



**WETASKIWIN REGIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



# **Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools**

## **Student Transportation Operating Handbook**



**Wetaskiwin Regional  
Public Schools**

Inspiring students to become the best they can be.

[www.wrps.ab.ca](http://www.wrps.ab.ca) Updated: January 2017

## TO THE OPERATOR:

This booklet has been produced to enable quick reference for drivers. It has been kept as brief but informative as possible. Further detailed information can be obtained at the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools' Transportation Department.

You, the driver, are a part of the school system. Communication is key in the success of operating your school bus. Positive dialogue with the students, parents and school creates an understanding that allows you to resolve situations that may arise from time to time.

1.	<b>General Procedures.....</b>	<b>3</b>
	Information in this section will include procedures that a driver should take, in the daily operation of the route, to ensure a safe and reliable means of transportation. - Specific Acts (School Bus Operation Regulation/Traffic Safety Act).....	<b>6</b>
2.	<b>Bus Pass Procedures.....</b>	<b>10</b>
	Bus Passes – Urban & Rural	
3.	<b>Pre-Trip Inspection.....</b>	<b>11</b>
	Six basic parts 1) Under the hood 2) Engine start 3) Light and signal check 4) Exterior walk around 5) Internal inspection 6) Static and "on the road" operating check	
4.	<b>Special Education Procedure.....</b>	<b>11</b>
	How to handle passengers/special hints Maintain co-operation with parents Special transportation - wheel chair Special Education Code Definitions Asthma Fetal Alcohol Syndrome / Effects (F.A.S./E.) Seizures / Convulsions Tourette Syndrome	
5.	<b>Field Trips.....</b>	<b>20</b>
6.	<b>Student Management.....</b>	<b>20</b>
	Managing Student Behaviour Guidelines for Dealing with Behaviour Problems Positive Communication – Parent Strategies	
7.	<b>Safety Procedures.....</b>	<b>24</b>

	1) Safety and accident procedures	
	2) Breakdowns	
	3) Turnarounds	
	4) School bus evacuation	
	5) Courses being offered	
	6) Emergency procedures	
8.	<b>Cell Phone Communication.....</b>	<b>30</b>
9.	<b>Bus Parking.....</b>	<b>31</b>
10.	<b>Bus Signage.....</b>	<b>32</b>
11.	<b>Division Policies.....</b>	<b>32</b>
	1) Inclement Weather	
	2) School Bus Stops	
	3) Student Conduct on School Buses	
12.	<b>Transportation Council.....</b>	<b>31</b>
13.	<b>Communication Chart.....</b>	<b>35</b>

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

The following guidelines outline the procedures that you should take in the daily operation of your route to ensure a safe and reliable means of transportation. All route times are departure times, not arrival times.

1. Buses are not to enter private property except for Special Needs, or in accordance with Administrative Procedure # , Private Property Entry. Where parents are wishing private entry, contact the Transportation Department before accommodating their wishes.
2. School Bus Passengers
  - a) Transportation is to be provided for K-12.
  - b) Pre-school aged children of bus drivers, who are greater than 6 months of age, are properly placed in a car seat that meets provincial standards, and do not disrupt the safe operation of a bus, would be allowed to ride, provided there is room on the bus. These children must be registered at the Transportation Department.
3. If possible, try a test run of your route before school begins. This will give you the opportunity to become familiar with the route and resolve any problems before you start loading students. If you find a problem with the scheduling of the route, notify Student Transportation.
4. If you have kindergarten children on your route, expect them not to be riding every day in the first week due to school scheduling. The children should be settled into the bus routine by the second week.
5. On regular routes, if you are on schedule, there is no need to wait for later children at the designated stop. However before leaving the area, be sure that no children are at the stop or running towards the stop. A good idea is to have a LISTED DEPARTURE TIME FOR EVERY STOP.
6. Students are allowed to get off only at their designated stop (K-6). Only if a child has a note from the parent, school principal, or school secretary, may they be dropped off at a different stop.
7. Normally never back the bus on school grounds or at loading or unloading stops adjacent to such school grounds. If you must back the bus be sure there is a responsible person at the rear of the bus to assist you.
8. When loading or unloading rural and urban students, the bus should be positioned in the right lane to ensure traffic cannot pass on the right hand side of the bus. Note, this does not mean to locate the bus at curbside or directly in the shoulder lane.
9. When stopped behind a school bus displaying the overhead alternating lights, the school bus behind shall not activate its overhead alternating flashing lights unless also engaged in loading or unloading students. To improve visibility of the lead bus, the approaching bus should be slightly to the right.
10. Do not fill the fuel tank of the bus when passengers are on the bus.
11. Do not leave the bus without stopping the motor, removing the keys, setting the brakes and closing the door. Use hazard lights if appropriate.
12. No driver will operate a bus while under the influence of liquor or debilitating drugs.
13. Smoking is not permitted on a school bus with or without students on board.

14. Maintain a neat personal appearance.
15. Ensure that the school bus is in good repair and safe operating condition.
16. **In the event of a delay exceeding 10 minutes, the Transportation Department is to be contacted immediately. If you are unable to implement your Emergency Information Fan Out please indicate this at that time.**
17. Assist any student who may be having problems getting on and off the bus.
18. Always check the bus after completion of route or field trip for damage, lost articles or children.
19. Never move the bus with a student out of their seat or standing.
20. **At non-supervised transfer sites, the transporting bus must wait for the receiving bus.**
21. When passengers are loading from school, if you are uncertain if they are your regular rider, ask them. If they are not and they are in Grade 6 or less, they must have a note from their parent, to board a different bus. This applies only if you have space availability.
22. Letters or information that has not been approved by the Transportation Department are not permitted to be sent home.
23. Cellular phones are to be used for emergency use only. WRPS follows Bill 16 Legislation.
24. **Never** apply your brakes to get your student's attention.
25. School Bus Operation Alberta Regulation 437/86 disallows the blocking of aisles or emergency exits on school busses .

Carrying of items such as musical instruments, hockey sticks, skates, skate boards, skis, etc., will be handled in the following manner:

- 1) Skates are required to be in a sealed bag.
  - 2) No hockey sticks will be allowed on a regular bus route.
  - 3) No skis will be allowed on a regular bus route.
  - 4) No curling brooms will be allowed on a regular bus route.
  - 5) Skate boards will be allowed on a regular bus route provided they are in a sealed bag.
  - 6) Musical instruments, no larger than 13" across, shall be kept on the lap of student.
  - 7) Larger objects which may interfere with safety and or comfort of any student on the bus will not be allowed.
  - 8) No ski-boards or scooters will be permitted on a regular bus route.
  - 9) Roller Blades are not permitted to be worn.
  - 10) Certain small items may be allowed if they are carried in a sealed bag.  
(e.g. skates that are enclosed in a gym bag)
26. Paper Work  
At the beginning of the school year each driver is given a bus driver's package. Included in this package
- 1) Student List\*
  - 2) Report of Student Changes on School Bus\*\*
  - 3) Rules and Regulations for Students  
Application to Use School Bus

- 4) Fan Out (in case of breakdowns, etc.)
- 5) Seating Plan

- These are all available one week prior to commencement of the school year
- \* - (Needed for the Transportation Grant and spare drivers. (a) must be returned to the Transportation Department by September 30).
- \*\* - Report of Student Changes on School Bus - This form must be completed each time you have added or deleted a student from your bus and should be returned to the Transportation office as quickly as possible after the change.

Stop Locations & Routes are not to be changed without the department's approval.

Students Who Have Moved - Unless you are sure that the student has moved from the residence and no longer attends school, please do not remove their name from the student list. If you are uncertain of the situation, contact the Transportation Department for confirmation as to whether or not the student is still registered. If they are not, then you can delete their name from the list, i.e. student may only ride three times a year - they still are to remain on your list. This form is to be used after your Student List has been submitted to the Transportation Department. Bus drivers must also have a fan out available to contact parents in case of breakdown, etc.

