss;
- g. Nausea.

3. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Treat and pad the wound;
- b. Apply adequate splint, if possible;
- c. Elevate injury.

## **Heat Stroke**

Heat stroke should not be confused with sunstroke. Sunstroke is a common ailment suffered by those who remain in the sun too long. Heat stroke is potentially fatal. The body's temperature regulation center in the brain has been rendered inoperable, and the temperature continually rises, causing eventual brain damage.

1. **Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Flushed, hot, dry skin;
- b. The student has stopped sweating;
- c. Rapid pulse, gradually weakening;
- d. Irrational or aggressive behavior;
- e. Staggering gait, fatigue;

- f. Visual disturbances, headache, vomiting;
- g. Collapse and seizures;

2. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Complete rest indoors or in shade;
- b. Remove unnecessary clothing;
- c. Cool student down with ice packs to the neck, groin and armpits;
- d. Give fluids and cool water if the person is conscious.

## **Hyperventilation**

Hyperventilation can be stress-related or deliberate over-breathing. By deliberately over-breathing, the student causes the blood's carbon dioxide level to fall, resulting in distressing symptoms.

1. **Signs and symptoms:**

- a. Rapid respirations;
- b. Rapid pulse;
- c. Shortness of breath;
- d. Pressure, tightness or pain across the chest;
- e. Anxiety;
- f. Blurred vision;
- g. Tingling in fingers and toes;
- h. Hand and finger spasms and pain;
- i. Fainting.

2. **Care and treatment:**

- a. Reassurance;
- b. Remove the cause of anxiety, if possible;
- c. If the student has fainted, lay student down with legs elevated;
- d. Monitor breathing.

## **Nose Bleeds**

When a student nose bleeds, there are some immediate things you can do to stop the bleeding. Elevate the trunk of the body so that it is higher than the heart. Tilt the head forward and compress the nostril for five to ten minutes.

# CHAPTER 9: SECURITY AWARENESS, HARRASSMENT AND HOSTILE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Until recently, school transportation has been centered on two main objectives: safety and efficiency of school bus operations. Since September 11, 2001, transportation security has been added. In addition to the threat from foreign and domestic terrorist groups, the school bus driver and their students may be targets of violence from students, unauthorized boarders and others outside the school bus.

## SECURITY TRAINING

### School Bus Drivers

School bus drivers are the eyes, ears and protectors of their communities the same way that the Neighborhood Watch Program is. Drivers know their routes and know what is usual and unusual and need to **TRUST THEIR GUT!** School bus drivers need to be informed on how to react in security related situations in the following way:

1. Be aware of state and school district security guidelines;
2. Be aware of suspicious activity or behavior in areas around school buses, school bus facilities and schools;
3. Notice and report any unusual conditions of vehicles, both those belonging to the school district and those vehicles that may enter into parking lots or facilities. Pay attention to suspicious people or vehicles in the school bus area outside a school or at school bus stops;
4. Be vigilant with respect to strange packages, items or substances which are brought on or around school buses;
5. Know who your supervisory contacts are in the school district and have their phone numbers immediately available;
6. Recognize threats and how to properly handle them;

7. Know emergency operating plans and procedures, and stay familiar with the operation of emergency equipment;
8. Remove keys from the ignition when your bus is unattended;
9. Conduct pre-trip and post-trip inspections and inspect your bus whenever you have left it unattended for any length of time;
10. Maintain an uncluttered bus.

## **School Bus Safety and Security Checklist**

School bus drivers need to be vigilant when checking the following items in a pre-trip inspection, or anytime you have left the bus unattended for any length of time.

1. **Seats:** Look for lumps, bulges, damaged upholstery and any suspicious package on a seat;
2. **Floor Surface:** Look for modifications to material/unusual thickness;
3. **Roof Liner:** Look for rips or bulges;
4. **Cargo Compartment:** Look for strange odor, raised floor, unusual welds, unusual items or excessive weight;
5. **Exterior Surface:** Look for missing screws, unusual scratches, welds, signs of tampering or recent paint;
6. **Undercarriage:** Look for items that are taped or attached to the frame or fresh undercoating;
7. **Engine Compartment:** Look for odd wires or liquids, unusual welds or new tape;
8. **Tires:** Look for unusual odor from air valve;
9. **Fenders:** Look for unusual thickness.

## **Identifying Suspicious Behavior**

School bus drivers are in an excellent position to identify suspicious behavior. Report your suspicions to the dispatcher who then has the responsibility to pass this information to the proper authorities.

Suspicious behavior is anyone who appears to not belong. This could be based on being in the wrong place, appearing lost, loitering, observing and taking notes, acting in a nervous fashion, dressing inappropriately for the weather or any other indicator of strange or unusual behavior.

**You can not identify suspicious behavior based on stereotypes of race, color or ethnicity.**

## **Identifying Suspicious Activities**

Suspicious activities are anything the school bus driver may feel is unusual or out of place. In addition, pay particular attention to the following:

1. Anyone appearing interested in school facilities, vehicles or their surroundings;
2. Anyone who has been sighted within a school, or school bus stop numerous times;
3. Anyone who has put a package in a public place and then left;
4. Anyone soliciting information on school facilities, buses or schedules;
5. Anyone taking pictures or video taping areas of school bus facilities, schools or school bus stops;
6. Anyone looking lost or wandering around at school bus stops or school grounds;
7. Anyone showing disruptive or potentially distracting behavior;
8. Anyone showing an unusual interest in employees or students;
9. Anyone wearing a uniform who appears to not be part of the setting;
10. Anyone wearing clothing that is not appropriate for the weather.

## Reporting Unusual Activities

It is important for you to be able to report any suspicious behavior or activity to your dispatcher. It is just as important for you to be able to observe and be able to report accurate information. Make sure to:

1. Be able to report the location of a vehicle, and if it was parked;
2. Be able to provide the direction a vehicle is or was moving;
3. Be able to provide the color, year, make and model of a vehicle;
4. Be able to provide the license plate number and state;
5. Be able to provide the identifying features, like damage, rust or other car details;
6. Be able to provide a description of the occupants.

## Rules for Suspicious Items

If you spot a suspicious item or device that can not be identified as belonging to the driver or one of your students, you must immediately report your suspicions to your supervisor. Suspicious packages can be any bag, container, object or package.

1. Here are some other examples of suspicious items:
  - a. Any item placed in an out-of-the way location where it would not be easily seen;
  - b. An package accompanied by a threatening message;
  - c. An package that may appear to be a potential bomb of some type;
  - d. Any common items that are in uncommon areas, such as baby strollers or back packs.
2. If you encounter a suspicious item or package, there are 6 general rules to prevent injury to you and your students:
  - a. Remain alert and calm;

- b. Never touch, move or cover a suspicious item;
- c. Move as far from the suspicious item as possible while avoiding other hazards such as traffic or pedestrians;
- d. Do not use your radio or cell phone within 300 feet of the item, it could detonate and you could be the source of ignition;
- e. Stay out of the items line of sight, thereby reducing the hazard of injury by direct fragmentation;
- f. Keep away from glass windows or other materials that could become flying debris.

## HOSTAGE AWARENESS

### Introduction

Chances are slim that a hostage situation will ever occur. However, you have a better chance of having your school bus and your students taken as hostages than any other threats. Listed below are some basic guidelines to follow if you find your school bus taken hostage.

### Emotional Stages

If you find yourself in a hostage situation, you need to understand the feelings you will experience:

1. **Denial:** It is common for the victim to feel that “this can’t be, that this is not happening to me,” or that “it is just a joke;”
2. **The belief of immediate rescue:** Do not mislead yourself by thinking you will be rescued right away. It is to your advantage for the situation to take time to resolve. There is more of an opportunity for negotiation with the captor, which can lead to a peaceful resolution;
3. **Try to hold onto reality:** Make a determined effort to stay focused. Avoid the temptation to let your thoughts center around your family/loved ones, and what might become of them if something should happen to you.

