

**Minidoka County Joint School District # 331**

All school districts and school bus drivers must meet all operations and performance requirements in conformity with law and with rules and regulations of the Department of Law Enforcement and the SBOE (Section 33-1508, Idaho Code). The board of trustees or its designee shall be responsible for delineating in writing vehicle operations and the duties of bus drivers, which shall, at a minimum, include:

1. The driver shall ensure the safe condition of the school bus by conducting an initial and thorough daily pre-trip/post trip/child check school bus inspection. The district/contractor shall provide drivers with a pre-trip inspection form. Staff shall develop and maintain a model pre-trip/post trip inspection form using nationally recognized criteria for the school bus pre-trip inspection. Each subsequent trip shall require an additional pre-trip school bus inspection, which at a minimum shall ensure that all safety equipment is in working order, i.e. brakes, tires, all lighting systems, steering and horn. During post trip inspections, importance should be placed upon locating any sleeping students, articles left on the bus (Idaho CDL Manual, Section 10.2.6), and all defects which shall be reported by the school bus driver.
2. A school bus shall be backed only as a last resort. Buses shall not back to turn around on a public roadway, unless the local board finds there is no alternative to backing buses on certain roads. The local board then, by official action, may allow the backing of school buses on certain public roadways (Section 33-1502, Idaho Code).
3. No passenger shall be permitted to operate the school bus. EFFECTIVE July 1, 2018 SISBO / Student Transportation / SDE / 72
4. The school bus driver shall not allow guns or inflammable or explosive substances such as gasoline to be carried on a school bus. Students are to only carry objects onto the bus that can fit safely within the seat compartment, preferably on the student's lap. The student shall not carry hazardous materials, objects, or animals (with the exception to IEP and 504 Plan service animals) on the bus.
5. School bus drivers shall properly wear a seat belt whenever the bus is in motion.
6. School bus doors shall remain closed while the bus is in motion. No school bus shall start in motion before all passengers have been seated. The driver shall require each passenger on the bus to be seated in a manufacturer's school bus passenger seat. No student shall be allowed to stand while the bus is in motion.
7. School districts shall establish school bus stops in safe locations with at least one hundred (100) yards clear visibility in both directions, whenever possible, and at least forty (40) feet from intersections, whenever possible. [No motor vehicle shall block an intersection (Section 49-660, Idaho Code). No bus stop shall be established less than one and one-half (1½) miles from the

nearest appropriate school except when, in the judgment of the board of trustees, the age or health or safety of the student warrants (Sections 33-1501 and 33-1502, Idaho Code)].

8. All school buses shall stop to load/unload passengers at designated bus stops in accordance with the law (Section 49-915 and 49-1422, Idaho Code). Staff shall maintain model student loading/unloading training curriculum, the basis of which shall be in conformity with nationally recognized procedures (National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures). The student shall not leave or board the bus at locations other than the assigned home stop or assigned school unless arrangements for doing so have been approved by the appropriate authority. Appropriate authority and the approval process shall be defined in local district policy.

9. School bus drivers shall load and unload from the right side of the roadway. School bus drivers shall not allow students to cross roadways having more than three (3) lanes for purposes of loading or unloading and shall only load or unload students who live on the right side of such a roadway, except at locations having easily accessible traffic control signals (Section 49-1422, Idaho Code).

10. When it is necessary for the student to cross the roadway, the driver shall require the student to cross twelve (12) feet in front of the bus in accordance with the state loading/unloading training curriculum. The District endorses the joined fingers, open palm, single arm wave and eye contact with the driver for student crossing. Long steady blast of the horn is to be used as a danger signal.

11. School bus drivers shall report the license number of any vehicle which violates any law endangering school children to his/her immediate supervisor (Section 33-1509, Idaho Code).

12. Student transportation operations shall be included in the district's crises planning and related training shall be provided to school bus drivers related to district crises plans. School bus drivers shall remain vigilant and report suspicious behavior or conditions which could become harmful to students or be indicative of impending acts of terror. School bus drivers shall be provided training in homeland security awareness.

13. A driver on a school bus route shall not leave an occupied bus. In case of a breakdown EFFECTIVE July 1, 2018 SISBO / Student Transportation / SDE / 73 the driver shall request assistance via two-way communication whenever possible. Otherwise, the driver should ask a passing motorist to make contact with the district, send a school bus aide or at least two (2) responsible students to make contact with the district, or wait for help.

14. Whenever it is necessary for the school bus driver to leave an unoccupied bus or leave the driver's seat of an occupied bus, he/she should shut off the motor, curb the wheels where appropriate, set the brakes and remove the ignition key.

15. The school bus driver shall give consideration to engine idling during extended wait times. Consideration should be given to varying climate conditions. All buses equipped with an

auxiliary heater shall not be allowed to idle for more than three (3) to five (5) consecutive minutes (exceptions: pre-trips, passenger stops.) Heater shall be used to provide pre-heated water in the cooling system for starting cold engines as well as providing heat to the passenger compartment during cold weather without running the engine. Reduced idling will reduce student transportation costs and improve air quality. Allowing engines to idle for more than three (3) minutes may cause districts (including contracted districts) to lose funding for purchasing fuel.

16. All school and activity buses shall stop at all railroad grade crossings in accordance with the law (Sections 33-1508, 49-648 and 49-649, Idaho Code). Staff shall develop and maintain railroad grade crossing training curriculum, the basis of which shall be in conformity with nationally recognized procedures (National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures).

17. School districts shall limit on-duty and driving time of school bus drivers similar to the limitations imposed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations for drivers of similar commercial motor vehicles. Drivers shall use FMCSA over-the-road hours of service trip logs, a trip agenda, or other trip documentation validating applicable driving hours on all out-of-district trips in excess of one hundred (100) miles (FMCSA Regulations, Hours of Service of Drivers).