30. When a spare driver is operating your bus, you are responsible to notify the transportation department.
31. Controlled Railway Crossings  
In the case of a railway crossing that is controlled by a traffic control signal, the driver of a school bus shall:
  - 1) Approach with caution
  - 2) Slow down
  - 3) Look both ways
  - 4) Proceed if safe to do so
32. Impassable Roads  
If you know in advance that this may occur, or it happens while on route, the following is suggested:
  - 1) Contact the parents/guardians to explain the situation.
  - 2) Arrange for a safe pick-up or drop-off location.
  - 3) Contact Student Transportation.
33. Emergency Breakdowns  
Under normal circumstances students are to be transported in authorized vehicles only. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers only are permitted to pick up students in these situations.
34. Bus Idling  
To reduce emissions and noise at our schools please ensure you reduce your idle times in accordance with weather conditions as not to effect vehicle safety and reasonable passenger comfort. The guidelines are:
  - 1) Upon arrival at school, school bus engines shall be shut off after the 5 minutemanufacturers recommended cool down period.
  - 2) School buses may be allowed to idle at a school loction when temperature conditions are -15° Celsius or colder.
  - 3) School buses may be allowed to idle at a school location when rain or snow conditions cause a humidity build up causing windows to fog over and therefore a safety concern.
  - 4) School buses equipped with wheel chair lifts may be allowed to idle to reduce the risk of battery failure.

## **SPECIFIC ACTS (Parts Of)**

- 1) School Bus Operation Regulation
- 2) Traffic Safety Act

Copies of the above acts in complete form are available at Student Transportation.

### **Prohibitions**

- 10 No person shall, while transporting pupils on a school bus, convey in or on the school bus:

- 1) Animals
- 2) Firearms
- 3) Explosives
- 4) flammable materials or substances
- 5) fuel other than in the fuel system and fuel tank of the bus, or
- 6) anything
  - a) of a dangerous or objectionable nature, or
  - b) that might endanger the lives or safety of persons in the bus.

AR 437/86s10

### **Speed**

- 11 No person shall operate a school bus at a speed greater than:

- 1) 90 kilometers per hour, or
- 2) the speed limit prescribed by law, whichever is the slower speed.

AR 437/86s11

### **Backing Up**

- 12 No person shall operate a school bus in reverse where the school bus is:

- 1) on a school ground, or
- 2) at a location, adjacent to a school ground, at which the school bus is loaded or unloaded, unless there is a responsible person located outside at the rear of the school bus giving directions as to the operating of the school bus in reverse.

AR437/86s12

### **Fueling**

- 13 The person operating a school bus shall not, nor shall he permit another person to, put fuel into the fuel tank of the school bus while any person, other than the person operating the school bus, is on the school bus.

AR 437/86s13

### **Use of Tobacco, etc.**

- 14 No person, while he is operating a school bus or is a passenger on a school bus, shall at any time during which pupils are on the school bus smoke or use tobacco in any manner.

The person operating a school bus shall ensure that no person remains on the school bus who appears to be:

- 1) consuming alcohol,
- 2) impaired by alcohol or a drug, or
- 3) at any time during which pupils are on the school bus, smoking or using tobacco in any manner.

### **Luggage, Equipment and Tools**

- 15 When luggage, equipment or tools are carried on a school bus they shall not be carried in the interior of the school bus.

Notwithstanding subsection (1), where it is not practical to carry luggage, equipment or tools other than in the interior of the bus they may be carried in the interior of the school bus if they:

- 1) are stored under the seats where possible.
- 2) do not block the aisles or emergency exits, and
- 3) are stored, lodged or secured in such a manner so that they cannot be dislodged or move about when the brakes of the school bus are applied, during acceleration of the school bus or in the event of an accident involving the school bus.

The person operating the school bus shall ensure that any luggage, equipment or tools carried on the school bus are transported in accordance with this section.

AR 437/86s16

### **Loading and Unloading Pupils**

- 16 The person operating a school bus shall load or unload pupils onto or from a school bus only when and at a place that it is safe to do so.

When the person operating a school bus unloads a pupil from the school bus, that person must, before he moves the school bus after the unloading, ensure that the pupil has reached a place that is safe from the traffic.

AR 437/86s17

### **Pupils Crossing Road**

- 17 Where a pupil must cross a road or highway before loading onto or after unloading from a school bus, the operator shall, as far as practicable, direct the pupil to cross the road or highway in front of the school bus.

AR 437/86s18

### **Leaving School Bus**

- 18 No person operating a school bus shall leave the school bus unless:
- 1) the motor and ignition is turned off,
  - 2) the ignition key is removed, and
  - 3) the emergency brake is set.

AR 437-86s20

### **Railway Crossings**

- 42(5) In the case of a railway crossing that is not controlled by a traffic control signal, a person driving a vehicle that:
- 1) is a school bus,
  - 2) is carrying explosive substances as a cargo, or
  - 3) is used for carrying flammable liquids or gas as cargo, whether or not the vehicle is carrying that cargo,
  - 4) shall stop no closer than 5 metres or further than 15 metres back from the nearest rail of the railway and



- 5) remaining stopped, shall listen and look in both directions along the railway for an approaching railway train and for signals indicating the approach of a railway train,
- 6) shall not proceed to drive the vehicle across the railway crossing until it is safe to do so, and
- 7) in the case of a school bus, shall before proceeding to drive the school bus across the railway crossing
  - a) open the front door of the bus, and
  - b) if practicable to do so with one hand, also open the window of the bus that is located immediately to the left of that person.

Subsection (5) does not apply when a peace officer or a flagperson otherwise directs.

When a person driving a vehicle has stopped the vehicle in accordance with this section, that person:

- 1) shall drive the vehicle across the railway tracks with the vehicle in a gear that will not need to be changed while crossing the tracks, and
- 2) shall not shift gears of the vehicle while crossing the railway tracks.

### **Flashing Lights On School Buses**

69 In this Division, "school bus" means a vehicle on which are displayed the words "school bus".

#### **Alternately Flashing Amber Lights**

- 71 Where a school bus is displaying alternately flashing amber lamps, a person driving a vehicle that is approaching the school bus shall,
- 1) when approaching the school bus from the rear, if the school bus is on a highway that is divided by a median into two separate roadways, or
  - 2) when approaching the school bus from the front or rear, if the school bus is on a highway that is not divided by a median into two separate roadways, reduce the speed of the approaching vehicle so that if the approaching vehicle passes the school bus it does so in a cautious manner.

#### **Alternately Flashing Red Lights:**

- 72 1) Where a school bus is operating alternately flashing red lamps, a person driving a vehicle that is approaching the school bus shall:
- a) when approaching the school bus from the rear, if the school bus is on a highway that is divided by a median into two separate roadways, or
  - b) when approaching the school bus from the front or rear, if the school bus is on a highway that is not divided by a median into two separate roadways, stop the approaching vehicle before it reaches the school bus.
- 2) After stopping an approaching vehicle pursuant to subsection (1), the person driving the vehicle shall not proceed to drive the vehicle past the school bus until:
- a) the driver of the school bus indicated by a signal that the vehicle may proceed, or
  - b) the alternately flashing red lamps on the school bus stop flashing.

#### **Activating Flashing Lights, etc.**

- 73 1) A person driving a school bus shall
- a) activate the alternately flashing amber lamps when that person begins to slow down the school bus for the purpose of stopping on a highway to load or unload passengers, and
  - b) activate

- (i) the alternately flashing red lamps, and
  - (ii) the stop arm, when the school bus is stopped on a highway for the purpose of loading or unloading passengers.
- 2) Subsection (1) (a) applies only in respect of school buses that are equipped with alternately flashing amber lamps.
- 3) Subsection (1) (b) (ii) applies only in respect of school buses that are equipped with stop arms.
- 4) A person shall not operate the alternately flashing lamps or the stop arm located on a school bus other than as provided for under subsection (1) or a regulation or bylaw referred to in section 113 (2) of the Act, whichever is applicable.
- 5) Notwithstanding a regulation or a bylaw referred to in section 113 (2) of the Act, when the alternately flashing lamps and stop arm are used pursuant to that regulation or bylaw they shall be used in the sequence as provided for under subsection (1).

### **Backing Up On School Ground, etc.**

- 74 A person driving a school bus shall not back up the school bus when the school bus is:
- 1) on a school ground, or
  - 2) at a location adjacent to a school ground at which the school bus is loaded or unloaded, unless there is a responsible person located outside at the rear of the school bus giving directions with respect to the backing up of the school bus.

