

LIABILITY POSSIBILITY

3301-83-08 Pupil transportation management policies.

Pupil transportation management policies should be developed cooperatively by administrators and transportation personnel. Policies should be designed to ensure the safety and welfare of all school bus passengers and shall include:

- (A) The school bus driver's authority and/or responsibility to maintain control of the pupils.
- (B) The pupil's right to "due process" as provided for by the policies and procedures of the educating agency.
- (C) Pupil management and safety instruction policies shall include the following:
 - (1) Pupils shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
 - (2) Pupils must wait in a location clear of traffic and away from the bus stops.
 - (3) Behavior at the school bus stop must not threaten life, limb or property of any individual.
 - (4) Pupils must go directly to an available or assigned seat so the bus may safely resume motion.
 - (5) Pupils must remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear.
 - (6) Pupils must observe classroom conduct and obey the driver promptly and respectfully.
 - (7) Pupils must not use profane language.
 - (8) Pupils must refrain from eating and drinking on the bus except as required for medical reasons.
 - (9) Pupils must not use tobacco on the bus.
 - (10) Pupils must not have alcohol or drugs in their possession on the bus except for prescription medication required for a student.
 - (11) Pupils must not throw or pass objects on, from or into the bus.
 - (12) Pupils may carry on the bus only objects that can be held in their laps (see paragraph (J) of Rule 3301-83-20 of the Administrative Code).
 - (13) Pupils must leave or board the bus at locations to which they have been assigned unless they have parental and administrative authorization to do otherwise.
 - (14) Pupils must not put head or arms out of the bus windows.
 - (15) Guidelines will be formulated for the use and storage of equipment and other means of assistance required by preschool and special needs children.
 - (16) Drivers and bus aides must have access to appropriate information about the child to the degree that such information might affect safe transportation and medical well-being. This information must be available in the vehicle or readily accessible in the transportation office. All such information is strictly confidential.

3301-83-09 Pupil instruction.

(A) Safety instruction shall be given to all regularly transported pupils in grades kindergarten through three within two weeks after the commencement of classes each school year (see section 3327.16 of the Revised Code). The program shall include but not be limited to:

- (1) Safe walking practices to and from the bus stop.
- (2) Wearing of light-colored or reflective clothing when going to and from the bus stop in darkness.
- (3) How and where to wait safely for the bus including how to avoid personal risks involving strangers.
- (4) What to do if the bus is late or does not arrive.

(5) How to enter and leave the bus safely. This instruction shall include the potential hazards regarding the snagging of clothing, backpacks, or other items, as well as items which may be dropped around or under the bus.

(6) Safe riding practices (including instruction on rule 3301-83-08 of the Administrative Code, pupil transportation management policies).

(7) Safely crossing the highway before boarding and after leaving the bus.

(8) Respect for the rights and privileges of others.

(B) Pupils enrolled in kindergarten through grade three who may be transported on non-routine type trips only must be given a general orientation annually on school bus safety procedures.

(C) Pupils enrolled in grades four through twelve and regularly transported shall be properly instructed in safety procedures on and around the school bus.

(D) The procedure in paragraphs (A), (B), and (C) of this rule may require modification for preschool and special needs children.

3301-83-11 School bus inspections.

(A) Ohio state highway patrol safety inspection

The school bus owner, operator, lessee, or designee shall be responsible for presenting all school buses for the annual Ohio state highway patrol safety inspection and will be responsible for the pre-inspection, repair and preparation of each school bus.

(B) Daily Inspection of the school bus by the driver

It is the responsibility of each school bus driver to complete and document a daily pre-trip inspection of the school bus before transporting students. The school bus owner, operator, lessee, or designee may designate another qualified individual to complete and record portions of the stationary inspection in lieu of the school bus driver. It is the responsibility of the school bus owner to provide each driver with all inspection forms for reporting purposes.

3301-83-12 Safety procedures.

(5) School bus railroad crossing procedures

(a) Traffic checks shall be made upon the approach to the railroad crossing so that the driver can observe traffic and reduce speed far enough in advance of the stop to avoid trapping other motorists in panic stops or rear-end collisions with the bus. On multiple roadways, all stops must be made in the far right lane whenever possible and practical.

(b) At approximately three hundred feet from the railroad crossing, the driver must signal the passengers for silence, turn off noisy equipment (fans, etc.), turn off the warning lamp master switch if necessary, and actuate the strobe light, if available and if conditions warrant.

(c) Actuate the hazard lights at least one hundred feet from the railroad crossing, unless prohibited by local ordinance. No other signs or signals, except the strobe light, will be actuated from the bus while stopped or stopping at the railroad crossing.

(d) Open the driver's window just prior to stopping

(e) Stop the bus within fifty feet and not less than fifteen feet from the nearest rail. Set the parking brake.

(f) Shift the gear lever into neutral. This applies to buses with either standard or automatic transmission.

(g) Open the service door and look and listen not less than twice in both directions for an approaching train, engines, or train cars.