## Things "TO DO" in a Hostage Situation

1. **Bond With Your Captor:** Try to relate to them and build a relationship of understanding and sympathy.
2. **Be Human:** Do not allow the captor to view you as an object instead of a person. Let your captor know that you are a father or mother and that there are people who depend on you, even if there are none. Avoid having your face covered. This dehumanizes a person;
3. **Take mental notes:** Without being obvious to the captor, note any scars, tattoos, or other identifying marks. Estimate height, weight, and hair color;
4. **Expect to be arrested:** Law enforcement personnel will detain everyone until identification can be verified. Captors have exchanged clothing with hostages in an effort to escape. Your district will have officials on the scene to identify you;
5. **Keep a low profile:** Speak only when spoken to. Do not initiate conversation;
6. **Think pleasant thoughts:** The incident could go on for hours. Avoid falling into depression, and remain confident that you will be released;
7. **Remain strong for your students:** Even though you may have had a difficult time with the students all year, they will look to you for leadership in an emergency. If you maintain your composure, it will help them to do the same;
8. **Remember you are a Primary Witness for Investigators:** It is vital that you write down everything that occurred during the hostage situation from onset to resolution. Do this as soon as possible while the events are still fresh in your mind. Do not speak to the media. Your district officials on the scene should shield them from you. Follow district policy regarding any future media contact.

## Things "NOT TO DO" in a Hostage Situation

1. **Do Not Make any Threats:** Remember that the captor is holding you against your will with some type of weapon. Do not behave, or speak in a manner that may be perceived by the captor as threatening;

2. **Do Not Stare or Glance at your Captor:** Keeping your eyes down will give the appearance of submission. Do not appear aggressive in your body language or facial expressions;
3. **Do Not Interfere:** Do not volunteer to assist the captor in any way. Do not interfere with the actions of the captor. For instance, he/she may be irritated with crying students and strike the students to quiet them. Remember that you are being held at gun/knife point. Challenging the captor will increase the risk of further harm to yourself and/or the students;
4. **Do Not Negotiate for your Own Release:** Only the police will conduct negotiations. If you involve yourself, you may jeopardize a peaceful resolution to the hostage situation;
5. **Do Not Negotiate for the Release of the Students:** Do not make offers or promises of money or possessions in exchange for the release of the students. Only the police can negotiate;
6. **Do Not be Arrogant:** Give the captor what ever they want. Do not resist. It could result in harm to yourself and/or the students.

### **Tips to Help you in a Hostage Situation**

1. **Help Keep the Peace:** Prevent anyone from getting hurt. Consider your actions so as not to put yourself or your passengers at risk;
2. **Be Patient:** If you as the driver show patience, then your students will be more prone to follow your lead;
3. **Remain Calm:** Try not to show fear, the students are looking to you as an example;
4. Know that 99% of all situations are resolved through negotiations: **Negotiations may take time, but remember that time is on your side;**
5. **Do not be Confrontational:** be a hero, unnecessary harm to you or your passengers may result from your actions;
6. **Communicate:** If possible, try to make your location and situation known as soon as possible if the hostage taker has not made contact. (Microphone keyed open);

7. **Be a Good Witness:** Make a mental picture of the hostage-taker(s) and any weapons. The driver preferring to stay with their students may not have the choice. This information may be vital for the police in determining the next move to help the remaining hostages;
8. **Go Along to Get Along:** You should cooperate with your captor and do as you are told. Comply with reasonable demands, offer to tie up hostages or act as the captor's accomplice. Still do as you are told, but the key is not to offer help;
9. **If the Police Try to Enter the Bus:** Try to avoid giving away police positions or actions, by your actions or facial expressions. Captors could pick-up on them. Be prepared for loud noise and follow instructions quickly;
10. **Help Avoid Getting Caught in a Hostage Situation:** Report any suspicious person immediately. wait for something to happen or get out of control;
11. **Call the Police:** This is the best action a driver can do. Avoid becoming caught in the situation before it occurs;
12. **Know your Passengers:** Knowing your passengers and their needs can be vital in such emergencies. Their medical needs many allow communication for emergency medical support.

## HARRASSMENT AND HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS

Targets of bullying and harassment experience anxiety, distress, confusion, loss of self-esteem and depression. (Blueprints for Violence, 1999) Schools, school buses and school bus stops need to be safety zones for students.

### Harassment

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, a school district can not allow harassment or hostile environments in the school. It violates the law when a school district creates it, encourages it, or tolerates it. School districts are now the subject of many civil lawsuits for their failure to stop harassment and hostile environments in the school.

### Hostile Environments

A hostile environment is defined as an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment that results in a student's inability to learn. School districts are required to take steps to prevent hostile environments, and deal with complaints about harassment when they are made.

When a school district knows that an environment is hostile or a student is being harassed, you are required by law to do something about it.

## **What is a Hostile Environment**

1. When a single incident is so serious that it causes disruption to the education of a student;
2. A hostile environment or harassment is behavior that is **UNWELCOME AND UNWANTED AND IS RELATED TO ONE'S GENDER OR RACE, OR NEGATIVELY IMPACTS THE STUDENT'S EDUCATION IN A WAY THAT MAKES THE STUDENT FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE;**
3. Harassment on the school bus and at the school bus stop can be far worse for the student because:
  - a. The supervisor/driver must concentrate primarily on safe driving and may not be aware of the harassment while it's occurring, or the harassment occurs at the school bus stop where there is no adult supervision;
  - b. School buses and school bus stops may limit the number of witnesses;
  - c. The school bus or school bus stop is a confined area that prevents escape from the harassment;
  - d. The student's ability to avoid harassment is restricted.

**Harassment is Unwelcome and Unwanted.**

## **What Types of Behavior Constitute Harassment or a Hostile Environment**

1. Listed below are some types of behavior that are considered, but not limited too, harassment:
  - a. Conveying rumors or gossip. Making suggestive comments about another person or making comments about the sexual orientation or activity;

- b. Calling names of a sexual or ethnic nature;
- c. Obscene gestures, including students grabbing their own genitals and/or rubbing themselves in a sexually suggestive manner;
- d. Sexual molestation;
- e. Use of sexually explicit language, like slang terms for parts of the anatomy;
- f. “Mooring” at a student with express intent to refer to bust size;
- g. Creating graffiti on the school bus or at the school bus stop which uses explicit sexual language to describe and degrade members of the opposite sex;
- h. Unwelcome and unwanted touching, pinching or restraining of students by students regardless of the age of the student;
- i. Exposing private parts; flipping up skirts or snapping bras;
- j. Threatening unwanted sexual activity;
- k. Continual teasing or lewd remarks;

**Know and understand your district's harassment policy**

## **Boundary Violations**

As a school bus driver, it is important for you to know the boundaries for appropriate behavior around the students you transport. School bus drivers are more open to accusations of harassment because of the 1-on-1 contact you have with the students you transport.

You need to be aware of what are considered boundary violations. **BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS** are behaviors that are considered inappropriate. Transporting a student in your private car would be considered a boundary violation. While a pat on the back, a warm smile or a kind word would not be considered boundary violations.

1. The following would be considered **boundary violations** or **inappropriate behavior** towards a student:
  - a. Do not discuss or share your personal life with students;
  - b. Do not act as a confidant to students. If they come to you with problems, refer them to the appropriate school authority; (school counselor, psychologist, etc.)
  - c. Do not encourage, laugh, or tolerate sexist or racist jokes;
  - d. Do not stereotype your students;
  - e. Do not allow students to sit on your lap or hug them. No neck rubs or back massages;
  - f. Do not offer rides home to students in your personnel vehicle;
  - g. Do not show special treatment or make promises of special treatment to your students;
  - h. Do not meet with your students outside of school.

### **The Bus Drivers Role**

It is the responsibility of the bus driver to report all types of harassment to the proper authorities. You must learn to recognize when actions have the potential to escalate into harassment, or worse. You are considered a primary reporter and by law must report any suspicious behavior to your administrator. Your role as a school bus driver is to:

1. Report all incidents of harassment to the proper school district authority. Remember that **YOU ARE PERSONALLY LIABLE IF YOU SUSPECT HARASSMENT AND FAIL TO REPORT YOUR SUSPICIONS.** The school is required by law to listen to a claim of harassment of a student or adult.
3. Make sure to document any incidents of harassment you have reported to your supervisor. If the student files a civil lawsuit because a school district failed to stop or prevent harassment, you

could be held financially liable. Documentation is your only protection.