### **School Zones**

Subject to section 107(2) of the Act, where a portion of a highway is identified as a school zone by a traffic control device, the speed limit that is established or prescribed for that school zone is in effect during the following periods of time on any day that school is held:

- 1) the period between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.;
- 2) the period between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.;
- 3) the period between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

## **BUS PASS PROCEDURES**

**CHECK FOR BUS PASSES** (City of Wetaskiwin Only). This normally applies to all pupils, except curb to curb special students and E.C.S.

### **Bus Passes – Urban**

- 1) Students will be required to produce a bus pass AM & PM, with a grace period of 3 weeks from commencement of the school year.
- 2) After 3 warnings, the driver will supply Transportation with a list of students who do not have a bus pass.
- 3) No refusal of a ride would be exercised by the driver.
- 4) All urban students are required to have a bus pass.

## **PRE-TRIP INSPECTIONS**

Six basic parts:

- 1) Under the hood
- 2) Engine start

- 3) Light and signal check
- 4) Exterior walk around
- 5) Internal inspection
- 6) Static and "on the road" operating check.

The above should be performed on a daily basis. Specific detailed information can be obtained at Student Transportation.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCEDURE**

This section will deal with the transporting of disabled students and will include instructions on how to handle most students and maintain adequate communication and cooperation with parents. Your skill, loyalty and dependability will be enhanced by a daily display of patience and good public relations. **ALL OUR CHILDREN ARE SPECIAL.**

### **Special Characteristics:**

#### **Early Intervention**

- 1) 2 1/2 to 5 1/2 years of age (mainly at Broxton Park)
- 2) children with severe mental or physical handicapping conditions, severe speech delays, blind, deaf or behavior disorder
- 3) little personal independence

**All other disabilities include students aged 5 1/2 to 19**

#### **Autism**

- 1) frequently bizarre or repetitive behavior
- 2) impaired social relationships and interactions
- 3) in many cases little or no language
- 4) may be mentally disabled
- 5) may be self-abusive or dangerously aggressive

#### **Behavior Disorder**

- 1) intellectually may range from very bright to normal, to severe mental disability
- 2) may exhibit bizarre, inappropriate or antisocial behavior
- 3) may be dangerously aggressive

#### **Deaf and Blind**

- 1) may range from mild hearing impaired to deaf
- 2) may range from mild visually impaired to "clinical" blindness

#### **Dependent Mental Disability**

- 1) severe intellectual disability
- 2) many are confined to wheelchair, and may have poor control of limbs or other body parts
- 3) may have little or no language and poor attention span
- 4) many are unable to feed or toilet themselves
- 5) may be medically fragile and have seizures

#### **Learning Disability**

- 1) average or above intellectual ability
- 2) delayed academic skills, especially reading, spelling, math and written language
- 3) difficulty with attention, concentration and impulse control
- 4) often low self-esteem due to frequent "failures"

#### **Mild Mental Disability**

- 1) mild intellectual impairment

- 2) immature for age
- 3) may be inattentive, overly active, impulsive

### **Multiple Disability**

- 1) has more than one disabling condition (see other categories)

### **Physically Handicapped**

- 1) may be confined to wheelchair or have limited mobility e.g. cerebral palsy
- 2) requires physical assistance for self care and/or education
- 3) may have additional medical problems

### **Trainable Mental Disability**

- 1) moderate mental (intellectual) disability
- 2) functions like children 1/3 to 1/2 the age
- 3) may have additional problems - speech, behavior, motor control

**Problem Children** - Never strike or abuse a child in any way, no matter what he or she does. If the problem is such that you cannot drive, stop the bus (in a safe manner) as soon as possible. Attend to the situation. If a child becomes uncontrollable, call us for some assistance. Then do an misconduct form on the child.

**Infractions** - Misconduct forms are a must. The infraction forms should be given to the Principal of that school, as soon as possible, preferably the day of the incident. The infraction form is to be taken in by the driver, not a student. The Principal receives all the copies except for the Driver Copy which stays in the book, for our reference. The Principal will deal with the infraction. Never let the child get the best of you. Don't try to deal with a problem yourself...ask for help.

**AM Pick-Ups** - Once a parent is advised of a pick up time and you are there by that pick up time, wait your two minutes and then proceed. Also advise parents to have the child ready five minutes prior to the pick up time.

**Pick ups** - Always pick up and drop off the children on the right side of the street. **Do not make a U turn** ... go around the block if necessary. If you use alleys for pick-ups and drop-offs, **do not speed**.. Also, **do not speed** when going through complexes.  
**Do not speed, period.**

**No One Home** - When dropping off a student, make sure someone is home to receive the child. If no one is home, wait approximately five minutes. If still no one arrives, carry on with your route. When you have dropped off your last student, take the child back home. If no one is home, contact Transportation Department at (780) 352-6018 or, if after hours, contact the Transportation Manager directly.

**Schools AM** - Try not to arrive at any school more than 10 minutes before the school start time.

**Schools PM** - In the PM, we must arrive at the school within 10 minutes prior to dismissal time. The 10 minutes, after dismissal time, is a **must** to wait before you leave...Unless you already have all your students. Check with school procedures on departure time regulation.

**Refusing Rides** - You can **never** refuse a child to ride AM or PM. The Principal is the only one with this authority.

**Uncontrollable Child** - If you should have a child that comes to you in an uncontrollable state (either from home or the school), and once the student is on the bus and does not seem to calm down, bring the child back to the most recent pick up location. Please contact Transportation so we can inform the receiving party.

**Unsafe Wheelchair** - If you have a wheelchair you feel is unsafe to transport a child safely in, call Student Transportation.

**Extra Clean Unit** - safeguard the health of your passengers who may be vulnerable to dust and germs, - give a better attitude among your passengers - prolong the life of your unit, give the general public a favorable image of you, the driver, and the special transportation system.

### **Special Transportation –**

**Wheelchair** - The vehicle used for this type of transportation is unique and new skills will be required to operate it effectively.

- 1) You, the driver, must be aware of your passengers and their different needs as well as the traffic and road conditions. Driving patterns sometimes need to be adjusted, to take into consideration the extra care needed for your passengers, such as: eliminating any form of jerky movements that could cause discomfort. Starts and stops should be as smooth as possible. Remember, sudden movements give the sensation of loss of balance to wheelchair passengers.
- 2) Do not run, push the chair at normal walking speed.
- 3) Watch for small cracks or bumps.
- 4) Inform the person of what you are doing at all times.
- 5) Be careful not to bang the chair or handle roughly. (Remember: Electric wheelchairs will need extra care because the battery can be easily punctured).

### **Loading and Unloading - Is it a safe area??**

- 1) Make sure that the door is locked open and cannot swing shut accidentally.
- 2) Lower the lift to ground level, make sure you do not force it into the ground or leave it resting on uneven ground.
- 3) Make sure the chair brakes work and are on, also that the safety plate to the ramps works properly.
- 4) DURING COLD OR INCLEMENT WEATHER, CLOSE THE DOORS FIRST BEFORE SECURING THE CHAIR TO THE VEHICLE.

## **Special Education Code Definitions**

### **Code 41 – Severe Mental Disability**

A student with a severe mental disability is one who:

- a. Has severe delays in all or most areas of development.
- b. Frequently has other disabilities including physical, sensory, medical and or behavioural.
- c. Requires constant assistance and/or supervision in all areas of functioning including daily living skills and may require assistive technology.

### **Code 42 – Severe Emotional/Behavioural Disability**

A student with a severe emotional/behavioural disorder is one who:

- 1) Displays chronic, extreme and pervasive behaviours, which require close and constant adult supervision, high levels of structure, and other intensive support services in order to function in an educational setting. The behaviours significantly interfere with both the learning and safety of the student and other students.
- 2) Has a diagnosis or psychosis including schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, obsessive/compulsive disorders, or severe clinical depression.
- 3) Displays self-stimulation, self-abusive or aphasic behaviour; or,
- 4) Is dangerously aggressive, destructive, and has violent and impulsive behaviours toward self and others such as Conduct Disorder. In most extreme and pervasive instance, severe Oppositional Defiant Disorder may qualify.

### **Code 43 – Severe Multiple Disability**

A student with multiple disabilities is one who:

1. Has two or more non-associated moderate to severe mental and/or physical disabilities which, in combination result in the student functioning at the severe to profound level; and,
2. Requires special programs, resources and/or therapeutic services.

### **Code 44 – Severe Physical or Medical Disability**

A student with a severe physical, medical or neurological disability is one who:

- 1) Has a medical diagnosis or a physical disability, specific neurological disorder or medical condition which creates a significant impact on the student's ability to function in the school environment.
- 2) Requires extensive personal assistance and modifications to the learning environment in order to benefit from schooling.

