

## SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION (REGULATIONS)

In accordance with the policy of the board of education, the following regulations shall apply to the district's school transportation program. Responsibility for implementing these regulations shall be delegated to the supervisor of transportation.

### School Bus Maintenance

1. All school buses purchased and used by the district will meet or exceed any and all state and federal minimum safety construction standards. (SDE Regulation)
2. The district shall have each school bus mechanically inspected annually by an approved Department of Public Safety fleet inspector. (SDE Regulation)
3. The driver shall perform a daily pre-trip safety inspection of the vehicle. The inspection shall include brakes, lights, tires, exhaust system, gauges, windshield wipers, steering, and fuel. The driver shall make a daily written report describing the condition of the bus and listing any deficiencies. This report is to remain on file with the superintendent or designee for a period of ninety (90) days. (SDE Regulation)
4. Any school bus deemed unsafe shall immediately be placed out of service until all necessary repairs are made. All repairs to school buses shall be made by a duly qualified automotive technician.
5. It is the responsibility of all drivers to clean and refuel any bus entrusted to their operation. It is furthermore the responsibility of all school bus drivers to inform the supervisor of transportation when routine maintenance is required.
6. The district shall adopt a preventative maintenance schedule to prolong the life of all school buses and to ensure the safety of the passengers. This schedule shall be developed by the supervisor of transportation.

### School Bus Drivers

1. Any person employed as a school bus driver, whether full- or part-time, shall hold the appropriate driver's license and endorsements required by the Department of Public Safety for the operation of a school bus.
2. Any person employed as a school bus driver, whether full- or part-time, shall successfully complete a school bus drivers course and hold a school bus driver's certificate as required by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE).
3. The driving records of all school bus drivers shall be checked annually and all drivers must meet the requirement of the SDE for school bus drivers' records. All new drivers shall have a felony records check conducted prior to employment and must meet SDE requirements.
4. All school bus drivers shall have an annual health certificate signed by a physician licensed by this state filed in the superintendent's office attesting that such physician has examined the driver and that the driver has no sign or symptoms of ill health, and is otherwise, from the observation of such physician, physically and mentally capable of safely operating a school bus. (SDE Regulation)

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION, REGULATIONS (Cont.)**

5. The use of tobacco by a school bus driver is not permitted during the operation of the bus or while on school premises as per board policy CKDA. The use of any intoxicating beverage and/or controlled dangerous substance by the driver within 8 hours prior to or during the operation of a school bus is strictly prohibited. (SDE Regulation)
6. Any school bus driver involved in a school bus accident resulting in personal injury, property damage of \$500.00 or more, or charged with a violation of traffic law shall submit to a screening test to detect if alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance was used by the driver prior to school bus operation (see DCCB).
7. All school bus drivers shall be evaluated annually for job performance purposes. All new drivers shall be evaluated within the first 90 days of the beginning of the school year. All drivers shall receive written notification of the date of evaluation one week prior to evaluation. All procedures relative to and including the written evaluation form shall be on file in the office of the supervisor of transportation. These procedures shall be available to any interested party upon request.

Any school bus driver receiving a deficiency or reprimand may respond in writing to the transportation supervisor within 10 working days. A written plan of improvement shall be furnished to the school bus driver. A formal reevaluation shall be scheduled within 30 days. All evaluations shall be made available to the board of education and may be introduced as evidence in any disciplinary action or termination of employment hearings. Immediate suspension pending due process proceedings for termination of employment shall be made for any of the following reasons:

- A. Failure to conduct a thorough daily pre-trip inspection;
- B. The use of alcohol or any controlled dangerous substance within eight hours prior to the operation of a school bus.
- C. Operating a school bus in a careless or wanton manner without regard for the safety of persons or property or in violation of the conditions outlined in 47 O.S. §11-801:
  1. No person shall drive a school bus at a speed greater than a maximum of 55 miles per hour on paved two lane roads except on the state highway system, the interstate highway system and the turnpike system where the maximum shall be 65 miles per hour.
  2. On any highway outside of a municipality, the speed limit in a properly marked school zone shall be a maximum of 25 miles per hour, unless otherwise determined by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.
  3. Many school bus routes will not warrant speeds even as high as 15 miles per hour. A driver must always adapt driving to conditions.
- D. Failure to stop for a railroad crossing in a school bus when children are being transported; failure to exercise proper judgment at any railroad crossing, endangering the safety of any school children.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION, REGULATIONS (Cont.)**

- E. Conviction of any crime of moral turpitude involving children.
  - F. Abuse of sick leave; excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness.
  - G. Use of any portable electronic communications device while the vehicle is in motion
8. Any school bus driver shall be suspended with pay pending the outcome of an investigation of any charge of recklessly endangering the safety of persons or property while operating a school bus or any charge of moral turpitude involving children.
  9. All school bus drivers shall comply with requirements of the supervisor of transportation regarding attendance of and participation in in-service and periodic safety meetings for the purpose of increased student safety.
  10. All school bus drivers shall dress appropriate to the operation of a school bus. Prohibited articles of clothing shall include:
    - A. Thong-type sandals;
    - B. Halter tops or see-through blouses;
    - C. Dresses shorter than three inches above the knee;
    - D. Any article of clothing with logos promoting alcohol or tobacco products, phrases that are sexually implicit or suggestive, and phrases containing profanity;
    - E. Any gang-related paraphernalia.
  11. Substitute and activity school bus drivers shall meet all the requirements prescribed for regular bus drivers.