4. If you have reported your concerns to your supervisor and nothing has been done, report your concerns to someone outside the school and document your reports to a higher school district official.
5. Do not be afraid to report suspicious behavior to the appropriate authority even if the suspected abuse is by an educator. If it doesn't feel right and makes you feel uncomfortable-trust your intuition. Many times educators have said that they "felt something was wrong" or they "were suspicious", but were afraid to speak up for fear of embarrassing the offender or retaliation by the school district or community. Most abuse allegations do not result from a single incident, but a continuing course of conduct, and are more often true than not.
6. If you suspect serious abuse by district personnel and are uncomfortable reporting it to your local school district administrator, you can call Diana Hollander at the Nevada Department of Education Office at (702) 486-6626 and they will report your suspicions to the proper authorities or call the local police or secret witness hotline.

**97% of all reported allegations are true!**

## **Nevada's Provisions for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment**

Nevada has declared that "A learning environment that is safe and respectful is essential for the pupils enrolled in the public schools in this state to achieve academic success and meet this state's high academic standards. Any form of harassment or intimidation in public schools seriously interferes with the ability of teachers to teach in the classroom and the ability of students to learn."

1. The intended goal is to ensure that:
  - a. The public schools in this state provide a safe and respectful learning environment in which person of differing beliefs, characteristics and backgrounds can realize their full academic and personal potential;

- b. All administrator’s principals, teachers and other personnel of the school districts and public schools in this state demonstrate appropriate behavior on the premises of any public school by treating other persons, including, without limitation, pupils, with civility and respect and by refusing to tolerate harassment or intimidation; and
  - c. By declaring its goal that the public schools in this state provide a safe and respectful learning environment, the legislature is not advocating or requiring the acceptance of differing beliefs in a manner that would inhibit the freedom of expression, but is requiring that pupils with differing beliefs be free from abuse and harassment. (NRS 388.132)
2. **HARASSMENT** is defined by Nevada as a willful act or course of conduct that is not otherwise authorized by law and is:
- a. Highly offensive;
  - b. Intended to cause and actually causes another person to suffer serious emotional distress. (NRS 388.125)
3. **INTIMIDATION** is defined by Nevada as a willful act or course of conduct that is not otherwise authorized by law and:
- a. Is highly offensive;
  - b. Poses a threat of immediate harm or actually inflicts harm to another person or to the property of another person. (NRS 388.129)

**Harassment and Intimidation are against the law.  
It is your responsibility to report all incidents of  
harassment to the appropriate school district  
officials and follow up.**

## **Interfering with a Pupil Attending School**

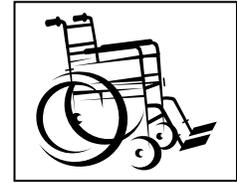
It is unlawful for any person, against the will of a pupil attending any public school, to beat, whip, detain or otherwise interfere with a pupil while on the way to and from school. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. (NRS 392.470)

## **Threatening or Assaulting a Pupil or School Employee**

1. It is unlawful for any person to disturb the peace of any public school by using vile or indecent language within the building or grounds of the school.
2. It is unlawful for any person to threaten or assault any public or school employee within the building or grounds of the school, on a bus, van or other motor vehicle owned, leased or chartered by a school district to transport pupils or school employees or, at a location where the pupil or school employee is involved in an activity sponsored by a public school. (NRS 392.480)

**Respect the student's right to privacy. Handle complaints of harassment immediately with care and confidentiality.**

# CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



## INTRODUCTION

Transporting students with special needs takes a very special driver. These students have a multitude of issues that require special training, patience, personal knowledge of each student and their needs.

All students are entitled to a free and appropriate education in the “Least Restrictive Environment.” For students with special needs, transportation is considered a “Related Service” when determining what is necessary to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education. Transportation is defined in The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and includes:

1. Travel to and from school and between schools;
2. Travel in and around school buildings;
3. Specialized equipment (such as special or adaptive buses, lifts, and ramps), if required to provide special education for a child with a disability.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION STAFF

There is a substantial difference between transporting regular education students and special education students. It is important for drivers to understand the issues and special needs of transporting these very fragile students. Staff retention is critical given the considerable costs associated with the extra training required. Having transportation staff that have personal knowledge of the specific needs of individual students is a tremendous asset to the care.

## CHARACTERISTICS AND CONDITIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Under IDEA, a student must have a certain characteristic or condition that adversely affects their educational performance, therefore requiring special education and related services.

1. Autism;
2. Deaf-Blindness;
3. Hearing Impairments/Deafness;

4. Mental Retardation;
5. Multiple Disabilities;
6. Orthopedic Impairment;
7. Other Health Impairments;
8. Emotional Disturbance;
9. Specific Learning Disabilities;
10. Speech and/or Language Disability;
11. Traumatic Brain Injury;
12. Visual Impairments/Blindness.

## **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATOR PROGRAM (IEP)**

1. An IEP is a written statement of services a student is to receive. Only the IEP team can change an IEP.
2. Based on IDEA, each school district shall conduct a full and individual evaluation and develop a plan for each child who is considered for special education.
3. The IEP team is a formal group of educators that develop an educational program, establish goals and determine the related services for the student.
4. When developing an IEP, transportation staff must be included when transportation is being included as a related service;
5. The transportation staff will need to address issues regarding the safe transportation of the student. Specific information needs to be provided to the transportation department, driver, parent and student so that they know what services to expect;
6. If after implementing the IEP program, you find that more information or assistance is needed, you can reconvene the IEP team. Any team member can request that the IEP team be reconvened.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The **Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA)** requires that a **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** and **Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)** information needed to transport a student safely, even if confidential, shall be made available to the related-service provider. Information provided to transportation staff is confidential and staff shall be trained regarding confidentiality requirements.

## DRIVERS, ASSISTANTS AND BUS AIDES

Drivers, attendants and bus aides have the responsibility to operate special equipment, manage student behavior and provide basic first aid when necessary. They must know how to properly position a student, secure an adaptive or assistive device and be familiar with the nature, needs and characteristics of the students they transport.

1. Transporting special needs students require specific training in:
  - a. Student referral, assessment, the IEP process, and confidentiality of student information;
  - b. Legal issues, including federal and state laws, administrative rules and school district policies and procedures for special education students;
  - c. Operational policies and procedures, including:
    - i. Loading and unloading;
    - ii. Evacuation procedures, including the use of emergency equipment such as belt cutters;
    - iii. Lifting and positioning procedures;
    - iv. Behavior management, including response management to unacceptable behavior and procedures for dealing with inappropriate and unacceptable student behavior;
    - v. Student accountability and observation, including evidence of neglect or abuse;

- vi. Post-Trip interior inspections for students, medicine, and other articles that may have been left on the bus;
- vii. Reporting procedures and report writing;
- viii. The characteristics of contagious and communicable diseases and disease management techniques;
- ix. First aid and CPR, including blood borne pathogens and universal precaution procedures.

## **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT USE AND OPERATION**

As a driver of special education students, you will need to be familiar with a variety of equipment. You will need to be familiar with the design and operating procedures of this special equipment.

1. Some examples are:
  - a. Power lifts, including procedures for manual operation;
  - b. Emergency exits, including doors, windows and roof hatches;
  - c. Fire suppression systems;
  - d. Power cut-off switches;
  - e. Emergency communications system;
  - f. Climate-control;
  - g. Adaptive and assistive devices used to support and secure students, including mobile seating devices, child safety restraint systems, safety vests, special belts, assistive technology devices, trays and securement hardware, including storage and securement;
  - h. Two-way electronic voice communication systems that can be used at any point in the bus route;
  - i. Service animals that can be transported to assist the student with disabilities. District policies and procedures, as well as training, should be established prior to transport.

## LOADING AND UNLOADING ON POWER LIFTS:

The procedures for loading and unloading special needs students is very different from loading and unloading regular education students.