A student with severe autism or other severe pervasive developmental disorder is included in this category.

### **Code 45 – Deafness**

A student with a profound hearing loss is one who:

- 1) Has a hearing loss of 71 decibels (dB) or more in the better ear over the normal speech range (500 and 4000 hertz (Hz) which interferes with the use of oral language as the primary form of communication; or
- 2) Has a cochlear implant preceded by a 71 dB hearing loss unaided in the better ear; and
- 3) Requires extensive modifications and specialized supports.

### **Code 46 – Blindness**

A student with a severe visual disability is one whose corrected vision is so limited that it is inadequate for most or all instructional situations, and information must be presented through other means. A student with a severe visual disability (blindness) has a visual acuity ranging from 6/60 (20/200) in the better eye with correction, to having no usable vision or a field of vision reduced to an angle of 20 degrees. For designation under this category, students would be eligible for registration with CNIB.

### **Code 47 – Severe Communication Disability (for ECS children only)**

A child with a severe communication disability has severe difficulty in communicating with peers and/or adults because of a severe disability in expressive and/or receptive language and/or total language. This may include little, if any, expressive or receptive communication skills.

### **Code 51 – Mild Mental Disability**

A student with a mild mental disability is usually delayed in most academic subjects and social behaviours as compared to his/her same-age peers.

### **Code 52 – Moderate Mental Disability**

A student with a moderate mental disability requires significant modification to basic curriculum, but is able to profit from instruction living/vocational skills and may acquire functional literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Code 53 – Emotional /Behavioural Disability**

A student with a mild to moderate emotional/behavioural disability exhibits chronic and pervasive behaviours that are so maladaptive that they interfere with the learning and safety of the student and other students. Typically, behaviour disabilities are characterized by a number of observable maladaptive behaviours:

- 1) An inability to establish or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers or adults.
- 2) A general mood of unhappiness or depression.
- 3) Inappropriate behaviour or feelings under ordinary conditions.
- 4) Continued difficulty in coping with the learning situation in spite of remedial interventions.
- 5) Physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- 6) Difficulties in accepting the realities of personal responsibility and accountability.
- 7) Physical violence toward other persons and/or physical destructiveness toward the environment.

### **Code 54 – Learning Disability**

A student with a learning disability usually has average or above average intelligence but has specific learning disabilities that interfere with normal academic learning.

### **Code 55 – Hearing Disability**

A student with a mild to moderate hearing disability is one whose hearing condition affects speech and language development and interferes with the ability to learn.

### **Code 56 – Visual Disability**

A student with a mild to moderate visual disability is one whose vision is so limited that it interferes with the student's ability to learn or the student requires modification of the learning environment to be able to learn.

### **Code 57 – Communication Disability**

A student with a communication disability has significant difficulty in communication with peers and adults because of a disability in expressive and/or receptive language, and/or disabilities in speech including articulation, voice and fluency.

### **Code 58 – Physical or Medical Disability**

A student with a mild to moderate physical or medical disability is one whose physical, neurological or medical condition interferes with the ability to learn, or who requires modification of the learning environment to be able to learn.

### **Code 59 – Multiple Disability**

A student with a multiple disability has two or more non-associated mild to moderate disabilities that have a significant impact upon his or her ability to learn. Some disabling conditions are closely associated so would not be designated under this category. For example, students with hearing disabilities frequently have communication disabilities, and students with mental disabilities almost always have both academic and communication disabilities.

### **Asthma**

**Asthma can be life threatening**, it cannot be cured – only controlled. The main symptoms of asthma are:

- 1) Long lasting cough
- 2) Shortness of breath
- 3) Tightness in the chest
- 4) Wheezing

Some people may have only one or two of these symptoms, while others may have all of them. Even mild symptoms should be treated so that lung damage does not occur and/or get worse.

### **Causes of Attacks**

Some of the common triggers are:

- 1) Infections
- 2) Exercise
- 3) Smoke
- 4) Strong odours...paint, cleaning products, hair spray, perfumes etc.
- 5) Pollen, moulds, dust and mildew
- 6) Dander from warm blooded animals
- 7) Weather changes.

There are two main types of medications used in treating asthma. However there are different ways of administering them.

**Anti- inflammatories:** these reduce and sometimes prevent the swelling that causes the symptoms.

**Bronchodilators:** these relax the muscles that tighten around the airways. These may be used when symptoms are increased or for every day use. Sometimes these are referred to as **Rescue Inhalers**.

### **KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS!**

- 1) Treatment needs to be started before the (student) is in the **DANGER ZONE**.
- 2) The student should have their **RESCUE INHALER** with them. Have them take the correct amount of their medication.
- 3) Keep Calm!! Everyone else needs to as well.
- 4) Anxiety/Fear = Stress = Increased symptoms.
- 5) After the student has used the **RESCUE INHALER**, there should be noticeable improvement in the child's ability to breath easier.

IF THE STUDENT **DOES NOT** SHOW SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT:

- 1) Watch for breathing getting more difficult. You may be able to observe the chest and neck getting pulled in with each breath, or the student hunching over, or struggling to breath.
- 2) **If the child's lips or fingernails turn grey or blue...THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! CALL FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

### **DO NOT:**

- 1) Allow the student to drink a large amount of water. They may drink only a normal amount.
- 2) Breathe warm moist air.
- 3) Re-breathe air that has been exhaled into a paper bag.



- 4) Use over the counter medications unless approved by the child's doctor or any team of Emergency Response Personal.

### **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome / Effects (F. A. S. / E.)**

Because of the wide variability of effects, there is no simple approach to working with individuals with FAS/E. No simple technique. A medical doctor must make the diagnosis of FAS/E. Research into the background of children indicates that their primary disability arises from the **organic brain damage**, not from their environment.

As a school bus driver, you may encounter students with FAS/E. You should acquaint yourself with some positive coping skills. Learning all you can about specific areas of difficulty the child has, and where possible, help the child understand and identify the problems created by unacceptable behaviour, will make your job more pleasant, and less stressful. You should also learn effective methods of behaviour modification for the child.

### **Create and Develop a Positive Environment for the FAS/E Busing Student**

The long-term goal is to have the child take charge of his/her life and take responsibility for his/her actions.

Children prenatally exposed to alcohol do best in a stable, predictable, nurturing environment. All children benefit from this sort of environment. But for alcohol-affected children it is a must because of his need for an environmental predictability.

### **Characteristics of FAS/E**

- 1) FAS/E children may be hyperactive and over sensitive to stimulation. They may have severe temper tantrums and find it difficult to adjust to change. They may lack inhibitions and have attention problems. Because of their outgoing talkative manner many people may not be aware that they have language problems.
- 2) In middle childhood, hyperactivity, short attention span, impulsiveness and memory difficulties become more of a problem. Children may lack social skills, making it hard for them to have friends.
- 3) **They have a hard time predicting the consequences of their behaviour.**
- 4) They may be easily influenced by peers, or have difficulty getting along with their peers.
- 5) There may be a high demand for touch, yet a lack of bonding with caretakers.
- 6) They may exhibit teasing or bullying behaviour. The child may feel **fearless** and **unresponsive** to verbal cautions.
- 7) **The teen child with FAS/E seems unable to understand how his/her actions could affect another person and has a real difficulty showing remorse or taking responsibility for what he/she has done.**
- 8) At the same time the student can be friendly, energetic, love animals, artistic, gentle, wonderful storytellers and have exceptionally good long-term visual memory.

Because you are a part of these children's day, to some extent it is to your benefit to understand what coping methods work best with the individual.

Remember you are the first and last person the child sees during their school day.

### **Intervention Concepts**

- 1) Always start with the environment!
- 2) Allow the child to be part of the intervention process.
- 3) **DON'T TRY HARDER. TRY DIFFERENT!**
- 4) What can be done differently to help your bus student achieve success.
- 5) Always build on individual strengths.
- 6) Some individuals are of average or above average intelligence but "can't do life".

## **Some Coping Hints**

- 1) Tell the student what you *want* rather than what you *don't* want.
- 2) Keep your bus environment structured, remember children with FAS/E do not adjust to change well.
- 3) FAS/E children will 'change their behaviour' in relation to others around them. Role models are extremely important!
- 4) Do not directly confront the child. Remember their ability to change according to the climate of their surroundings.
- 5) Try a firm, consistent, low, monotone voice.
- 6) Be patient and flexible. Remain calm and quiet.

