

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #877 POLICY

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose

INDEX TITLE Noninstructional Operations and Business Services SERIES NO. 700

POLICY TITLE Student Transportation Safety Policy CODE NO. 709

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide safe transportation for students and to educate students on safety issues and the responsibilities of school bus ridership.

II. PLAN FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY TRAINING

A. School Bus Safety Week

The school district may designate a school bus safety week. Bus safety training for students will be conducted as required by Minn. Stat. 123B.90-91.

B. Student Training

1. The school district shall provide students enrolled in grades kindergarten (K) through 12 with school bus safety training. The training shall be results-oriented and shall consist of both classroom instruction and practical training using a school bus. Upon completing the training, a student shall be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of at least the following competencies and concepts:
 - a. transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right;
 - b. school district policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
 - c. appropriate conduct while on the bus;
 - d. the danger zones surrounding a school bus;
 - e. procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
 - f. procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing; and
 - g. school bus evacuation and other emergency procedures.
2. All students transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first week of school must demonstrate achievement of the school bus safety training competencies by the end of the third week of school. Students who enroll in a school after the first week of school and are transported by school bus shall undergo school bus safety training and demonstrate achievement of the school bus safety competencies within three weeks of the first day of attendance.

3. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must provide students enrolled in grades K through 3 school bus safety training twice during the school year. Nonpublic school students transported by the school district will receive school bus safety training by their nonpublic school. The nonpublic school must certify to the school district's school transportation safety director that all students enrolled in grades K through 10 have received appropriate training.
4. Students taking driver's training instructional classes must receive training in the laws and proper procedures for operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of a school bus.
5. The school district and a nonpublic school with students transported by school bus at public expense must conduct a school bus evacuation drill at least once during the school year.
6. The school district will make reasonable accommodations in training for students known to speak English as a second language and students with disabilities.
7. The school district may provide kindergarten students with school bus safety training before the first day of school.
8. The school district may provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in grades K through 5.
9. The school district shall adopt and make available for public review a curriculum for transportation safety education.
10. Nonpublic school students transported by the school district will receive school bus safety training by their nonpublic school. The nonpublic schools may use the school district's school transportation safety education curriculum. Upon request by the school district transportation director the nonpublic school must certify to that all students enrolled in grades K through 10 have received the appropriate training.

III. CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR

- A. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school district's general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses; including nonpublic and charter school students.
- B. Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school district under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district's transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.

1. School Bus and Bus Stop Rules. The school district school bus safety rules are to be posted on every bus. If these rules are broken, the school district's discipline procedures are to be followed. In most circumstances, consequences are progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges. It is the school bus driver's responsibility to report unacceptable behavior to the school Principal's Office.
2. Rules at the Bus Stop
 - a. Get to your bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
 - b. Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.
 - c. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
 - d. Use appropriate language.
 - e. Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus.
 - f. Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.
 - g. After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
 - h. If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
 - i. No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.
 - j. No use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
3. Rules on the Bus
 - a. Students will sit in the buses while in motion.
 - b. Students will board the buses only at stops which are specifically designated.
 - c. Students may not transport guns, gasoline, animals, large carry-on items or any other objects of a dangerous or objectionable nature.
 - d. Aisle must be unobstructed.
 - e. Only authorized students may ride school buses and they may only ride buses to which they are assigned unless a parent's permission slip is received.
 - f. Students may not damage the bus in any manner.

Other statutes and local board regulations prohibit the following:

- g. Students may not display disobedience, improper conduct or tardiness.
- h. Profane or indecent language is prohibited.
- i. The use of tobacco, drugs or other substances is against the law.
- j. Students' bodies or parts thereof shall remain inside the bus.
- k. Students may not hang onto or attempt to ride on the outside of a bus.

- l. Emergency doors or safety devices are not to be tampered with.
- m. Students may not throw objects from, in or against a bus.
- n. Student may not divert the driver's concentration by talking to the driver, by loud talking or laughter, or by their actions.
- o. Pushing or fighting with other students is prohibited.

Forms reporting discipline problems are in the principal's office or in the Business Office. This form must be filled out by the driver giving the student's name, grade, date or incident, bus number, driver's name and the nature of the incident. The principal will indicate, on the form, the action taken. The form is to be signed by the driver and principal, dated and copies distributed to parents, drivers, and the Business Manager.

The bus company reserves the right to assign seats or take whatever action it deems necessary to ensure the rules and regulations are followed.

