

TRANSPORTATION 600

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Background

The Board believes that the bus shall be operated in a safe and courteous manner.

Procedures

1. The bus driver shall:
 - a. Be properly licensed for operating a school bus;
 - b. Be familiar with and adhere to the requirements of the Highway Traffic Act and related sections of other Acts;
 - c. Prior to being employed, provide the Transportation Supervisor with a driver's abstract and a signed consent form allowing Grande Prairie Roman Catholic School District access to future driver abstracts;
 - d. Have a medical examination prior to employment and every five years;
 - e. Be thoroughly familiar with and adhere to transportation procedures;
 - f. Attend seminars and staff development activities as required;
 - g. Arrange to deliver the bus to the shop during the last week of June and take possession of a bus prior to school opening;
 - h. Not drive bus within 10 hours of consuming alcohol or while under the influence of alcohol. Failure to comply with guidelines on the consumption of alcoholic beverages will result in termination of employment;
 - i. Be reviewed by the Transportation Committee if license has been suspended for any driving infractions;
 - j. Provide the Transportation Supervisor with a phone number that the driver can be reached in case of emergency;
 - k. Not smoke in the bus or on Grande Prairie Roman Catholic School District property;
 - l. Not take medication while driving the bus that will affect his/her driving capabilities;
 - m. Not transport on the bus any hot beverages for consumption while fulfilling duties as school bus driver;
 - n. Be clean and neat while on duty.

- o. Submit a medical certificate on request of the Superintendent.

2. Schedule Requirements

The bus driver shall:

- a. Conduct a bus evacuation drill with the students during the first week of school and one other time during the school year, and advise the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians of the dates on which drills were conducted;
- b. Arrange their schedules to ensure that the bus arrives at school at the times specified by the Transportation Supervisor;
- c. Be at school at least five minutes before dismissal time;
- d. Before leaving the school, take a roll call to ensure that the load is complete;
- e. Leave the school when the load is complete; or if the load is incomplete, at the direction of the Principal;
- f. Ensure that the students will reach their school and home safely;
- g. Not allow students to be allowed off at other stops without written consent of the parents;
- h. Under extreme conditions where this cannot be assured, the students will remain on the bus until released to responsible adult care;
- i. Seek the assistance or advise of the Principal whenever a student engages in conduct injurious to the safety of other students;

3. Technical Requirements

The bus driver shall:

- 3.1. Ensure the bus and equipment are in safe mechanical condition;
- 3.2. Complete all check lists and safety checks prior to transporting students;
- 3.3. Ensure that the bus interior is clean and that the exterior lights are free of any obstacles; and
- 3.4. Use alternating flashing lights as per Highway Traffic Act Sec. 105.

Bus Routes

Background

The Board expects the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians to establish bus routes within the jurisdiction in accordance with the attendance areas established by the District.

Procedures

Persons dissatisfied with the decision of the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians regarding bus routes may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools on one occasion only, unless circumstances change significantly. All appeals must be written and signed.

School Bus Accidents

Background

The Board believes that a format needs to be established, and followed, for the reporting of school bus collisions.

Procedures

1. The driver of the school bus must first contact the busing contractor and relay the following information:
 - a. Location;
 - b. Number of students on the bus;
 - c. Are there any injuries; and
 - d. Number of vehicles involved.
2. The busing contractor must immediately:
 - a. Contact R.C.M.P. (R.C.M.P. will contact an ambulance if necessary);
 - b. Send a relief bus to the scene of the accident;
 - c. Protect the scene until the R.C.M.P. give permission to move vehicles; and
 - d. Contact the District's Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians; and
 - e. Notify all parents by telephone or by sending a note sent home with each child as soon as possible.
3. The District's Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians is responsible for:
 - a. Attending the accident scene;
 - b. Contacting the Superintendent or designate by phone and summarizing the events of the accident;
 - c. Collecting information about the accident and preparing a written report and submitting it to the Associate Superintendent of Business Operations within hours of the accident; and
 - d. Referring all media inquiries to the Superintendent.

Attendance Boundaries

Background

Although the Board accepts that parents and students have a right to choose their school, the Board shall set attendance boundaries for each school. Transportation is provided within the attendance area of each school.

Procedures

1. Parents who desire to have their children attend a school other than their designated school shall be responsible for their children's transportation to an existing pick up within the boundaries of their school of choice, subject to space on the bus based on weighted load and space in the program needed.
2. Cross Boundary transportation will be provided for students enrolled in:
3. Special programs that meet the needs of the student as determined by the Superintendent or designate.
 - 2.2. French Immersion.
 - 2.3. Special situations (social or behavioural problems) that address the needs of the student as determined by the Superintendent or designate.
 - 2.4. Overcrowded schools as determined by Superintendent or designate.
 - 2.5. Focus schools. A fee may be charged to provide students with enhanced level of service.