## **Seizures/ Convulsions**

A seizure or convulsion is a brief period of unconsciousness or altered consciousness. One or more of the following symptoms may accompany it:

- 1) Falling
- 2) Muscle spasm
- 3) Drooling/frothing at the mouth
- 4) A temporary halt in breathing

Seizures can occur in anyone, regardless of age. A seizure struck person does not respond.

## **What Causes Seizures?**

The brain is a huge complex network of electrical circuits. Seizures are the result of abnormal activity in one area of the circuit, and this causes abnormal currents to spread to the rest of the brain. The result is a seizure.

Seizures/Convulsions are associated with many medical conditions. Many seizures/convulsions are caused by fever; however, they can also be caused by: poisoning, head injury, and even (breath-holding, in rare cases). Repeated convulsions may be an indicator to a chronic condition, epilepsy.

## **What To Do?**

There is possibly nothing more frightening to observe than a seizure or convulsion. As a school bus driver there is a potential for anyone of one your students to suddenly go into a seizure. Panic and alarm are common reactions, however a little preparedness will avoid a lot of anxiety.

Remaining calm is one of the most important things you need to do. Any other students on the bus should also be instructed to remain calm and quiet.

- 1) The primary goal is to keep the airways clear!
- 2) Place the student face down or on his side, this allows the tongue to come forward and secretions to drain.
- 3) If the child is NOT BREATHING or if his lips are turning blue, CLEAR THE AIRWAY AND BEGIN MOUTH-TO-MOUTH RESUSCITATION.
- 4) If the child is breathing normally, place him in a safe area: a seat or the floor, loosen tight clothing, and place soft articles around his head to prevent injury.
- 5) Do not attempt to wedge his mouth open.
- 6) Do not attempt to restrain his movements.
- 7) Do not attempt to place objects/fingers between his teeth.

Following the seizure the child will be tired and will probably fall into a deep sleep. This is normal, do not try and wake him.

### **Tourette Syndrome**

Tourette Syndrome (TS) is a neurological disorder characterized by tics...involuntary, rapid, sudden movements or vocalizations that occur repeatedly in the same way. It is believed to be caused by abnormal metabolism of the neurotransmitters, dopamine and serotonin.

People with TS are more likely to have any combination of the following problems:

- 1) Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- 2) Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- 3) Various Learning Disorders

### **FIELD TRIPS**

All field trips are booked by each individual school directly to the contractor.

### **STUDENT MANAGEMENT**

#### **Managing Student Behavior**

- 1) Next to driving the bus, managing student behavior and maintaining effective discipline is the second most important responsibility of a school bus driver. Proper behavior not only makes the ride more enjoyable for everyone, it also adds to the safety of the ride.

The following guidelines and suggestions should help you avoid or handle any problems in this area. The best judge, however, will be yourself. You will know how best to handle your students.

- 2) In all cases when handling discipline problems, you would work in cooperation with the school principal and parents. In this way you may come to a joint decision which all parties will support. In cases of an extreme discipline problem, a meeting between yourself, the principal, parent and student may be recommended.
- 3) If dialogue with the student does not work, contact the parent. At this point, if problems remain, discuss the situation with the school via an misconduct form describing what you have done and what is presently occurring.
- 4) Outline your expectations and rules to the students. Do this early so the students know what you expect of them. A good time to do this is after you board the students from the school in the afternoon on the first or second day of school.
- 5) Try to create an atmosphere of friendly cooperation among the students. If the students feel they have a working relationship with you, they will be more willing to cooperate.
- 6) Get to know your students and how they behave.
- 7) Remember you cannot control a student's behavior. You can only encourage or reinforce it. Avoid a power struggle.
- 8) Listen to the students' complaints, suggestions and comments. In being a good listener you can gain a student's trust and respect.

- 9) Reinforce appropriate behavior. Tell a student when he has done well.
- 10) Never ridicule or embarrass a student. It will only lead to discipline problems.
- 11) Do not take out your personal feelings or prejudices on a student.
- 12) Speak in normal tone. Try not to raise your voice. This will only put the student on the defensive.
- 13) Do not compromise yourself or the rules in order to be accepted by the students.
- 14) Use your own judgment in correcting behavior. You might wish to overlook a behavior if it is not disruptive or harmful. Sometimes if you ignore a behavior a child realizes it is not going to get him attention and will stop.
- 15) Base your judgment of a behavior not only on whether it annoys you, but also on whether it annoys the other students.
- 16) Be firm, fair and consistent with respect to discipline. Treat all the students as equals in intelligence.
- 17) Do not handle the serious discipline cases yourself. Refer them to the principal.
- 18) Try to refrain from saying "what not to do". Give the student a positive behavior request. If possible give a reason why he should not have behaved as he did. If the student can understand the reason for the request, he will usually comply.
- 19) Do not threaten or issue an order you know you cannot enforce. This will only undermine you in future discipline problems.
- 20) Once you have corrected a student's behavior, give the child time to react. If the student responded well, give him a positive comment.
- 21) Never strike or grab a child in a manner than can be construed as a method of discipline.
- 22) Look for good qualities - all children have them.
- 23) Behavior problems can be divided into two categories - minor and major. Some less serious ones include:
  - a) No bus pass
  - b) Spitting
  - c) Failure to meet bus on time
  - d) Teasing
  - e) Littering
  - f) Rudeness
  - g) Loud talking or yelling
  - h) Eating
- 24) The major infractions listed below are ranked in order from most serious to least serious. A driver or principal might well decide to treat some of the less serious as minor problems:
  - a) Endangering safety
  - b) Vandalism
  - c) Possession of dangerous weapons
  - d) Possession or use of drugs or alcohol
  - e) Throwing objects
  - f) Fighting
  - g) Failing to follow driver's instructions

- h) Use of tobacco
- i) Not staying seated
- j) Putting arm or head out of window
- k) Poking, hitting or pushing
- l) Profanity
- m) Possession of tobacco by younger students

### **Repeated Minor Infractions**

No listing of infractions can be complete or can really indicate how serious a problem is. The driver and the principal will use common sense in determining whether a behavior problem is a major or a minor one. Students causing willful damage to a bus will be held fully accountable.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

### **Minor Problems**

Here are some guidelines for dealing with student behavior problems on school buses.

- 1) First Infraction: The driver talks to the student and asks for a promise to improve and contacts the parent/guardian.
- 2) Second Infraction: The driver repeats the talk and informs the principal through the use of an misconduct form.
- 3) Third Infraction: The driver informs the principal, who treats the matter as a major problem.

In the last two cases, the misconduct form should be completed by the driver.

### **Major Problems**

- 1) First Infraction: The driver stops the bus, calls the student to the front, warns, and records details of the incident on an misconduct form. The driver gives a copy of the misconduct form to the principal, who meets with the student and advises the parents. Police may be informed if a law has been broken, such as throwing things out the window.
- 2) Second Infraction: The driver, principal and student meet. The student may be suspended from the bus. Return depends on agreement between parents and principal for behavior change. Police may be informed if a law has been broken. The school sends a copy of the misconduct form to the Student Transportation Department.
- 3) Third Infraction: The driver, principal, student and parents meet. Permanent suspension from the bus may be recommended. The school sends a copy of the misconduct form to Student Transportation.

### **Misconduct Form / Student Log Book**

In handling discipline, an misconduct form should be the last stage completed. You should handle the problem in a way that does not include filling out the form but utilizing your Student Log Book. However, if the problem continues, the misconduct form must be used.

### **Suggested Responsibilities for Riders**

At the start of a year when you outline your expectations to the students, the following may be of some assistance. These suggestions should assist the students in understanding their responsibilities while riding the bus to and from school. Feel free to add any additional rules you may feel are necessary.

- 1) Have respect for public and private property while waiting at the bus stop. Line up properly as the bus is coming to a stop.