4. Consequences

Discipline will be administered by the principal who will consult with the transportation supervisor when necessary. Principals are allowed to make other adjustments as they deem necessary.

(1) Other Discipline

Based on the severity of a student's conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school also may result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.

(2) Records

Records of school bus/bus stop misconduct will be forwarded to the individual school building and will be retained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of student misbehavior on a school bus or in a bus-loading or unloading area that causes an immediate and substantial danger to the student or surrounding persons or property will be provided by the school district to the Department of Public Safety in accordance with state and federal law.

(3) Vandalism/Bus Damage

Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages (or make arrangements to pay) within two weeks may result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid.

(4) Notice

School bus and bus stop rules and consequences for violations of these rules will be reviewed with students annually and copies of these rules will be made available to students. School bus rules are to be posted on each school bus.

(5) Criminal Conduct

In cases involving criminal conduct (for example, assault, weapons, drug possession, or vandalism), the appropriate school district personnel and local law enforcement officials will be informed.

IV. PARENT AND GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

A. Parent and Guardian Notification

The school district school bus and bus stop rules will be made available to each family. Parents and guardians are asked to review the rules with their children.

B. Parents/Guardians Responsibilities for Transportation Safety

Parents/Guardians are responsible to:

1. Become familiar with school district rules, policies, regulations, and the principles of school bus safety, and thoroughly review them with their children and encourage them to abide by them;
2. Support safe riding and walking practices, and recognize that students are responsible for their actions;
3. Communicate safety concerns to their school administrators;
4. Monitor bus stops, if possible;
5. When appropriate, assist students in safely crossing local streets before boarding and after leaving the bus;
6. Have their children to the bus stop five minutes before the bus arrives;
7. Have their children properly dressed for the weather;
8. Support school district and bus company efforts to improve school bus safety; and
9. Have a plan in case the bus is late.
10. If your child is denied bus transportation because of misbehavior, you are responsible for finding or providing transportation for your child. Your child is not excused from school because transportation is denied.

V. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. School bus drivers shall have a valid Class A, B, or C Minnesota driver's license with a school bus endorsement. A person possessing a valid driver's license, without a school bus endorsement, may drive a type III vehicle set forth in

Sections VII.B. and VII.C., below. Drivers with a valid Class D driver's license, without a school bus endorsement.

- B. School bus drivers must comply with mandatory drug and alcohol testing.
- C. Additional school bus driver responsibilities are outlined in the transportation contract between bus provider and school district.
- D. A person who operates a type III vehicle and who sustains a conviction as described in Section VII.C.1.g (*i.e.*, driving while impaired offenses), VII.C.1.h. (*i.e.*, felony, controlled substance, criminal sexual conduct offenses, or offenses for surreptitious observation, indecent exposure, use of minor in a sexual performance, or possession of child pornography or display of pornography to a minor, (or VII.C.1.i. (multiple moving violations) while employed by the entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the school bus, shall report the conviction to the person's employer within ten days of the date of the conviction. The notification shall be in writing.

VI. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING

A. Training

- 1. All new school bus drivers shall be provided with pre-service training, including in-vehicle (actual driving) instruction before transporting students and shall meet the competency testing specified in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual and any additional requirements as specified by the contract between the bus company and school district. All school bus drivers shall receive in-service training annually. The school district shall require the bus company to retain on file an annual individual school bus driver "evaluation certification" form for each school district driver as contained in the Model School Bus Driver Training Manual.
- 2. All bus drivers operating a type III vehicle will be provided with annual training and certification as set forth in Section VII.C.1.b., below, by either the school district or the entity from whom such services are contracted by the school district.

B. Evaluation

School bus drivers with a Class D license will be evaluated annually and all other bus drivers will be assessed periodically for the following competencies:

- 1. Safely operate the type of school bus the driver will be driving;
- 2. Understand student behavior, including issues relating to students with disabilities;

3. Ensure orderly conduct of students on the bus and handling incidents of misconduct appropriately;
4. Know and understand relevant laws, rules of the road and local school bus safety policies;
5. Handle emergency situations; and
6. Safely load and unload students.

The evaluation must include completion of an individual “school bus driver evaluation form” (road test evaluation) as contained in the Model School Bus Driver Training Manual.

[Note: The school district may use alternative assessments rather than those set forth in the Model School Bus Driver Training Manual for bus driver training competencies with the approval of the Commissioner of Public Safety. A driver also may receive at least eight hours of school bus in-service training in any year as an alternative to being assessed for bus driver competencies after the initial year of being assessed for bus driver competencies.]