1. To load and unload special needs students on a power lift you:
  - a. Must never ride the power lift;
  - b. Load and unload students facing outwards;
  - c. Lock brakes;
  - d. Turn power off on electric wheelchairs;
  - e. Secure student;

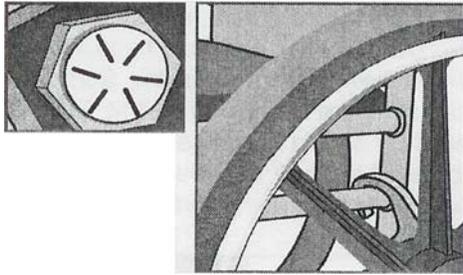
## SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

1. Each bus that is set up to accommodate wheelchair/mobility aids or other assistive or restraint devices that utilize belts, shall contain **at least one belt cutter properly secured in a location within reach of the driver while belted into his/her driver's seat.**
2. The belt cutter shall be durable and designed to eliminate the possibility of the operator being cut during use.

## SECURING THE WHEELCHAIR AND FOUR-POINT TIEDOWNS

There are many types of wheelchairs that you will be used by the children you transport. There are basic standards for securing wheelchairs.

1. Always position the wheelchair and rider facing forward;
2. When securing a wheelchair, attach the four-point tiedown straps to the securement positions provided on the wheelchair. Tighten the straps to remove all slack;
3. If the wheelchair does not have securement positions, it is best to attach the tiedown straps to welded junctions of the wheelchair frame or to other structural areas where the frame is fastened together with hardened steel bolts indicated by six raised lines or bumps on the bolt head; Securement sites on the wheelchair shall be located just below the wheelchair's seat on the non-detachable frame member;



4. **DO NOT ATTACH TIEDOWNS TO ADJUSTABLE, MOVING, OR REMOVEABLE PARTS OF THE WHEELCHAIR SUCH AS ARMRESTS, FOOTRESTS, AND WHEELS;**
5. When securing the wheelchair, choose structural securement points as close to the seat surface as possible to avoid greater wheelchair stability during travel. It is best if the rear securement points are high enough to result in angles of rear tiedown straps between and 30 and 45 degrees to the horizontal;
6. If you are securing a wheelchair with a tilt seat, make sure to attach both the front and rear straps to either the seat frame or to the base frame. Mixing wheelchair securement points between the seat and base can result in the tiedown straps becoming slack if the angle of the seat changes during a crash;
7. It is best if floor anchor points for rear tiedown straps are located directly behind the rear securement points on the wheelchair. If possible, the front tiedown straps should anchor to the floor at points that are spaced wider than the wheelchair to increase lateral stability during travel;

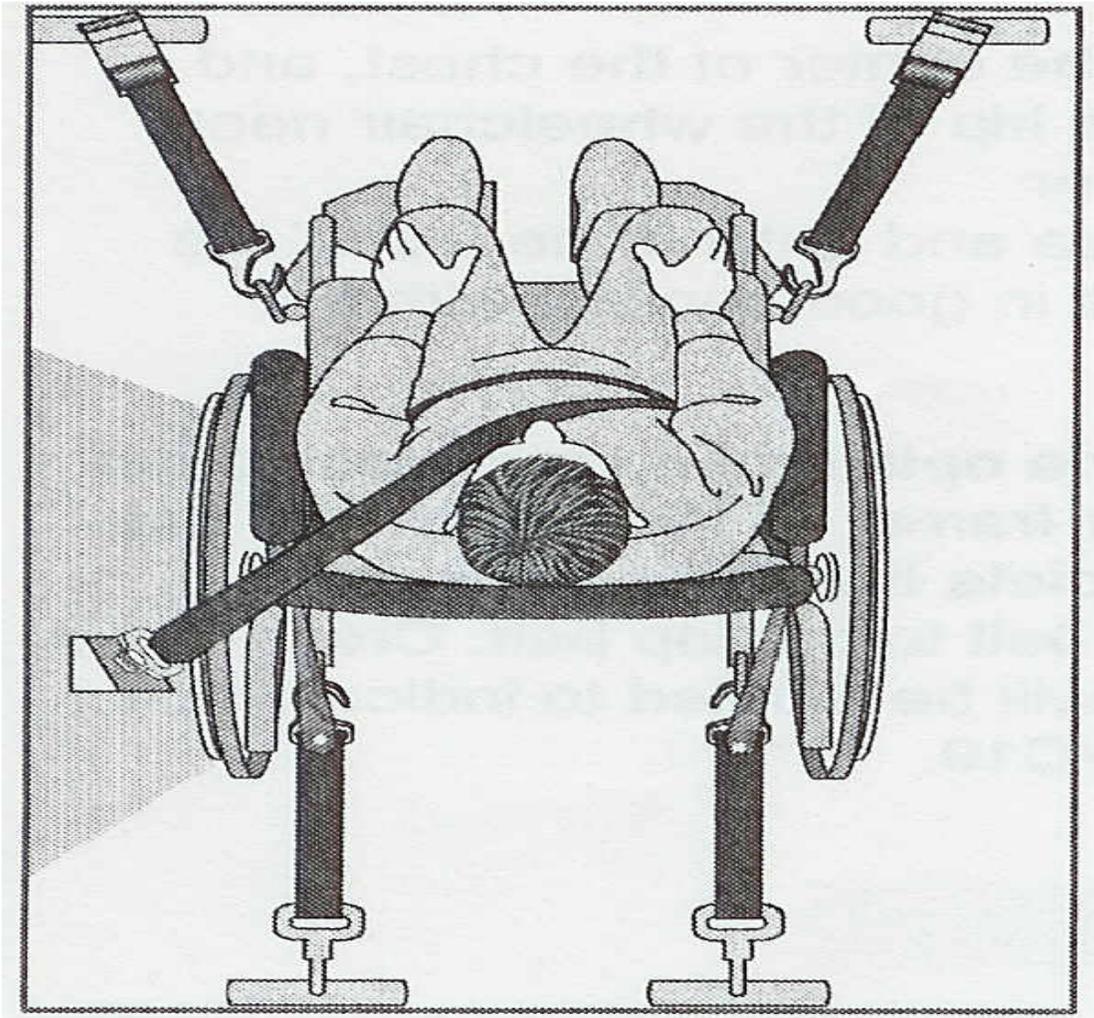
## **SECURING THE STUDENT IN THE WHEELCHAIR**

In addition to securing the wheelchair, it is VERY important to provide securement to the wheelchair user with a lap and shoulder belt. Belts attached to the wheelchair are not strong enough to withstand the forces of a crash. When securing a student in a wheelchair you must:

1. The lap must be placed low across the front of the pelvis near the upper thighs, not high over the abdomen. The lap belt should be angled between 45 and 75 degrees to the horizontal when viewed from the side. Some wheelchair features like arm rests can interfere with good belt fit. Do not place the lap belt over the armrest. It may be necessary to insert the belt between the armrest and seatback. Or through an opening in the armrest;

2. A diagonal shoulder belt should cross the middle of the shoulder and center of the chest, and should connect to the lap belt near the hip of the wheelchair rider. The upper shoulder-belt anchor point or D-ring guide should be anchored above and behind the top of the student's shoulder, so that the belt is in good contact with the shoulder and chest while traveling;

**When properly secured, there is no allowable movement of a wheelchair!**



**Never crisscross securement straps.**

## **OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS**

1. Wheelchair securements must never be on the crossbar. This could cause the wheelchair to collapse;
2. Keep the space around the student as clear as possible to reduce the possibility of the student coming in contact with vehicle components or other students;
3. Immediately after use, all securement hardware not permanently affixed to the bus floors and sidewalls must be securely stored;
4. Keep wheelchair tracks or plates must be swept, vacuumed or otherwise cleaned to keep the tracks free from dirt and debris;
5. If possible, remove hard trays and secure them elsewhere in the vehicle to reduce the chance of injury.
6. Secure medical and other equipment to the wheelchair or vehicle to prevent it from breaking loose and causing injuries in a crash.