- 2) Have respect for one another. No poking, hitting, slapping, pulling hair, etc.
- 3) Use acceptable language. No swearing.
- 4) Keep all parts of the body inside the bus.
- 5) Stay in the seat when the bus is in motion and do not change seats during the trip.
- 6) Keep aisles free of legs, feet and objects at all times.
- 7) Keep voices low so as not to create excessive noise and so that instruction from the driver can be heard at all times.
- 8) Show bus pass when entering bus.
- 9) Ask driver's permission to open or adjust window openings.
- 10) Respect bus as a valuable piece of property.
- 11) Respect and obey the bus driver at all times.
- 12) The following activities are not allowed while riding the bus:
  - a) Smoking
  - b) lighting matches
  - c) throwing objects
  - d) tampering with bus controls
  - e) eating or drinking not normally allowed
  - f) playing a radio or tape recorder
- 13) Breakable containers or objects are not allowed on the bus.
- 14) Pets or other live animals are not allowed on the bus.
- 15) Students must be on time for the bus.
- 16) Nothing is to be thrown out the windows.
- 17) The rear door is to be used for emergencies only.
- 18) No firearms, knives or other weapons are allowed on the bus.
- 19) Older students should display a responsible and protective attitude towards the younger ones.
- 20) Students may only get off at their designated stop unless they have a note from their parent, guardian, or the school. (K - 6)

To ensure students have an understanding of the responsibilities, you are required to post at the front and back of your bus, School Bus Rules posters (these are provided from the office).

### **Positive Communication – Parent Strategies**

Here are some suggestions to encourage positive communication with parents and guardians of the students on your run.

- 1) At the beginning of the school year, call the parents to introduce yourself, or write a note of introduction to be taken home with the school division hand-outs.
- 2) Always have a positive attitude.
- 3) Talk in "I" mode. "I do not feel comfortable." Or "I feel that this is not safe behaviour."
- 4) Think first. Keep a cool head.
- 5) Use a level tone of voice. Do not get excited and shout.
- 6) Start with polite conversation. Ask if the child has talked to them about the situation. Explain to the parent what you know about it.
- 7) Never make accusations unless you have seen what happened. Do not base your findings on someone else's say so. Do not make assumption.
- 8) Write notes about what you would like to discuss before making the call.
- 9) When talking to parents, ask for their help in solving the situation.
- 10) Enlist in the child's teacher for help if you are having difficulties. Sometimes they can shed some light on why the child might be misbehaving, and give you some ideas on how to deal with it.
- 11) If parents are unreasonable, do not argue. Politely ask them to phone the transportation department.
- 12) Call parents to report positive behaviour follow-ups.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES**

The following are some guidelines for handling the students safely.

- 1) Loading and unloading must be conducted in a safe and orderly manner. Students must remain one metre away from the curb until the bus is stopped and the loading door is opened. For offloading, a student must not leave their seat until the door is opened.
- 2) Safe behavior on the bus requires that students remain seated and quiet. Arms and heads must be kept inside the bus. Throwing, scuffling or littering are not acceptable. Bad behavior causes driver distraction and creates a safety hazard.
- 3) The driver must always wear his safety belt.
- 4) Head and clearance lights must be used at all times.
- 5) On designated roads drivers must use the flashing lights on the bus to stop traffic when boarding or alighting passengers. In rural areas, there are often no bus stops or controlled intersections. Frequently students must cross at private lanes. Upon the instruction of the driver, students must cross IN FRONT of the bus at least 10 m (paces) from the bus and the red student loading lights must be used. They must wait for the driver to wave them across, and should also check again, themselves.
- 6) Accidents - Studies show that most school bus accidents that do occur tend to be due to driver error. This includes failure to adjust to the traffic and road conditions and misjudgment of space. The most common accidents involve being rear-ended, hitting a parked vehicle, errors in turning, errors in merging and sideswipe collisions. In addition, an interesting fact to note is that drivers with 11 - 20 years of experience are second highest in the number of accidents. This is basically due to the development of bad driving habits, and poor attitude.
- 7) All school bus crashes or bus failures must be reported to Student Transportation. This includes all accidents, no matter how minor they may appear. Bus failures include school bus fires, wheels falling off, broken mirrors and scraped fenders, but not such mechanical failures as broken water pumps, stalled buses, flat tires, etc. A copy of all accident reports must be sent to Student Transportation.
- 8) The best way to avoid any accidents is to take some precautions beforehand. In operating your route, make the best use of your defensive driving skills. Students also need to learn safety techniques. To assist students, you should explain the bus to them, how the windows and doors operate, etc. By becoming familiar with the vehicle, they will be more aware of what to do in case of an emergency.
- 9) All drivers involved in an accident must report to the Student Transportation Department, if possible. If the accident is on the morning route, the driver must report before the afternoon route. If the accident is on an afternoon route, the driver should report before the afternoon route of the following day.
- 10) A preventable accident could involve suspension or dismissal of a driver/contractor.
- 11) The following types of accidents will probably subject a driver/contractor to a warning letter .
  - a) **Any rear-end accident.** The view from a bus is sufficient enough that any rear-end by a bus is obviously due to inattention, outright carelessness, following too close, or speeding. Icy roads are not an excuse. You must know there will be icy conditions at intersections and adjust for these.
  - b) **Left turn across traffic.** You have to allow enough time to be completely clear of traffic approaching. The common excuse that the approaching vehicle was speeding is not good. You must judge this and if they are speeding, wait until they are gone by before entering their traffic lane.
  - c) **Leaving a yield or stop sign.** The same applies as a left turn. You must wait until you can safely cross or enter a road regardless of whether the other vehicle is speeding or not.
  - d) **Entering an uncontrolled intersection.** Any bus entering an uncontrolled intersection should be doing so, so slowly that a collision should be almost

impossible regardless of whether the other vehicle was on the right or left, and always be 100% prepared to yield.

- 12) If we can eliminate these four types of accidents, the majority of our serious claims will be eliminated.
- 13) A definition to keep in mind is:  
Drive to avoid accidents in spite of actions of others **or the elements**.  
A formula to keep in mind is:
  - a) Recognize the hazard
  - b) Understand the defense
  - c) Act in time
- 14) Stopping on Highway to Unload/Pick-up  
When loading or unloading rural and urban students, the bus should be positioned in the right lane to ensure traffic cannot pass on the right hand side of the bus. Note, this does not mean to locate the bus at curbside or directly in the shoulder lane.
- 15) Vehicles Passing School Buses  
When a school bus is loading/unloading and is passed by a vehicle, you should try to obtain a vehicle license number, color, make of car, date and time of day and report this to the R.C.M.P.

## **COLLISION**

In general, the procedures for a breakdown will apply in the event of a collision. However, depending upon the circumstances, location, degree of injury, etc., the following procedures are recommended.

### **Minor Collision Without Injury**

- 1) Stop the bus. If there is a danger to other motorists, do not hesitate to move the vehicle off the roadway (where possible).
- 2) Assess the scene - check on the condition of everyone involved and check the vehicles to ensure that there is no danger of fire. Evacuate if necessary.
- 3) Place flares or reflectors.
- 4) Summon assistance and the police.
- 5) Arrange to have another vehicle continue your route.
- 6) Obtain the information required by the school board, insurance company, school bus owner, etc.
- 7) Report the particulars to the school board and other appropriate authorities.

### **Major Collisions**

The severity of the collision will determine the order in which you proceed. People may tend to panic and complicate the situation so your first job will be to remain calm and attempt to calm others. THEN:

- 1) Quickly assess the situation and evacuate if necessary.
- 2) Assign someone to protect the scene in order to prevent other motorists from becoming involved. Set out flares or reflectors as required.
- 3) Treat the injured in order of seriousness - the most serious first. Those who have stopped breathing first, followed by severe bleeding, then treat for shock and treat more minor injuries. (A first aid course is recommended.).
- 4) Summon help to the scene as required (policy, ambulance, fire). Follow 5, 6, 7 of minor collision procedures.
- 5) Students are not to be removed from the collision scene unless a School Division official has directed you to do so.

**NOTE:** Again, your role in the event of a collision is critical, a great deal will depend upon your knowledge and ability. In order to be of use, you must be conscious and able to assist. In order



to best ensure this, wear your seat belt at all times when driving your school bus.

## **FIRE**

Fires may result from several causes - leaking fuel, overheated tire or brakes, carburetor or other motor problems. Whatever the cause, an evacuation should begin immediately upon discovering a fire or danger of fire. Your passengers should be moved to a safe place at least 35 metres (100 ft.) from the bus until the danger is over.