VII. OPERATING RULES AND PROCEDURES

A. General Operating Rules

1. School buses shall be operated in accordance with state traffic and school bus safety laws and the procedures contained in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual.
2. Only students assigned to the school bus by the school district shall be transported. The number of students or other authorized passengers transported in a school bus shall not be more than the legal capacity for the bus. No person shall be allowed to stand when the bus is in motion.
3. Drivers are to enforce the provisions of the school bus and bus stop rules as appropriate. Students may be released from the bus at only two points the designated bus stop or at school, except in case of an emergency or as otherwise authorized.
4. In case of an accident or breakdown of the bus, the driver shall contact the dispatcher and follow procedures as established between the bus company and school district.
5. The school district may adopt such additional operating rules as are deemed necessary to meet local conditions and needs, provided they do not conflict with State laws and regulations.

6. A bus driver may not operate a school bus while communicating over, or otherwise operating, a cellular phone for personal reasons, whether handheld or hands free, when the vehicle is in motion. For purposes of this paragraph, “school bus” has the meaning given in Minn. Stat. § 169.01, Subd. 6. In addition, “school bus” also includes type III vehicles when driven by employees or agents of the school district. “Cellular phone” means a cellular, analog, wireless, or digital telephone capable of sending or receiving telephone or text messages without an access line for service.

B. Type III Vehicles

1. Type III vehicles are restricted to passenger cars, station wagons, vans, and buses having a maximum manufacturer’s rated seating capacity of 10 or fewer people including the driver and a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less. A van or bus converted to a seating capacity of 10 or fewer and placed in service on or after August 1, 1999, must have been originally manufactured to comply with the passenger safety standards.
2. Type III vehicles must be painted a color other than national school bus yellow.
3. Type III vehicles shall be state inspected in accordance with legal requirements.
4. A type III vehicle cannot be older than 12 years old unless excepted by state and federal law.
5. If a type III vehicle is school district owned, the school district name will be clearly marked on the side of the vehicle. The type III vehicle must not have the words “school bus” in any location on the exterior of the vehicle or in any interior location visible to a motorist.
6. A type III vehicle must not be outwardly equipped and identified as a type A, B, C, or D bus.
7. Eight-lamp warning systems and stop arms must not be installed or used on type III vehicles.
8. Type III vehicles must be equipped with mirrors as required by law.
9. Any type III vehicle may not stop traffic and may not load or unload before making a complete stop and disengaging gears by shifting into neutral or park. Any type III vehicle used to transport students must not load or unload so that a student has to cross the road, except where not possible or impractical, then the driver or assistant must escort a student

across the road. If the driver escorts the student across the road, then the motor must be stopped, the ignition key removed, the brakes set, and the vehicle otherwise rendered immobile.

10. Any type III vehicle used to transport students must carry emergency equipment including:
 - a. Fire extinguisher. A minimum of one 10BC rated dry chemical type fire extinguisher is required. The extinguisher must be mounted in a bracket, and must be located in the driver's compartment and be readily accessible to the driver and passengers. A pressure indicator is required and must be easily read without removing the extinguisher from its mounted position.
 - b. First aid kit and body fluids cleanup kit. A minimum of a ten-unit first aid kit and a body fluids cleanup kit is required. They must be contained in removable, moisture- and dust-proof containers mounted in an accessible place within the driver's compartment and must be marked to indicate their identity and location.
 - c. A type III vehicle must contain at least three red reflectorized triangle road warning devices. Liquid burning "pot type" flares are not allowed.
 - d. Passenger cars and station wagons may carry a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, and warning triangles in the trunk or trunk area of the vehicle if a label in the driver and front passenger area clearly indicates the location of these items.
11. Students will not be regularly transported in private vehicles that are not state inspected as type III vehicles. Only emergency, unscheduled transportation may be conducted in vehicles with a seating capacity of 10 or fewer without meeting the requirements for a type III vehicle. The school district has no system of inspection for private vehicles.

All privately owned vehicles used for such trips must be properly authorized, insured, and in accordance with District and state standards.

Whenever use of privately owned automobiles or volunteer drivers is authorized by the District, the District's liability insurance policy becomes secondary or excess coverage to the privately owned automobile and volunteer driver's insurance policy.
12. All drivers of type III vehicles will be licensed drivers. The school district will not knowingly allow a person to operate a type III vehicle if the person has been convicted of an offense that disqualifies the person from operating a school bus.