Appeals

3. A decision made by the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools if the parent can demonstrate that a change in attendance boundary will significantly benefit their son/daughter. Written and signed appeals will be considered on one occasion only, unless circumstances change significantly.

Amended March, 2011

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION BY BUS

Background

The District provides bussing at no cost to eligible students within the boundaries of Grande Prairie RCSSD No. 28. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 who choose to register in a school outside their designated attendance area may receive bussing at the student's expense if service is normally available.

Procedures

1. Students shall be eligible for bussing (Grades Kindergarten to Grade 12) at District expense who:
 - Live beyond Alberta Education prescribed distance limits from the school of attendance.
 - Are directed to attend a school outside the normal attendance area established for the school.
 - Attend a required program outside the normal attendance area of the school.
 - Have medical conditions verified by a medical doctor.
 - Are students whose walk to school is considered unsafe by the Supervisor of Transportation
 - Are students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 who live farther than 1.7 km from their school, according to AB Education's guidelines for calculating distances.
2. Parents may purchase an in-town bus pass for their daughter/son (Grades Kindergarten to Grade 12) at parent expense if the following conditions are met:
 - The District has seats available on the bus.
 - The school bus has a one-way ride time of less than one hour.
 - The Supervisor of Transportation is in agreement that additional passengers will not significantly impact the route.
3. Where the school district allows students to be enrolled in a Program of Choice and there is transportation available, the district will provide no-cost student transportation providing students meet conditions in #1 above. If the student does not meet eligibility conditions in #1, then clause #2 will be enforced.
4. Where the school district allows students to be enrolled in a School of Choice and there is transportation available, the district will provide no-cost student transportation.
5. Students shall comply with the standards of conduct as specified in Administrative Procedure 331 – Student Conduct on School Buses.

6. Any teachers, parents or individuals acting in a supervisory capacity are authorized to ride a school bus.
7. Only authorized passengers will be transported on a school bus.
8. Parents are expected to inform the bus driver of any special medical conditions of their children that may require the driver's attention.
9. Parents are expected to ensure that their children are properly dressed for bus transportation.
10. Parents are expected to notify the Supervisor of Transportation when they will no longer require bus service.
11. Students shall not be dropped off at a location other than the normal point of departure unless written instructions advising an alternate drop-off are provided to the bus driver by the parent or guardians.
12. The Principal is responsible for informing students and parents with regard to transportation procedures.
13. A bus pass replacement fee of \$5.00 may be charged for lost passes.
14. From time to time the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians may ride the school bus to check bus schedules, mileage and routes.

Rural Transportation

Short Term Rider

In the event of an emergency situation where parent(s)/guardian(s) must leave for a short term and require their child(ren) to stay at a rural residence until they return or other arrangements are made, the following conditions will apply:

Conditions:

- 1) Must be an emergent situation
- 2) Must not be longer than two (2) weeks duration
- 3) Must endeavor to provide 24 hours notice (faxed or submitted to transportation office) with parent(s)/guardian(s) permission (signature required) and emergency contact numbers provided.

Ride-A-Long Program

This program to allow urban or rural students registered in our district schools to occasionally ride home with another student to an existing rural residence. The following conditions will apply for an occasional ride:

Conditions:

- 1) Occasional Use only (1-2 times/month)
- 2) 24 hours notice (faxed or submitted to transportation office) with parent(s)/guardian(s) permission (signature required) and emergency contact numbers provided.
- 3) Subject to Transportation Supervisor's approval.

Reference: Section 51, 60, School Act

Cross-Reference: Administrative Procedure 331 – Student Conduct on Buses

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION BY PRIVATE VEHICLES

Background

School bus, taxi or parents normally provide student transportation to and from school or to and from school-sponsored activities. Occasionally, special circumstances do warrant District employees transporting students in privately owned vehicles.

The transportation of students in privately owned vehicles is authorized in special circumstances and in accordance with the following procedures:

Procedures

1. The Principal may authorize the use of private vehicles to transport students provided:
 - 1.1 School bus, taxi or parental transport of the student is not feasible;
 - 1.2 Adequate measures are established to ensure student safety;
 - 1.3 Adequate insurance coverage on the vehicle is maintained;
 - 1.4 Responsible persons 21 years of age or over are assigned as drivers; and
 - 1.5 Drivers are not being paid for their services.
2. When private vehicles are being used to transport students, the following conditions must be adhered to:
 - 2.1 The Principal or designate of the school must authorize the use of a private vehicle, in writing;
 - 2.2 Details of the vehicle insurance coverage shall be filed with the Principal;
 - 2.3 Details of the vehicle's driver's licence shall be filed with the Principal.
 - 2.4 Primary insurance coverage for vehicles used to transport students on authorized trips must provide bodily injury and property damage coverage of at least One Million (\$1,000,000) Dollars;
 - 2.5 Drivers who transport students are to be advised that their insurance coverage is always primary or first loss insurance and that if they intend to occasionally transport students they shall so advise their insurance company.
3. The District's non-owned vehicle liability insurance coverage will provide secondary insurance coverage over and above the owner's policy. This secondary coverage covers the driver only while transporting students and/or approved supervisors on authorized school trips and applies only to claims advanced on behalf of the student(s) and/or approved supervisor(s).
4. Parents shall be notified in writing that a private vehicle will be used to transport their child and will be given the name of the driver.

5. Only in exceptional circumstances will students be sent on errands that require the use of a private vehicle. Before granting permission, proof of proper insurance endorsement (i.e., coverage for a young driver) must be provided. Where permission is granted, student passengers shall not be allowed.

Reference: Section 60, School Act

PARENT-PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION

Background

Circumstances may arise where private vehicles could be used to transport a limited number of students as an alternative to the preferred procedure of using a school bus. The Principal of each school is authorized to establish procedures, in compliance with existing legislative and insurance requirements, governing the use of private vehicles as an alternate means of student transportation.

Procedures

1. All drivers shall have their own third party liability insurance in effect for at least \$1,000,000. Written confirmation of such coverage must be obtained by the Principal for the school records.
2. Drivers must comply with all applicable laws/regulations at all times.
3. Students themselves shall only drive when all other options have been exhausted. Permission shall be granted only to those students who are deemed “mature” enough. Guidelines shall be clearly communicated to all student drivers.
4. If any student drivers violate any guidelines, they shall have their driving privileges removed permanently.
5. The Principal shall ensure that thorough records are maintained including, but not limited to, names of operators/passengers, dates, times, destinations, etc.
6. Permission slips must be signed by parents of all student drivers, passengers and/or participants. Students themselves must sign waiver forms.
7. Principals have the right to refuse any private transportation request where, in their opinion, it is in the best interests of the student(s) to do so.
8. Principals and/or teachers are required to acquaint private transportation drivers with all rules, regulations or procedures, prior to the trip.
9. Recommendations:
 - 9.1 If there is sufficient time, drivers should be advising their own insurance companies of such volunteer use.
 - 9.2 Drivers must forward driver abstracts to the school for file purposes.
 - 9.3 Routes should be predetermined.
 - 9.4 A Review Committee consisting of staff and students shall review accidents and/or violations.

10. It is to be noted that the District's general liability policy provides non-owned automobile coverage if an individual is sued on an excess basis. In other words, the volunteer driver's own policy would be primary and the District's policy would only respond once the primary policy limits were exhausted.

Reference: Section 60, 61, School Act

Inclement Weather and Transportation of Students

Procedures

1. In the case of inclement weather conditions, the busing contractor in consultation with the bus driver shall make a decision in regard to whether or not it will be safe to transport students. When a bus driver decides not to operate, s/he will contact, by no later than 6:15 a.m. the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians. Bus drivers are responsible for ensuring that all students are informed when buses will not operate due to the inclement weather.
2. Where all bus drivers in a particular zone have communicated with one another through a phone fan out system and determined not to run to a particular school or schools because of inclement weather, a designated individual will communicate this information immediately to the school Principal, the Supervisor of Transportation and Custodians, who will then communicate the information to the Superintendent or designate.
3. Normally, schools will remain open for those students who are able to attend. However, safety shall be the overwhelming concern in these situations; the Board of Trustees will support the decision of parents who choose not to send their child to school because of safety concerns.
4. In extreme weather conditions when buses are not running, the principal, in consultation with other principals in the attendance area, may recommend to the Superintendent to close the school(s). Provision shall always be made for a staff member to be at school at opening time to ensure the safety of any students who arrive at school unaware of the school closure.
5. In cases where weather conditions deteriorate after the students have been transported to school, no school bus shall transport students home until after the regular dismissal time.
6. If the conditions are such that it is not safe for the buses to take the rural students home, it will be the responsibility of the principal and the staff to use their school's communication plan to alert parents to the situation and, where necessary, to arrange for local billeting of students or for their accommodation at the school.
7. In the event of a school plant emergency a school closure may take effect. The Principal in will consult the Superintendent, who will make this decision.
8. Each principal shall have in place and use a communication plan to inform parents, students and school staff members in the event of a school closure. Communication plans should include a provision for a fan out system to contact parents and students, including those not normally transported by school bus. In addition, the communication plan should describe a process for ensuring that public service messages about school closure are broadcast on local radio stations.