(h) Shift into the proper gear when the crossing can be made safely and there is sufficient space on the other side of the railroad crossing.

(i) Close the door, continue to look for trains, engines, or train cars in hazardous proximity of the bus, and listen for any audible signals.

(j) Release parking brake and proceed across the railroad crossing when safe to do so. Do not shift gears while crossing.

(k) When the bus has safely cleared the last rail and is approximately fifty feet from the crossing:

- (i) Turn off the hazard lights and strobe light
- (ii) Close window, if desired
- (iii) Turn on warning lamp master switch and heater fans, if needed
- (iv) Turn on radios

(1) Traffic checks shall be made to identify any hazards by motorists trying to pass the bus while completing the railroad crossing.

(C) School bus turn-around

(1) Whenever possible, the bus shall be clearly visible to the other motorists five hundred feet in both directions.

(2) Whenever possible, turn-a-rounds should not be scheduled at intersections where the vehicle must cross a lane of traffic while backing.

(3) Four-way hazard lights shall be actuated unless prohibited by local ordinance.

(4) The driver shall sound the horn twice before backing or have an audible signal while backing.

(5) The driver shall not back the school bus at pick-up or discharge locations while pupils are outside the vehicle.

(D) Loading and unloading at school facilities

(1) When it is necessary to load or unload pupils off the school grounds, the bus shall be positioned and parked (with parking brake set) so that pupils do not cross the roadway to get to or from the bus.

(2) Warning flasher lights shall be deactivated when loading and unloading on school grounds or when loading and unloading from a school bus stopped off the traveled portion of the roadway adjoining the school grounds

(3) Parking for loading and unloading on school grounds shall be bumper to bumper or diagonal. Either method used shall exclude any necessity for backing the school bus. The rear and/or side emergency exits shall remain accessible at all times.

(4) Pupils in the loading area shall be properly supervised by the building principal or designee.

(5) Except when loading or unloading pre-school or special needs children, the driver shall remain on the bus while pupils are loading and unloading.

(E) Before receiving or discharging pupils, the bus shall be driven to the right side of the paved or traveled portion of the roadway and brought to a full stop.

(F) The bus driver shall be the only operator of the service entrance door. The door shall not be opened to load or unload pupils until traffic has cleared the bus or come to a complete stop in all directions.

(G) The bus driver shall not use the service door control to actuate warning lights. The door must remain in a securely closed position while the bus is in motion.

(H) The bus driver shall not leave a school bus unattended with pupils on board except when loading or unloading pre-school and special needs children or in the event of an emergency. Drivers who must leave the driver's position for these purposes shall not leave the immediate vicinity of the bus, except for an emergency.

(I) The driver shall not leave the bus until the brakes are set, the engine stopped and the ignition key removed, with the exception for buses equipped with wheelchair lifts or diesel engines that require the engine to be running.

(J) At the conclusion of each route or trip, the driver should ensure all passengers have left the bus by visually inspecting each seat position.

3301-83-13 School bus stops.

(7) Each bus shall have a detailed route sheet on board which shall include:

- (a) Direction to designated stops
- (b) Time schedule
- (c) Designated stop
- (d) Driver-designated place of safety
- (e) Number of people at stop location and residence side
- (f) List identifying road hazards (paragraph (I) of rule 3301-83-20 of the Administrative Code)

(8) When applicable, each route shall have a responsible student assigned to assist a substitute bus driver with the route.

3301-83-15 Emergency and evacuation procedures.

This policy shall be developed in cooperation with all those whose services would be required in the event of emergencies. The transportation director/supervisor, school administrators, teachers, drivers, maintenance and service personnel and students shall be provided instruction in the procedures to be followed in the event of:

(1) Accident

The policy shall describe how to protect the accident scene; evacuate and control students; evaluate the need for medical assistance; notify the responsible law enforcement agency, school officials and emergency services; collect and record data essential to the preparation of required reports; and communicate with parents and/or guardians.

(2) Disability of driver

Procedures for handling situations in the event of illness, injury, or disability of the bus driver shall be included in the policy.

(3) School bus failure

The policy shall describe procedures for securing the bus, disposing of and controlling passengers, notifying school officials, securing alternate equipment, and repairing and recovering the disabled school bus.

(4) Inclement weather conditions

The pre-emergency policy shall provide instruction as to school closings, delayed take-ups and/or early dismissals.

(5) Tornado

The policy shall provide procedures for drivers and students in the event of tornado sightings and/or warnings.

(6) Policies shall also be developed to address other dangerous and/or threatening situations (weapons, assaults, unauthorized attempted boardings, and impeding the movement of the bus).

3301-83-18 Passenger capacity.

(A) Seating shall be provided that will permit each passenger to sit in a position which will provide maximum protection by the barrier.

(B) The number of passengers in a school bus shall not exceed the school bus manufacturers rated capacity. Seating shall be adjusted according to the passengers individual physical size.

(C) No person shall stand while the school bus is in motion, with the exception of bus aides and driver training staff, in the official performance of their duties.