C. Type III Vehicle Driven by Employees with a Class D Driver's License

1. The holder of a class D driver's license, without a school bus endorsement, may operate a type III vehicle, described above, under the following conditions:
 - a. The operator is an employee of the entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the school bus, which may include the school district.
 - b. The operator's employer, which may include the school district, has adopted and implemented a policy that provides for annual training and certification of the operator in:
 - (1) safe operation of a type III vehicle;
 - (2) understanding student behavior, including issues relating to students with disabilities;
 - (3) encouraging orderly conduct of students on the bus and handling incidents of misconduct appropriately;
 - (4) knowing and understanding relevant laws, rules of the road, and local school bus safety policies;
 - (5) handling emergency situations;
 - (6) proper use of seat belts and child safety restraints;
 - (7) performance of pretrip vehicle inspections; and
 - (8) safe loading and unloading of students, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) utilizing a safe location for loading and unloading students at the curb, on the nontraffic side of the roadway, or at off-street loading areas, driveways, yards, and other areas to enable the student to avoid hazardous conditions;
 - (b) refraining from loading and unloading students in a vehicular traffic lane, on the shoulder, in a designated turn lane, or a lane adjacent to a designated turn lane;
 - (c) avoiding a loading or unloading location that would

require a student to cross a road, or ensuring that the driver or an aide personally escort the student across the road if it is not reasonably feasible to avoid such a location; and

- (d) placing the type III vehicle in “park” during loading and unloading.
- c. A background check or background investigation of the operator has been conducted that meets the requirements under Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, Subd. 8, or Minn. Stat. § 123B.03 for school district employees; Minn. Stat. § 144.057 or Minn. Stat. Ch. 245C for day care employees; or Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 3, for all other persons operating a type A or type III vehicle under this section.
- d. Operators shall submit to a physical examination as required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 2.
- e. The operator’s employer may require drug and alcohol testing of applicants for operator positions and current operators, in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 181.951, Subds. 2, 4, and 5.
- f. The operator’s driver’s license is verified annually by the entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the school bus.
- g. A person who sustains a conviction, as defined under Minn. Stat. § 609.02, of violating Minn. Stat. § 169A.25, § 169A.26, § 169A.27 (driving while impaired offenses), or § 169A.31 (alcohol-related school bus driver offenses), or whose driver’s license is revoked under Minn. Stat. §§ 169A.50 to 169A.53 of the implied consent law, or who is convicted of or has his or her driver’s license revoked under a similar statute or ordinance of another state, is precluded from operating a type III vehicle for five years from the date of conviction.
- h. A person who has ever been convicted of a disqualifying offense as defined in Minn. Stat. § 171.3215, Subd. 1(c), (*i.e.*, felony, controlled substance, criminal sexual conduct offenses, or offenses for surreptitious observation, indecent exposure, use of minor in a sexual performance, or possession of child pornography or display of pornography to a minor) may not operate a type III vehicle.
- i. A person who sustains a conviction, as defined under Minn. Stat. § 609.02, of a moving offense in violation of Minn. Stat. Ch. 169 within three years of the first of three other moving offenses is precluded from operating a type III vehicle for one year from the date of the last conviction.

- j. Students riding the type III vehicle must have training required under Minn. Stat. § 123B.90, Subd. 2 (See Section II.B., above).
 - k. Documentation of meeting the requirements listed in this section must be maintained under separate file at the business location for each type III vehicle operator. The school district or any other entity that owns, leases, or contracts for the type III vehicle operating under this section is responsible for maintaining these files for inspection.
- 2. The type III vehicle must bear a current certificate of inspection issued under Minn. Stat. § 169.451.

VIII. SCHOOL DISTRICT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- A. If possible, school bus drivers or their supervisors shall call “911” or the local emergency phone number in the event of a serious emergency.
- B. School bus drivers shall meet the emergency training requirements contained in Unit III “Crash & Emergency Preparedness” of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Model School Bus Driver Training Manual. This includes procedures in the event of a crash (accident).
- C. School bus drivers and bus assistants for special education students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition shall be trained in basic first aid procedures, shall within one month after the effective date of assignment participate in a program of in-service training on the proper methods for dealing with the specific needs and problems of students with disabilities, assist students with disabilities on and off the bus when necessary for their safe ingress and egress from the bus; and ensure that protective safety devices are in use and fastened properly.
- D. Emergency Health Information shall be maintained on the school bus for students requiring special transportation service because of their handicapping condition. The information shall state:
 - 1. the student’s name and address;
 - 2. the nature of the student’s disabilities;
 - 3. emergency health care information; and
 - 4. the names and telephone numbers of the student’s physician, parents, guardians, or custodians, and some person other than the student’s parents or custodians who can be contacted in case of an emergency.