18. At no time shall a driver exceed sixty-five (65) miles per hour or a lesser posted speed limit.

Each year, no later than the regular Board meeting in August, the Superintendent or their designee shall present their recommendation for bus routes, school safety busing zones, and non-transportation zones to the Board of Trustees. The Board shall consider student health and safety in considering the recommendations of the Superintendent or designee.

### Definitions

“Safety Busing Zone” shall mean the transportation of a student who lives less than 1½ miles from school when, in the judgment of the Board, the age, health, or safety of the student warrants such action as described in: Policy 8110 Safety Busing.

“Non-Transportation Zone” shall mean an area of the District designated by the Board which is not served by District transportation because of scarcity of students or remoteness, or because the condition of roads makes it impractical to provide service.

### Establishing Bus Routes

In order to operate the transportation system as safely and efficiently as possible, the following factors shall be considered in establishing bus routes:

1. School bus routes shall be established with due consideration of the sum total of local conditions affecting the safety, economic soundness, and convenience of its operation

- including road conditions, condition of bridges and culverts, hazardous crossings, presence of railroad tracks and arterial highways, extreme weather conditions and variations, length of route, number of families and children to be serviced, availability of turn-around points, capacity of bus, and other related factors. Further, the Board of Trustees shall consider the criteria set out in its measuring and scoring instrument
2. School bus drivers are encouraged to make recommendations about establishing or changing routes.
  3. Parents should be referred to the Superintendent or designee for any request of change in routes, stops, or schedules.
  4. At least once each year, the transportation supervisor or the District's school bus driver trainer shall evaluate each route for the purpose of assessing the safety of routes and bus stops. Documentation of the route evaluation shall be retained by the District. The District may use the State Department of Education's model evaluation procedure and forms for these evaluations.

### Bus Stops

Buses should stop to load and unload passengers only at designated places approved by school authorities. Exceptions should be made only in cases of emergency and inclement weather conditions. Bus stops shall be chosen with safety and protection of the health of the student in mind. No bus stop shall be established within 1½ miles from the students' school except in safety busing zones.

All bus stops shall be in safe locations with at least 100 yards of clear visibility in both directions. All bus stops shall be located at a site that allows the bus to stop without blocking any intersection; whenever possible stops shall be at least 40 feet from intersections.

School bus drivers shall load and unload from the right side of the roadway. Bus stops shall be sited to ensure that students do not have to cross any road with more than three lanes to board the bus or to proceed home after exiting the bus unless the location has easily accessible traffic control signals.

School buses shall only stop to load or unload passengers at designated bus stops, as required by law.

School loading and unloading zones are to be established and marked to provide safe and orderly loading and unloading of students. The principal of each building is responsible for the conduct of students waiting in loading zones and shall ensure that the loading and unloading areas are supervised adequately for the size of the loading area and the number of students present to ensure close, continuous, and interactive supervision whenever students or buses are present in the loading area.

### Delay in Schedule

The schedule for pickup and delivery of children shall be followed as accurately as possible. The driver is to notify the administration of a delay in schedule. The administration will notify parents/guardians on routes experiencing delays if necessary.

#### Responsibilities - Pupils

Pupils should recognize that safety is based on group conduct. Talk should be in conversational tones at all times. Students should not shout or talk loudly because it may distract the bus driver. Student shall not shout at passersby. Pupils should instantly obey any command or suggestions from the driver or their assistants.

A pupil may be denied transportation upon a showing of good cause as in bus rules which parents sign at registration.

#### Responsibilities - Parents

Parents' interest and assistance is a valued asset to the transportation program. Parents' efforts towards making each bus trip a safe and pleasant experience are requested and appreciated. The following suggestions are only three of the many ways parents can assist:

1. Ensure that students are at the bus stop in sufficient time to efficiently meet the bus;
2. Properly prepare children for weather conditions; and
3. Encourage school bus safety at home. Teach children about safe school bus related behavior, including its importance.

#### Safety

The Superintendent shall develop written rules establishing the procedures for bus safety and emergency exit drills which comply with State law and Federal Highway Safety Guideline 17 for student conduct while riding on buses.

If the bus and driver are present, the driver is responsible for the safety of their passengers, particularly for those who must cross a roadway prior to loading or after leaving the bus. Except in emergencies, no bus driver shall order or allow a student to board or disembark anywhere at other than their assigned stop unless authorized by the Superintendent. In order to assure the safety of all, the bus driver may hold students accountable for their conduct during the course of transportation and may recommend corrective action against a student. Bus drivers are expressly prohibited from using corporal punishment.

Further, the Board shall consider the criteria set out in its measuring and scoring instrument which, by this reference, is incorporated and attached to this policy.

The bus driver is responsible for the use of the warning and stop signaling systems. Failure to

use the system constitutes negligence on the part of the driver.

#### Inclement Weather

The Board recognizes the unpredictability of Idaho weather and resulting dangers. To achieve maximum safety for children and efficiency of operation, the Superintendent is empowered to make decisions as to the emergency operation of buses, the cancellation of bus routes, and the closing of schools in accordance with their best judgment. The Board may develop guidelines in cooperation with the Superintendent to assist them in making such decisions.

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#### Legal References

IC § 33-1501

IC § 33-1502

IC § 33-512

IC § 49-1422

IC § 49-660

IC § 49-915

#### Description

Transportation Authorized

Bus Routes—Non-Transportation Zones

District Trustees - Governance of Schools

Overtaking and Passing a School Bus

Stopping, Standing or Parking Prohibited in Specified Places

School Buses — Visual Signal

**ADOPTED: February 26, 2024**

**AMENDED:**

**CROSS REFERENCE: SDE TRANSPORTATION MANUAL [www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)**