**The driver is ultimately responsible for assuring that all special needs students are properly secured.**

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Each bus route must have a written emergency evacuation plan. This plan should include a student's ability to evacuate or help others. Students with disabilities should practice emergency evacuation drills unless their participation would present a risk for the student. All students must have a reasonable understanding of the concept of an emergency and what would happen in the case of an actual evacuation.

## **EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR**

Transportation as a related service may be required under Extended School Year provisions of IDEA. Extended school year services are services for special education students that extend beyond the normal school year in accordance with a student's IEP.

# CHAPTER 11: TRANSPORTING TODDLERS AND PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

## INTRODUCTION

In the State of Nevada, school districts are not required to provide transportation to students under the age of 3. If your district chooses to transport children under 3, these are good policies to follow.

Although transporting preschool children are the youngest, most vulnerable passengers on school buses. They depend on transportation personnel to provide a safe ride to and from early intervention programs and Head Start. Transportation is a critical component for children and their families accessing services to support a child's growth and development. Transportation should be established as the mutual responsibility of parents, transportation and service providers.

Programs supported and funded by federal, state and local governments have made great strides in developing, designing and providing services for young children and their families to develop each child's full potential. The school bus, for many children, is the primary vehicle that provides access to programs and services designated to meet individual needs of children and families.

Transportation providers need to be knowledgeable and develop skills to adequately provide for the safety of young children while being transported on school buses. Infants, toddlers and pre-school children with special physical, cognitive or behavioral needs present new challenges and responsibilities for transportation providers. These children require a great deal of supervision during the time they are in the school bus. Some issues that must be addressed to assure safe transportation in the school bus include: physical handling, communication with young children, behavior management, child safety seats, restraint systems, safety vests, wheelchairs and occupant securement systems, special equipment management, medically fragile conditions, personnel training, and parental responsibilities.

As more pre-school age children are being transported, there are an increasing number of questions as to how to safely transport them. NHTSA conducted crash testing on preschool age size dummies in school bus seats. The test results showed that preschool age children on school buses are safest when transported in child safety restraint systems (CSRSs) that are correctly attached to the seats. (NHTSA *Guide for the Safe Transportation of Pre-School Age children in School Buses*)

## DEFINITIONS

A **newborn** is a child from birth to one month. An **infant** is a child from one month to one year. A **toddler** is a child from one year to three years, and a **preschooler** is a child from three years to five years of age. **Note:** Individual programs may have variations in how these four terms are used.

## **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) under Part C of IDEA is the mechanism for addressing the unique needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

1. The IFSP process has two main parts:
  - a. The IFSP meeting, where parents and interagency personnel jointly make decisions about an eligible child's early intervention services; and
  - b. The IFSP document itself, which is a written plan for the provision of early intervention services for the child and family.

The decision to provide the early intervention service transportation is made on a case-by-case basis and is directly related to the need for this service. Given the significance of the IFSP process, there are numerous requirements concerning the IFSP document. The decision for a transportation representative to attend the IFSP meeting should be made on a case-by-case basis when a school bus is considered as the vehicle to transport an infant or toddler to and from a program location. This decision should be based on the individual needs of the child and family, as well as the service provider. The transportation representative should be a member of the IFSP team whenever the unique needs of an individual child require specialized service beyond the scope of what is traditionally provided.

## **HEAD START**

Head Start programs are required to provide special services for three through five year-old children with disabilities. Head Start programs are required to have a "Disabilities Coordinator" who is responsible for developing a disabilities service plan that provides for the special needs of children with disabilities and their parents. This plan must specify those services to be provided directly by Head Start and those that are provided by other agencies. Transportation is one of the related services addressed under 1308.4(o)(5).

Transportation is a related service to be provided to children with disabilities. When transportation to the program site and to special services can be accessed from other agencies, it should be used. When it is not available, program funds are to be used.

1. Hold a valid CDL, physical examinations, background checks and classroom and behind the-wheel training for all drivers; Communication and safety equipment, including first-aid kits, belt cutters and fire extinguishers will be required on all vehicles;

2. Annual and daily pre-trip inspection and maintenance programs;
3. Trip routing restrictions, including elimination of U-turns, backing up of buses and locating stops to avoid having children cross streets;
4. Safety training for parents and children;
5. At least three evacuation drills during the program year.  
(Transporting Students with Disabilities, January 9, 2002 edition)

## **DRIVERS**

The driver must be knowledgeable about his responsibility for each child on the school bus. This includes safely operating the school bus and supervision the safety of all young passengers. These recommendations should be followed with or without the presence of a bus attendant.

1. In addition to their regular duties, the drivers shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. General knowledge about the development of young children, including specific disability conditions;
  - b. Age-appropriate physical handling, communication and behavior management of young children;
  - c. Appropriate use of all the equipment (e.g., power lifts, child restraint systems, safety vests, wheelchairs, securement devices/occupant restraints and safety belts);
  - d. Loading and unloading of children who are ambulatory or non-ambulatory;
  - e. Evacuation and evacuation drills;
  - f. Knowledge about transportation requirements on a child's ISFP or IEP, including confidentiality;
  - g. Knowledge about special needs on the vehicle (e.g., apnea, asthma or other respiratory conditions, shints, life-threatening allergies to irritants, assistive devices, communicable diseases, g-tubes, oxygen, technological dependence, tracheotomy tubes, medical devices, medically complex and fragile conditions, uncontrollable seizure disorders and "Do Not Resuscitate" orders);
  - h. Knowledge about child protection laws (e.g., abuse and neglect);

- i. Exhibiting effective communication skills with school staff, students, parents, law enforcement officials and the motoring public;

## **BUS ATTENDANTS AND BUS AIDES**

The bus attendant/bus aides are responsible for the supervision and safety of passengers on the school bus during its operation. Bus attendants should be knowledgeable and well informed about infant, toddler, and pre-school child development for both children with and without special needs. Attendants should be knowledgeable about the following:

1. The cognitive, communication, physical, social-emotional, behavioral development and functional level of young children, including the unique needs of specific children in relationship to their disabilities;
2. Using age-appropriate physical handling, communication, and behavior management;
3. Appropriate use of equipment on the school bus (e.g., power lifts, child safety restraint systems such as child safety seats and safety vests, related securement systems, including vest mounting and safety belts, wheelchairs and wheelchair tie-downs and occupant restraint system);
4. Loading and unloading of children who are ambulatory or non-ambulatory;
5. Evacuation procedures and evacuation drills;
6. Transportation requirements on the IFSP or IEP, including confidentiality;
7. Special needs on the vehicle (e.g.; apnea, asthma or other respiratory conditions, life threatening allergies to irritants, assistive devices, communicable diseases, g-tubes, shunts, oxygen, technological dependence, tracheotomy tubes, medical devices, medically complex and fragile conditions, uncontrollable seizure disorders and “Do Not Resuscitate” orders);
8. Child protection laws; (e.g., abuse and neglect) and
9. Communicating effectively with school staff, students, parents, law enforcement officials and the motoring public;
10. **Check your school district policy.**

## CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINT SYSTEMS (CSRS)

Car seats used on school buses must be appropriate for the individual child and must be used correctly. All of the restraint systems used for transportation must be secured to the bus seat in the manner prescribed and approved by both the school bus manufacturer and CSRS directions.

1. **Elements of Correct Installation of CSRS:** It is recognized that compartmentalization, the passive safety system required on school buses under FMVSS 222, provides a higher level of safety to children over 40 pounds without diagnosed medical complexities or fragility than to children who might require special securement or positioning.
  - a. **Direction:** Position (rear or forward-facing) and adjust recline angle accordingly;
  - b. **Belt Paths:** Use the correct belt path on the CSRS as directed by the manufacturer's instructions;
  - c. **Installation:** To achieve tight installation, place adult's full weight into the seat of the CSRS to compress the vehicle seat cushion. Pull the safety tight, buckle and lock the safety belt. The CSRS should not move more than 1-inch forward or side to side.
  