Your bus will contain a portable fire extinguisher located in the area of the driver's compartment. You should be aware of its capabilities and proper use **before** attempting to fight a fire with it. **Do not** attempt to put out a fire if it is beyond the capability of yourself or your extinguisher. **Remember**, depending upon the type and size of the extinguisher, you will only have 8 to 10 seconds of chemical discharge.

## **Extinguisher Operation**

While you may encounter extinguishers made by different manufacturers, they are all used in basically the same way. A school bus must contain an adequate pressurized dry chemical extinguisher with a class 10 B:C rating. The procedure is to:

- 1) Remove it from its bracket
- 2) Approach the fire from upwind if possible.
- 3) Hold the extinguisher in an **upright** position.
- 4) Point the discharge apparatus (hose, horn, nozzle) at the base of the fire.
- 5) Pull the safety pin by breaking the seal.
- 6) Squeeze the handle.
- 7) Continue to use until fire is out **and** extinguisher is fully discharged.
- 8) Replace the safety pin and return it to your compartment.
- 9) Immediately have the extinguisher recharged or replaced before your next run.

## **BREAKDOWNS**

In spite of walk-arounds and strict maintenance schedules, vehicles will unexpectedly break down. Should this occur while you are on your route, the following procedure is recommended:

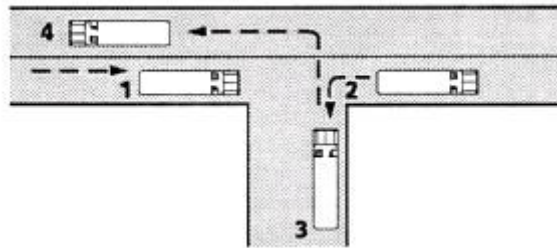
- 1) Stop the school bus in a safe place away from the roadway if possible.
- 2) Assess the situation. If the location of the bus presents a danger to the passengers, evacuate them to a safe place. If no danger is present they will usually be safest if they remain in the vehicle.
- 3) Place flares or reflectors in accordance with legal requirements which state: "The driver...shall forthwith cause two red flags to be placed on the highway in line with the vehicle, one at a distance of approximately 30 metres (90 ft.) in front of the vehicle and one at a distance of approximately 30 metres (90 ft.) at the rear of the vehicle."
- 4) If the problem cannot be corrected quickly and cellphone contact for help cannot be made, the driver should remain with the vehicle. Two responsible students should be sent for help if practical. Be sure to **WRITE DOWN** the information they will need. If the distance or weather makes it dangerous to send students, have everyone remain with the bus and attempt to flag down a passing motorist or wait until help arrives.

## **TURNAROUNDS**

Your bus route may require you to make at least one turnaround to avoid having to drive a few kilometres out of your way. When it is necessary, the following procedure is recommended:

- 1) Start slowing down and activate your brake lights well in advance of the turnaround.

- 2) Stop the bus in the proper position on the roadway which should be about one bus length ahead of the road to be backed into.
- 3) Check traffic in all directions and ensure you have sufficient gap in the traffic to permit the maneuver.
- 4) Wait for traffic to pass around you if this is possible.
- 5) Back into the roadway when it is clear, utilizing both side mirrors.
- 6) Re-enter the main roadway when it is clear and safe to do so.
- 7) Never back into or across a main highway at a turnaround point:
  - a) loading of passengers should be done before the turnaround (position 1)
  - b) unloading of passengers should be done after backing up (position 3)



### **PRACTICE SCHOOL BUS EVACUATION/PROCEDURE**

At least two school bus evacuation drills are completed for each route per year. This will be arranged with the School, and scheduled through Student Transportation. Normally all the buses serving one school will do it on a particular day, and will usually take place on arrival at the school in the morning.

There are **three standard** ways to evacuate a school bus although other methods can be used for extreme situations. Getting the passengers off the bus safely in the shortest possible time in an orderly fashion is the objective, regardless of which method is used. The three methods are:

- 1) Front exit
- 2) Rear exit
- 3) Both front and rear exits simultaneously

The following procedure is recommended:

- 1) The preferred exit is the front door but the quickest method is using the front and rear exits simultaneously. However, either the front or rear exit could expose your passengers to additional danger such as fire or traffic. In those cases only the safest exit should be chosen.
- 2) Remain calm and speak loudly and clearly. Ask for an orderly evacuation and explain the exit(s) that will be used.
- 3) Assign a responsible leader(s) to count the passengers as they exit and take them to a safe place (you have pointed out) at least 35 metres (100 ft.) from the bus. The leader(s) will be responsible for keeping everyone together at the safe place.
- 4) Assign the most capable and responsible student(s) to wait at each exit to provide assistance. One will be required at the front door, two at the rear door.
- 5) The bus driver remains inside the bus supervising the entire evacuation.
- 6) If the rear door is used someone (preferably the driver) should be just inside the rear door controlling the flow and advising the students to "watch your head, put your hands on the helpers' shoulders and step down."
- 7) Students must remain seated until it is their turn to leave. The students closest to the area of danger begin evacuating first. The seats are emptied in an orderly left to right sequence.
- 8) All carry on such as lunches, books, etc. should be left behind.
- 9) Students should walk in an orderly manner to the exit.

After the last student exits, the driver must walk the length of the bus to check that all passengers have left. The driver then exits the bus.

Complete information regarding the correct procedure is contained in the School Bus Drivers Improvement Program Series 5.

## **COURSES BEING OFFERED**

### **The School Bus Drivers Improvement Program ("S" Endorsement)**

This driver program is Provincial in scope and serves to standardize school bus operation. It is an excellent follow up course to the class 2 drivers training. The curriculum follows Provincial guidelines and insures that the Course member is instructed and tested in all phases of school bus operation. The Course is approximately 25 hours long consisting of information very beneficial to the experienced driver as well as the novice.

The benefits of proper training are many. Some of the more noteworthy ones are:

- 1) Fewer deaths and injuries
- 2) Fewer collisions and less property damage
- 3) Lower insurance rates
- 4) Less down time for vehicles
- 5) Lower maintenance costs
- 6) Better relations with passengers and public
- 7) Happier, more confident drivers
- 8) Fewer administration difficulties
- 9) Lower staff turnover
- 10) Reduced opportunity for civil liability
- 11) Reduced overall operating costs

The School Bus Drivers Improvement program consists of the following five series:

- (Series One) School Bus Inspection and Maintenance
- (Series Two) Loading, Unloading and On-Bus Procedure
- (Series Three) Defensive Driving & Bus Maneuvers
- (Series Four) Emergency and Collision Procedures
- (Series Five) Transporting Persons with Disabilities

Each of the above Series consists of up to five modules. The student will proceed through each series with the guidance of the instructor. Once the particular series has been completed, a short written test will be administered, and if passed, the student is considered competent in that phase. The training is therefore progressive in nature. There is a final pre-trip inspection and a road evaluation to complete the course.

Wetaskiwin Regional Publics Schools offers one Safety Seminar for all drivers bi-annually. In addition to the above, the following courses are offered: School Bus Driver Improvement Program - "S" Endorsement. The s endorsement course is designed to give you valuable information that will help you to do your job better. Dates and times of when the above will be offered will be sent out in our monthly bussing newsletter.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Since emergencies cannot often be predicted, they must be simulated and practiced as a matter of routine so that in the event of a real situation those involved will know the proper procedure to follow. Practice cannot totally eliminate all injury but will certainly reduce the possibility of unnecessary injury to yourself, your passengers and other motorists.

## **CELLULAR PHONES**

Purpose: To enhance effective emergency communication between bus drivers and operations while creating the ability to respond to customer service queries quickly and effectively in order to maximize student safety.

WRPS follows Alberta Government Bill 16 in regards to cellular phone use.

## **DIVISION POLICIES**

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

#### **POLICY**

The Board authorizes the Superintendent, in consultation with the Transportation Manager, to suspend or curtail school bus service to any school or schools and/or to close schools when emergent conditions constitute a hazard to the safety of students.

During inclement weather, the final decision to send a child to the bus stop or to school rests with the parents, even though busses and schools are operational.

In the event of early dismissal of bussed students, every student shall be delivered safely to their parents/guardians or are satisfactorily housed elsewhere.