**School Bus Safety**

1. Illegally passing a school bus is a violation of state law. All school bus drivers are required to report, within 24 hours of the alleged offense, drivers who illegally pass their buses. Each report is to include the vehicle color, license tag number, and the time and place of the violation and is to be made to the law enforcement authority of the municipality where the violation occurred and to the district's director of transportation.
2. All auxiliary transportation equipment owned by this district shall comply with state law requirements and shall be of such construction as to provide safe, comfortable, and economical transportation of passengers.
3. School bus drivers transporting children under the age of six will utilize a child passenger restraint system or a seat belt when using school-owned vehicles other than school buses to transport the students.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION, REGULATIONS (Cont.)**School Bus Route

1. Transportation shall be restricted to use for the students of this school district who reside within the boundaries of the school district. All Oklahoma State Board of Education Regulations regarding school bus routes shall be strictly adhered to.
2. All school bus stops shall be selected with the safety of the children at the bus stop the first consideration. When possible, a bus stop shall be located within one-half (½) mile of the home of each child being transported.
3. All school bus routes shall be evaluated annually. A copy of the evaluation shall be forwarded to the government agency responsible for maintaining the roadway if any physical hazards are noted. If identifiable hazards exist on a school bus route, all drivers shall exercise due caution. Route and bus stop changes may be made at the discretion of the supervisor of transportation.
4. School bus drivers may not deviate from established school bus routes without the written permission of the supervisor of transportation.
5. It is the duty of the parents or legal guardian to have their children at the bus stop at the proper time. No children may board any school bus except at a designated bus stop.
6. No children shall be discharged from their school bus at any point except the designated bus stop unless permission from the parent or guardian is furnished to the supervisor of transportation. Furthermore, no child shall be released to anyone except the parents having legal custody unless written permission is furnished to the supervisor of transportation or the principal.

Auxiliary or Activity Transportation

1. Any person operating a school bus for auxiliary transportation purposes shall adhere to all school transportation policies regarding driver qualifications and operational procedures.
2. No school buses will be utilized for any activity trip prohibited by Oklahoma State Board of Education regulations.
3. It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians of all children riding activity buses to have their children at the designated site for departure and arrival of all activity trips.
4. All adults transported in connection with activity trips must be designated sponsors or appropriate school personnel such as the superintendent, principal, or sponsor.
5. All requests for auxiliary transportation must be made to the supervisor of transportation or principal prior to the trip.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION, REGULATIONS (Cont.)**Student Discipline

1. Due to the serious nature of student transportation, no disruptive behavior shall be tolerated on any school bus that might endanger the life or safety of any student transported.
2. During a school assembly or upon enrollment, all students will be presented with a copy of the school bus rider rules. These rules must be discussed with each child by their parent or legal guardian and each parent or legal guardian must sign a written statement supporting the school district in the enforcement of these rules (see CN-A2).
3. Any violation of these rules could result in the following:
  - A. Two-day suspension of school bus riding privileges;
  - B. Two-day in-house suspension;
  - C. Suspension of bus riding privileges.
4. Any student carrying alcohol, a controlled dangerous substance, firearm, or weapon on any school bus will lose school bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year and shall be reported to the appropriate enforcement agency.
5. All school bus riding rules and discipline policies shall apply both to school bus routes and to all activity trips.

School Bus Accidents and Emergencies

1. All students transported in school buses shall receive instructions in safe riding practices and will participate in emergency evacuation drills within the first two weeks of each semester. All students riding on activity trips shall be included. These drills shall be conducted on school grounds under the direction of the supervisor of transportation. Documentation of these drills shall be kept on file at the office of the supervisor of transportation and available to interested parties.
2. In the event of an accident, the following procedures shall be strictly followed by the bus driver:
  - A. The bus must be stopped and the driver should preserve the accident scene, evacuate the students from the school bus if necessary, and render first aid to the best of the driver's abilities to any injured children or parties.
  - B. The bus driver will notify the proper authorities and the supervisor of transportation.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION, REGULATIONS (Cont.)**

- C. The school bus driver shall make no comments to any party involved, witnesses, or students except to furnish proof of driver's license and school bus driver certification upon request. Any comments made to the investigating officer shall be contained to answering direct questions. At the accident scene, the school bus driver shall not submit to any media or press interviews unless approved by the superintendent. The school bus driver shall obtain the name and address of all witnesses to the accident.
3. The superintendent or designee shall be responsible for any communications with the various press or media outlets. A person shall be designated as spokesperson in the absence of the superintendent or designee.
  4. Upon request, in the event of serious injury or death of a student, the principal shall consider contacting the mental health authorities and/or the ministerial alliance to arrange counseling sessions for parents, students, and all school employees.
  5. All school bus accidents shall be investigated and the proper reports shall be submitted to the State Department of Public Safety and the State Department of Education as per state law and regulations.
  6. In the event of any serious school bus accident, especially any involving personal injury, the superintendent will inform the chief legal counsel of the school district of the events surrounding the accident. Notification to the insurance carrier shall be made by the supervisor of transportation.

**Parental Grievance Procedures**

1. All parental grievances relating to student discipline and transportation services must be initiated with the principal.
2. In cases of disciplinary action concerning student suspension from school transportation, all decisions of the superintendent shall be final pending a formal hearing conducted by the board of education. All hearings must be requested in writing by the child's parent or legal guardian.
3. All inquiries regarding school bus stops shall be initiated with the supervisor of transportation, principal, or superintendent or his/her designee.
4. All complaints regarding any unsafe driving practices involving a school bus driver shall be directed to the school administration or superintendent for formal action. Documentation forms will be available in the office of the supervisor of transportation (see CN-A3).

**REFERENCE: 47 O.S. §11-705**