2. **Rear-Facing CSRS (infant only):**
  - a. These seats are designed for infants from birth to twenty pounds (manufacturer's instructions) and one year of age, usually less than 26 inches in length;
  - b. The rear-facing position at a 45 degree recline supports the infant's head, neck and back. Harness straps must be at or below the infant's shoulders;
  - c. Harness straps must be snug (allow only one finger of space under the harness at the collar bone) and must lie flat (not twisted);
  - d. The harness retainer clip, which is designed to hold the harness straps in place, should always be placed at armpit level. Avoid any extra padding or blankets behind or beneath or beneath the infant.
  
3. **Convertible CSRS (Rear-Facing):**

- a. Rear-facing infant position is designed for babies from birth to twenty pounds, and one year of age (manufacturer's instructions) and usually less than 26 inches in length;
- b. The rear-facing position at a 45 degree recline supports the infant's head, neck and back;
- c. The harness straps must be at or below the infant's shoulders;
- d. Harness straps must be snug (allow one finger of space under the harness at the collar bone) and lie flat (not twisted);
- e. The harness retainer clip, which is designed to hold the harness straps in place, is always at armpit level;
- f. Avoid any extra padding or blankets behind the infant;
- g. Avoid the use of a T-shield or tray shield with infants;

**Note:** There are several CSRSs that ride rear-facing to thirty pounds to accommodate the larger infant and to comply with NSTSA's Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Pre-School Age Children in School Buses."

**4. Convertible CSRS (Forward-Facing):**

- a. Forward-facing CSRS with five-point harness, T-shield or tray shield are designed for children above twenty pounds to sixty pounds;
- b. The seat should be adjusted to the upright position;
- c. Harness straps must be in the upper slot (at or above the child's shoulders);
- d. The seat may be used until the child's ears are above the back of the shell;
- e. Harness straps must be snug (allow one finger of space under the harness at the collar bone) and lie flat (not twisted).

**Note:** There are some CSRS's that cannot be installed properly in a twenty-inch bus seat (i.e., tray-shield).

5. **Car Beds:**

- a. A car bed for preschoolers and infants up to 20 pounds allows the infant to lie flat. The use of a car bed should be predicated on the advise of a physical or an appropriate medical support professional and approved by a qualified personnel at an IFSP team meeting;
- b. Lateral support can be added at both sides of the infant. Avoid placing padding around the infant's head to prevent airway blockage;
- c. Beds must be secured to the bus seat, with the seat belt passing through both slide loops;
- d. Adjust the harness system to a snug fit as specified by the manufacturer. Harness straps should lie flat (not twisted);
- e. Caution should be given to gastronomy tubes, tracheotomies and shunts.

6. **Specialized Positioning Seats:**

- a. These seats are used only when a child does not fit in a standard CSRS or has a particular condition warranting more support;
- b. The seat may require an additional tether strap to secure the seat to a bus seat;
- c. The safety belt must be routed through the appropriate belt path specified by the manufacturer's instructions to secure the CSRS;
- d. If a retainer clip is used, it must be positioned at armpit level;
- e. Caution should be given to gastronomy tubes, tracheotomies, and shunts.

7. **Booster Safety Seats (Belt Positioning Boosters Only):** A booster seat should be used only if children are between 40 and 80 pounds and must be used in conjunction with a lap-shoulder belt.

8. **Safety Vests:**

- a. Vest selection should be appropriate for the height, weight, and waist of the child. Proper fit must account for seasonal changes in clothing;

- b. The decision to use a vest should be made by an IFSP or IEP team that includes qualified personnel and the parents;
- c. The use of safety vests should be noted on the IFSP or IEP;
- d. The decision to use vests for wheelchair usage must be made by an IFSP and IEP team that includes qualified personnel and the parent and should be noted on the IFSP or IEP;
- e. Caution should be given to gastrostomy-tubes, tracheotomies and shunts;
- f. Child may have a tendency to slide under the vest/safety belt or submarine and should be securely fitted with a crotch strap supplied by the manufacturer;
- g. If unrestrained students share the seat with a student in a child safety restraint, the student using the restraint should be placed in a window-seating position;
- h. The seat behind the child in a vest should be kept empty or occupied by a child who is also in a child safety restraint system;
- i. Portable seat mounting straps should be checked for proper fit by transportation personnel during pre-trip inspections;
- j. Get parent/guardian signature prior to the use of safety vests.

9. **Wheelchairs:**

- a. All decisions regarding the use of wheelchairs on the school bus must be made by an IFSP or IEP team that includes qualified personnel and the parent and should be noted on the IFSP or IEP;
- b. Appropriate positioning of a child in a wheelchair should be made by qualified personnel including IFSP or IEP committee members and should be noted on the IFSP or IEP;
- c. The IFSP or IEP committee including qualified personnel should determine when it is appropriate to transfer a child from a wheelchair and placed on the original manufacturer's seat using age appropriate child safety or vest.

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR INFANTS, TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Because infants, toddlers and pre-school age children must be transported in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS's), a plan will need to be established with regard to emergency evacuations. Emergency evacuation procedures require that the children be individually loaded/unloaded.

1. In the event of an emergency, there will need to be:
  - a. A written plan on emergency evacuation procedures for infants, toddlers and pre-school age children who are secured in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRSs);
  - b. Emergency evacuation drills are practiced on a scheduled basis, at least as often as required for other school age children; See NRS 392.375
  - c. Personnel involved in transporting children in CSRSs should be trained in evacuation and emergency procedures;
  - d. All school buses carrying children in CSRSs carry safety belt cutters that are accessible only to the driver and any assistants;
  - e. CSRSs should not be placed in school bus seat adjacent to emergency exits.

(NHTSA Guide for the Safe Transportation of Pre-School Age Children in School Buses)

# CHAPTER 12: NEVADA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, NEVADA REVISED STATUTES

## NEVADA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

### **NAC 392.400 - Training while bus unoccupied.**

In the training course required by subsection 2 or NRS 392.380, a new driver must be given at least 10 hours of training in the operation of a school bus or other bus while it is not occupied by pupils.

### **NAC 392.410 - Written test for drivers.**

1. The yearly written test for drivers, required by subsection 3 of NRS 392.380, must be administered by each school district;
2. Before the beginning of a school year; and
3. For any driver who is employed after that time, before he is assigned to driving.
4. Each school district shall provide assurances to the superintendent of public instruction that it has taken appropriate measures to prevent unauthorized access to the questions to be presented in the test.
5. Drivers are limited to three opportunities to achieve a passing score on the test.

### **NAC 392.420 - Records concerning drivers.**

1. Each school district shall maintain records concerning drivers of school buses or buses used for transportation of pupils for extracurricular activities. The records must contain the following information:
  - a. For each driver:
    - i. Written confirmation that he has completed the required training course; and
    - ii. His scores on the yearly written test.
  - b. For each such trip made by the driver:
    - i. The purpose of the trip;

- ii. The destination;
- iii. The date;
- iv. The time of departure and return;
- v. The total miles driven;
- vi. The total time he has operated the vehicle; and
- vii. The report of any violation of subsection 3 of NRS 392.360 and the reasons for the violation.

c. The records must be retained for at least 1 year.

**NAC 392.500 – Conformity with minimal national standards required. (NRS 385.080, 392.400)**

1. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 392.400 and NAC 392.595 and 392.667, a school bus manufactured:
  - a. After February 10, 1972, and before October 22, 2000, may be used for the transportation of pupils only if it conforms to the minimum national standards for school buses established by the Secretary of Transportation pursuant to the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, 49 U.S.C. §§ 30101 et seq., and any more stringent standards adopted by the state board of education that were in effect at the time the school bus was manufactured; or
  - b. On or after October 22, 2000, may be used for the transportation of pupils only if it conforms to the national standards for school buses set forth in 49 C.F. R Part 571 and the standards set forth in the current edition of the Nevada School Bus Standards approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to Subsection 3 of NRS 392.400.
2. This section does not prevent the Federal Government or the government of any state or political subdivision thereof from establishing a safety requirement applicable to motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment procured for its own use if such requirement imposes a higher standard of performance than those required to comply with the otherwise applicable federal standard.