IX. SCHOOL DISTRICT VEHICLE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

- A. All school vehicles shall be maintained in safe operating conditions through a systematic preventive maintenance and inspection program adopted or approved by contracted bus company and the school district.
- B. All school vehicles shall be state inspected in accordance with legal requirements.
- C. Daily pre and post-trip inspections shall be required and prompt reports submitted of defects to be immediately corrected.

X. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DIRECTOR

The school board will designate an individual to serve as the school district's school transportation safety director. The school transportation safety director shall have day-to-day responsibility for student transportation safety, including transportation of nonpublic school children when provided by the school district. The school transportation safety director will assure that this policy is periodically reviewed to ensure that it conforms to law.

The school transportation safety director shall certify annually to the school board that each school bus driver meets the school bus driver training competencies required by Minn. Stat. § 171.321, Subd. 4. The transportation safety director also shall annually verify or ensure that the private contractor utilized by the school has verified the validity of the driver's license of each employee who regularly transports students for the school district in a type A, B, C, or D school bus or type III vehicle with the National Driver's Register or the Department of Public Safety. The school transportation safety director also shall confirm annually to the superintendent that students have received school bus safety training in accordance with state law.

The name, address and telephone number of the school transportation safety director are on file in the school district office. Any questions regarding student transportation or this policy may be addressed to the school transportation safety director.

XI. DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Persons wishing to express concerns with the transportation procedures which are being utilized are encouraged to initially contact the private firm rendering the service to the District. If no satisfaction is gained through this contact, then they shall call the building principal. The building principal shall attempt to resolve the matter.

If the building principal cannot resolve the problem, the transportation concern will be referred to the Director of Finance and Operations. If the concern can't be resolved it will be placed on the agenda of the District Transportation Committee. The District Transportation Committee decisions are final.

Membership may include parents, school bus drivers, representatives of school bus companies, local law enforcement officials, other school district staff, and representatives from other units of local government.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, Subd. 8 (Board to Issue Licenses)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.03 (Background Check)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.42 (Textbooks; Individual Instructor or Cooperative Learning Material; Standard Tests)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.88 (Independent School Districts; Transportation)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.885 (Diesel School Buses; Operation of Engine; Parking)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.90 (School Bus Safety Training)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.91 (School District Bus Safety Responsibilities)
Minn. Stat. § 144.057 (Background Studies on Licensees and Other Personnel)
Minn. Stat. § 169.01, Subd. 6(5) (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 169.443, (Safety of School Children; Bus Driver's Duties)
Minn. Stat. § 169.446, Subd. 2 (Driver Training Programs)
Minn. Stat. § 169.451 (Inspecting School and Head Start Buses; Rules; Misdemeanor)
Minn. Stat. § 169.454 (Type III Vehicle Standards)Minn. Stat. § 169.4582 (Reportable Offense on School Buses)
Minn. Stat. § 169A.25-169A.27 (Driving While Impaired)
Minn. Stat. § 169A.31 (Alcohol-Related School Bus or Head Start Bus Driving)
Minn. Stat. § 169A.50-169A.53 (Implied Consent Law)
Minn. Stat. § 171.02, Subds. 2, 2a, and 2b (Licenses; Types, Endorsements, Restrictions)
Minn. Stat. § 171.168 (Notification of Conviction for Violation by a Commercial Driver)
Minn. Stat. § 171.169 (Notification of Suspension of License of Commercial Driver)
Minn. Stat. § 171.321 (Qualifications of a School Bus Driver)
Minn. Stat. § 171.3215, Subd. 1(c) (Canceling Bus Endorsement for Certain Offenses)
Minn. Stat. § 181.951 (Authorized Drug and Alcohol Testing)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 245C (Human Services Background Studies)
Minn. Stat. § 609.02 (Definitions)
Minn. Rules Parts 7470.1000-7470.1700 (School Bus Inspection)
34 C.F.R. § 383.5 (Transportation Definitions)
49 C.F.R. § 383.31 (Notification of Convictions for Driver Violation)
49 C.F.R. § 383.33 (Notification of Driver's License Suspensions)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 416 (Drug and Alcohol Testing)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 707 (Transportation of Public Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 708 (Transportation of Nonpublic Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 710 (Extracurricular Transportation)
Transportation Contract Between District and Bus Company

**Administrative Offices
Buffalo, Minnesota 55313**

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