#### **GUIDELINES**

- 1) It shall be the responsibility of the Transportation Manager to advise the Superintendent regarding road and driving conditions. As a major source of information, the Transportation Manager shall solicit advice from a sampling of experienced bus drivers when preparing his recommendation.
- 2) Any of the following factors, or a combination of them, shall serve as guides for considering cancellation of bus routes or early dismissal of students:
  - 2.1 Wind-chill of approximately  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  per square meter, as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton,
  - 2.2 Visibility of less than 1 kilometer, as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton,
  - 2.3 Reports from bus drivers and County Road Foremen that many rural roads are, or will soon be, impassable,
  - 2.4 Temperature of  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton.
- 3) At the commencement of the term, Principals shall communicate in writing the following information to the parents:
  - 3.1 the current policy on Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather.
  - 3.2 advice to the Parents that their children should be dressed warmly in severe weather.
  - 3.3 advice to the Parents that they make alternate arrangements for accommodating their children in the event school is dismissed early when the parents are away.
- 4) In the event of emergency closure:
  - 4.1 The Transportation Manager shall arrange for the school bus drivers to be notified immediately.
  - 4.2 The Superintendent, or designee, shall initiate the spread of the information to the schools via the "fan-out" information system, and to the community via radio stations. The web page will also be updated.
- 5) If schools are closed during:
  - 5.1 Where possible, the Principal shall notify Parents of all E.C.S. to Grade Six children.
  - 5.2 The school building shall remain open so that any Students whose Parents cannot be contacted and who have no alternative place to go can remain there

under adult supervision, as arranged by the Principal, until accommodations can be found.

- 6) If busses are sent home early but the school remains operational, the Principal may allow a staff member who is likely to experience major difficulty in reaching home to leave school early.
- 7) If a driver encounters impassable roads, either in the morning pickup or the afternoon return run, and is forced to turn back without completing his route, he/she shall immediately:
  - 7.1 advise the Transportation Manager, who will call the school, and
  - 7.2 the school staff shall make every effort to notify the Parents of the Students on the bus route so affected.

## **SCHOOL BUS STOPS**

### **POLICY**

The Board is responsible to provide safe transportation to and from the designated school for all resident pupils eligible for such service. In fulfilling this commitment the Board establishes the following guidelines.

### **GUIDELINES**

- 1) Grades K-12
  - 1.1 Transportation services shall be provided for Students residing more than 2.4 kilometers from the designated school site.
  - 1.2 Transportation services may be provided if the distance is less than 2.4 kilometers with the provision that a transportation fee can be charged for that service.
  - 1.3 For children who are not disabled, a reasonable walk distance from a property entrance along a public roadway to a bus stop, is .6 of a kilometer (1/2 mile).
- 2) Notwithstanding Guideline 1, alternate bus stops may be authorized by the Transportation Manager, after due regard has been given to safety factors.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**

### **POLICY**

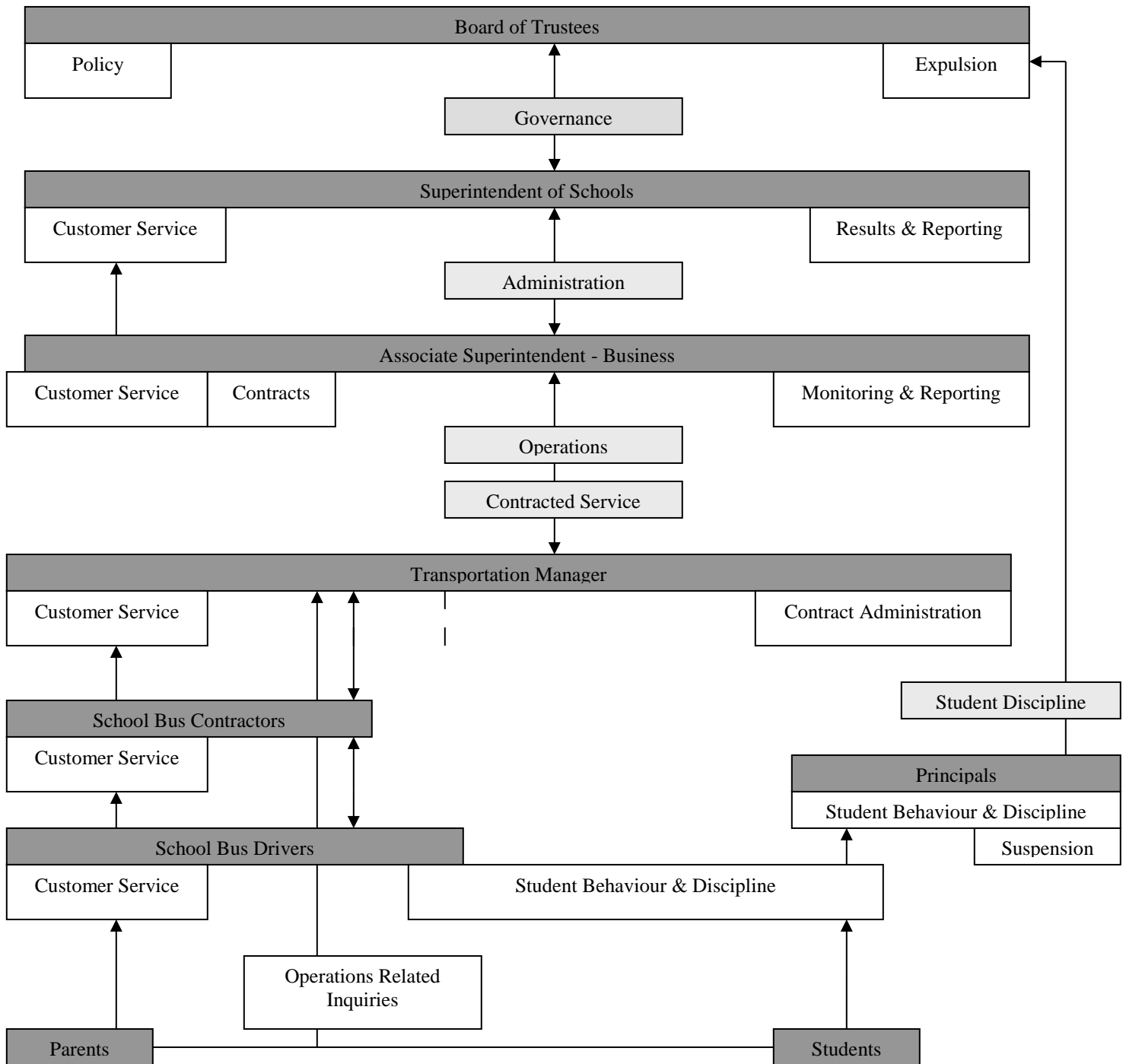
The Board considers the school bus to be an extension of the classroom and therefore classroom conduct is to be observed at all times.

### **GUIDELINES**

- 1) Duties and Responsibilities of the Bus Driver  
School Bus Contractors (and drivers they employ) are responsible to the Principal for any situation that arises concerning children riding their busses. The bus driver shall not put a student off the bus, except at the student's regular stop. The drivers will pick up all designated students unless prior arrangements have been made.
- 2) Duties and Responsibilities of the Student and Parents  
The bus driver is responsible for the safety of the students on his bus and must therefore receive the respect, consideration and cooperation of each student.  
Each student riding a school bus shall be provided with a copy of these guidelines when he/she is registered on the bus. Parents are requested to review the guidelines with their children so both are familiar with them.
- 3) Duties of the School Administration
  - 3.1 The Principal shall be responsible for seeing that bus loading zones at school sites are supervised.

- 3.2 The Principal shall be responsible for notifying the bus drivers of children who have been taken from school during the day or when parents notify the principal that they will be picking up their children after school.
- 3.3 The Principal may suspend a child from riding the school bus for violation of the rules established by the bus driver.

# Student Transportation Communication Chart



- School Bus Drivers are employees of the contractor. Employee/employer related issues are the sole responsibility of the contractor. Route operational concerns by drivers are made through the Transportation Department.
- Contract administration is the responsibility of the Transportation Manager.
- Routing information is a direct contact between the Transportation Department and Bus Driver with follow up to the contractor.
- Operations related inquiries by parents and/or students are made directly to the Transportation Department.
- Student Discipline related issues are the responsibility of the drivers. Incidents reporting is made to the Principal and the Transportation Manager. The Principal is responsible for discipline, suspension and recommending to the Board expulsion from the school bus.
- Customer concerns related to bus drivers proceed in the following order: driver, contractor, Transportation Manager, Associate Superintendent - Business, Superintendent.