## NEVADA REVISED STATUTES

### **NRS 392.300 Transportation of pupils may be furnished by trustees; regulations.**

1. As provided in the Title, the board of trustees of any school district may furnish transportation for all resident children of school age in the school district attending a public school, including pupils assigned to special schools or programs pursuant to NRS 388.440 to 388.520, inclusive.
  - a. Who are not excused from school attendance by the provisions of this Title; and
  - b. Who reside within the school district at such a distance from the school as to make transportation necessary and desirable.
2. When the board of trustees of a school district whose population is less than 100,000 furnishes transportation for pupils attending public schools pursuant to subsection 1, the board may also provide transportation for all resident children of school age in the school district attending private schools not operated for profit, over bus routes established for pupils attending public schools. If such transportation is provided, the pupils attending such private schools must be transported, if space is available, to and from the points on the established routes nearest to the schools which they attend.
3. The board of trustees of any school district may:
  - a. Establish bus routes;
  - b. Make regulations governing the conduct of pupils while being transported;
  - c. For the safety of pupils being transported, govern the conduct of drivers by making and enforcing regulations not inconsistent with regulations of the State Board of Education or with law.

### **NRS 392.320 Use of certain money for procuring vehicles, drivers and insurance.**

1. As used in this section, “vehicles” means the school buses, station wagons, automobiles and other motor or mechanically propelled vehicles required by the school district for the transportation of pupils.
2. The board of trustees of a school district shall use transportation funds of the school district for:

- a. The purchase, rent, hire and use of vehicles, and for necessary equipment, supplies and articles therefore;
- b. Necessary repairs of vehicles to keep them in safe and workable condition;
- c. The employment and compensation of capable and reliable drivers of vehicles and other employees necessary for the transportation of pupils and other authorized persons;
- d. Insuring vehicles owned, rented, hired, used or operated by or under the direction or supervision of the board of trustees. Such insurances shall;
- e. Be of such an amount as the board of trustees may be able to obtain and the regulations of the State Board of Education requires as sufficient to protect the board of trustees, the pupils being transported, and their parents, guardians or legal representatives from loss or damage resulting from acts covered by the insurance.
- f. Especially insure against loss and damage resulting from or on account of injury or death of any pupil being transported, caused by collision or any accident during the operation of such vehicle.

**NRS 392.330 Transportation by common and private carrier; purchase of bus tickets for certain pupils; contracts and insurance.**

- 1. In addition to the purposes authorized by NRS 392.320, a board of trustees may use transportation funds of the school district.
- 2. If the superintendent of schools fails or refuses to take appropriate action to have the defects corrected within 10 days after receiving notice of them from the Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety, he is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof may be removed from office.
- 3. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4, all vehicles used for transporting pupils must meet the specifications established by regulation of the State Board of Education.
- 4. Any bus which is purchased and used by a school district to transport pupils to and from extracurricular activities is exempt from the specifications adopted by the State Board of Education if the bus meets the federal safety standards for motor vehicles

which were applicable at the time the bus was manufactured and delivered for introduction in interstate commerce.

5. Any person violating any of the requirements of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

**NRS 392.410 Equipment and identification of school bus; use of system of flashing red lights; inspection; penalties.**

1. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, every school bus operated for the transportation of pupils to or from school bus must be equipped with:
  - a. A system of flashing red lights of a type approved by the state board, and installed at the expense of the school district or operator. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the driver shall operate this signal:
    - i. When the bus is stopped to unload pupils;
    - ii. When the bus is stopped to load pupils;
    - iii. In times of emergency or accident, when appropriate;
2. A mechanical device, attached to the front of the bus which, when extended, causes persons to walk around the device. The device must be approved by the state board and installed at the expense of the school district or operator. The driver shall operate the device when the bus is stopped to load or unload pupils. The installation of such a mechanical device is not required for a school bus that is used solely to transport pupils with special needs who are individually loaded and unloaded in a manner that does not require them to walk in front of the bus. The provisions of this paragraph do not prohibit a school district from upgrading or replacing such mechanical device with a more efficient and effective device that is approved by the state board.
3. A driver may stop to load and unload pupils in a designated area without operating the system of flashing red lights required by subsection 1 if the designated area:
  - a. Has been designated by a school district and approved by the department;
  - b. Is of sufficient depth and length to provide space for the bus to park at least 8 feet off the traveled portion of the roadway;
  - c. Is not within an intersection of roadways;

- d. Contains ample space between the exit door of the bus and the parking area to allow safe exit from the bus;
  - e. Is located so as to allow the bus to reenter the traffic from its parked position without creating a traffic hazard; and
  - f. Is located so as to allow pupils to enter and exit the bus without crossing the roadway.
4. In addition to the equipment required by subsection 1, and except as otherwise provided in subsection 4 of NRS 392.400, each school bus must be equipped and identified as required by regulations of the state board.
5. The agents and employees of the Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety shall inspect school buses to determine whether the provisions of this section concerning equipment and identification of the school buses have been complied with, and shall report any violations discovered to the superintendent of schools of the school district wherein the vehicles are operating.
6. If the superintendent of schools fails or refuses to take appropriate action to correct any such violations within 10 days after receiving notice of it from the Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety, he is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction must be removed from office.
7. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

**NRS 392.470 – Interference with pupil attending school; penalty.**

1. It is unlawful for any person, against the will of a pupil attending any public school, to beat, whip, detain or otherwise interfere with him while he is on his way to and from school.
2. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

**NRS 392.480 – Disturbance of school; threatening or assaulting pupil or school employee; interference with persons peaceably assembled within school for school district purposes; penalties.**

1. It is unlawful for any person to disturb the peace of any public school by using vile or indecent language within the buildings or grounds of the school. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor.

2. It is unlawful for any person to threaten or assault any pupil or school employee:
  - a. Within the building or grounds of the school;
  - b. On a bus, van or any other motor vehicle owned, leased or chartered by a school district to transport pupils or school employees; or
  - c. At a location where the pupil or school employee is involved in an activity sponsored by a public school. Except under circumstances described in paragraph c of subsection 2 of NRS 200-471 or NRS 200-571, any person who violates any of the provisions of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor.
3. It is unlawful for any person maliciously and purposely in any manner to interfere with or disturb any persons peaceably assembled within a building of a public school or school district purposes. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor.
4. For the purposes of this section “school employee” means any licensed or unlicensed person employed by a board of trustees of a school district pursuant to NRS 391.100.

**NRS 482.012 “Border state employee” defined.**

1. Boarder state employee means a person whose legal residence is not in this state, who resides outside of the State of Nevada and who commutes on a daily basis into the State of Nevada solely for the purpose of employment at a place of employment which is less than 35 air miles from the state border.

**NRS 484.148 “School bus” defined.**

1. “School bus” means every motor vehicle owned by or under the control of a public or governmental agency or a private school and regularly operated for the transportation of children to or from school or a school activity or privately owned and regularly operated for compensation for the transportation of children to or from school or a school activity.
2. “School bus” does not include a passenger car operated under a contract to transport children to and from school, a common carrier or commercial vehicle under the jurisdiction of the Surface Transportation Board or the transportation services authority when such vehicle is operated in the regular conduct of its business in interstate or intrastate commerce within the State of Nevada.

**NRS 484.1485 “School crossing zone” defined.**

“School crossing zone” means those sections of streets not adjacent to school property that pupils cross while following designated walking route to school.

**NRS 484.149 “School zone” defined.**

“School zone” means those sections of streets which are adjacent to school property.

**NRS 484.223 Duty to give information and render aid**

1. The driver of any vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury to or death of any person or damage to any vehicle or other property which is driven or attended by any person shall:

**NRS 484.303 – One-way highway; rotary traffic island**

1. Upon a highway designated and signposted for one-way traffic a vehicle shall be driven only in the direction designated.
2. A vehicle passing around a rotary traffic island shall be driven only to the right of such island.

**NRS 484.353 Certain vehicles required to stop at all grade crossings of railroad; exceptions.**

1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the driver of any motor vehicle carrying passengers for hire, or of any school bus carrying any school child, or of any vehicle carrying any explosive or flammable liquid as a cargo or part of a cargo, before crossing at grade any track or tracks of a railroad, shall stop that vehicle within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail of the railroad and while so stopped shall listen and look in both directions along the track for any approaching train, and for signals indicating the approach of a train, and shall not proceed until he can do so safely.
2. After stopping as required in this section and upon proceeding when it is safe to do so, the driver of any such vehicle shall cross only in a gear of the vehicle that there will be no necessity for changing gears while traversing the crossing and the driver shall not shift gears while crossing the track or tracks.
3. When stopping is required at a railroad crossing the driver shall keep as far to the right of the highway as possible and shall not form two lanes of traffic unless the highway is marked for four or more lanes of traffic.
4. No such stop need be made at a railroad crossing;

- a. Where a police officer or official traffic-control device controls the movement of traffic.
- b. Which is marked with a device indicating that the crossing is abandoned

**NRS 484.357 Overtaking and passing school bus; penalty.**

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the driver of any vehicle upon a highway, street or road, when meeting or overtaking, from either direction, any school bus, equipped with signs and signals required by law, which has stopped on the highway, street or road to receive a discharge any pupil and is displaying a flashing red light signal visible from the front and rear, shall bring his vehicle to an immediate stop shall not attempt to overtake or proceed past the school bus until the flashing red signal ceases operation.
2. The driver of a vehicle upon a divided highway need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus which is positioned in the other roadway. The driver of a vehicle need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus where traffic is controlled by a traffic officer.
3. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and;
  - a. For a third or any subsequent offense within 2 years after the most recent offense, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 and his driver's license must be suspended for not more than 1 year.
  - b. For a second offense within 1 year after the first offense, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$250.00 nor more that \$500.00 and his driver's license must be suspended for 6 months.
  - c. For the fist offense or any subsequent offense for which a punishment is not provided for in paragraph (a) or (b)m shall be punished by a fine of not less that \$250.00 nor more than \$500.00.

**NRS 484.358 Report by driver of school bus of violation of NRS 484.357; submission of report to school district and department; provision of notice to owner of vehicle.**

1. The driver of a school bus who observes a violation of NRS 484.357 may prepare a report of the violation. The report must be signed by the driver and include:
  - a. The date, time and approximate location of the violation;

- b. The number and state of issuance of the license plate of the vehicle whose driver committed the violation; and
  - c. An identification of the vehicle by type and color.
- 2. The driver of a school bus who prepares a report pursuant to subsection 1 shall, within 2 working days after the violation, send the report to the superintendent of his school district and a copy to the department, which shall thereupon mail to the last known registered owner of the vehicle a notice containing:
  - a. The information included in the report; and
  - b. The provisions of NRS 484.357; and
  - c. An explanation that the notice is not a citation but a warning of the seriousness of the violation.

#### **NRS 484.361 Basic Rule**

- 1. It is unlawful for any person to drive or operate a vehicle of any kind or character at:
  - a. A rate of speed greater than is reasonable or proper, having due regard for the traffic, surface and width of the highway, the weather and other highway conditions;
  - b. Such a rate of speed as to endanger the life, limb or property of any person;
  - c. A rate of speed greater than that posted by a public authority for the particular portion of highway being traversed;
  - d. In any event, a rate of speed greater than 75 miles per hour.

#### **NRS 484.363 Duty of driver to decrease speed under certain circumstances**

The fact that the speed of a vehicle is lower than the prescribed limits does not relieve a driver from the duty to decrease speed when approaching and crossing an intersection, when approaching and going around a curve, when approaching a hill crest, when traveling upon any narrow or winding highway, or when special hazards exist with respect to pedestrians or other traffic, or by reason of weather or other highway conditions, an speed shall be decreased as may be necessary to avoid colliding with any person, vehicle or other conveyance on or entering a highway in compliance with legal requirements and the duty of all person to use due care

### **NRS 484.365 School Bus: Maximum speed**

A school bus shall not exceed a speed of 55 miles per hour when transporting pupils to and from school or any activity which is properly a part of a school program.

### **NRS 484.366 School zone or school crossing zone: Speed limit; designation; determination of hours in which speed limit is in effect.**

1. A person shall not drive a motor vehicle at a speed in excess of 15 miles per hour in an area designated as a school zone except;
  - a. On a day on which school is not in session;
  - b. During the period from a half hour after school is no longer in operation to a half hour before school is next in operation;
  - c. If the zone is designated by an operational speed limit beacon, during hours when the pupils of the school are in class and the yellow lights of the speed limit beacon are not flashing in the manner which indicates that the speed limit is in effect; or
  - d. If the zone is not designated by an operational speed limit beacon, during times when the sign designating the school zone indicates that the speed limit is in effect; or
  - e. If the zone is not designated by an operation speed limit beacon, during times when the sign designating the school zone indicates that the speed limit is not in effect.
  
2. A person shall not drive a motor vehicle at a speed in excess of 25 miles per hour in an area designated as a school crossing zone except:
  - a. On a day on which school is not in session;
  - b. During the period from a half hour after school is no longer in operation to a half hour before school is next in operation;
  - c. If the zone is not designated by an operation speed limit beacon, during the hours when the pupils of the school are in class and the yellow lights of the speed limit beacon are not flashing in the manner which indicates that the speed limit is not in effect;

- d. If the zone is not designated by an operational speed limit beacon, during times when the sign designating the school zone indicates that the speed limit is not in effect.
3. The governing body of a local government or the department of transportation shall designate school zones and school crossing zones. An area must not be designated as a school zone if imposing a speed limit of 15 miles per hour would be unsafe because of high speed limits in adjoining areas.
4. Each such governing body and the department shall provide signs to mark the beginning and end of a school zone and school crossing zone which it respectively designates. Each sign marking the beginning of such a zone must include a designation of the hours when the speed limit is in effect or that the speed limit is in effect when children are present.
5. With respect to each school zone and school crossing zone in a school district, the superintendent of the school district or his designee, in conjunction with the department of transportation and the governing body of the local government that designated the school zone or school crossing zone and after consulting with the principal of the school and the agency that is responsible for enforcing the speed limit in the zone, shall determine the times when the speed limit is in effect.
6. As used in this section, “speed limit beacon” means a device which is used in conjunction with a sign and equipped with two or more yellow lights that flash alternately to indicate when the speed limit in a school zone or school crossing zone is in effect.

**NRS 484.373 Duties of driver driving motor vehicle at speed so slow as to impede forward movement of traffic; prohibition against stopping vehicle on roadway so as to impede or block normal and reasonable movement of traffic; exception;**

1. If any driver drives a motor vehicle at a speed so slow as to impede the forward movement of traffic proceeding immediately behind him, the driver shall:
  - a. If the highway has one lane for traveling in each direction and the width of the paved portion permits, drive to the extreme right side of the highway and, if applicable, comply with the provisions of NRS 484.374.
  - b. If the highway has two or more clearly marked lanes for traffic traveling in his direction, drive in the extreme right-hand lane except when necessary to pass other slowly moving vehicles; or

- c. If the highway is controlled-access highway, use alternate routes whenever possible.
2. A person shall not bring a vehicle to a complete stop upon a roadway so as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic unless the stop is necessary for safe operation or in compliance with law.

**NRS 484.374 Duty of driver of slow-moving vehicle to turn off roadway; circumstances in which duty arises; criminal penalty.**

1. On a highway that has one lane for traveling in each direction, where passing is unsafe because of traffic traveling in the opposite direction or other condition, the driver of a slow-moving vehicle, behind which five or more vehicle are formed in a lines, shall, to allow the vehicles following behind to proceed, turn off the roadway:
  - a. At the nearest place designated as a turnout by signs erected by the public authority having jurisdiction over the highway; or
  - b. In the absence of such a designated turnout, at the nearest place where:
    - i. Sufficient area for a safe turnout exists; and
    - ii. The circumstances and conditions are such that the driver is able to turn off the roadway in a safe manner.
2. Any person who violates subsection 1 is guilty of a misdemeanor.
3. As used in this section, “slow-moving vehicle” means a vehicle that is traveling at a rate of speed which is less than the posted speed limit for the highway or portion of the highway upon which the vehicle is traveling.