

BUS12.2 - Transportation Management: Transportation Safety

B - Business

Bus Safety Program

Objective:

The safety and welfare of students during transportation is the district's highest priority. All transportation personnel, bus operators, and passengers must comply with Arizona Department of Public Safety regulations. Any violation of safety rules must be reported immediately to the Superintendent.

1. **Bus Evacuation Drills:**

Bus evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice per school year for all students who ride the bus. Drills must comply with the Arizona Department of Public Safety's requirements.

2. **Vehicle Maintenance:**

All district vehicles used to transport students must be regularly maintained and inspected to ensure safety and efficiency. Buses will be replaced periodically to maintain high standards of safety.

3. **Daily Bus Inspections:**

Drivers are required to inspect their school buses daily before use to ensure that all equipment is in proper working condition and that the bus meets safety standards.

Legal References:

- Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) 15-843, 15-922, 28-900, 28-984

BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The objective of the Bus Safety Program is to ensure the safe and orderly transportation of students to and from school. The following guidelines serve as a checklist for district officials and are designed to promote safe practices for students and drivers.

LOCAL

Arriving at Pickup Point:

- Be on time; leave home early to arrive at the bus stop before the bus.
- Walk on the left side facing traffic, and on the shoulder of the road where possible.
- Wait in line without pushing or crowding, away from the roadway.

Board the Bus:

- Line up in single file with younger students in front.
- Wait for the bus to stop completely before boarding.
- Board quickly, without running or pushing.
- Use the handrail, especially when carrying items.
- Sit promptly, facing forward, and stay seated.

Conduct on the Bus:

- The bus will only move once all passengers are seated.
- Stay seated throughout the trip and keep the aisle clear.
- Avoid distracting the driver; only talk to them in emergencies.
- Never extend body parts outside the bus windows.
- Obey all driver instructions.

Prohibited Items:

- No tobacco, alcohol, or animals allowed.
- No weapons, explosives, harmful drugs, or chemicals.

Exit from the Bus:

- Stay seated until the bus stops completely.
- Exit the bus without pushing.

Crossing the Highway:

- Only cross when the driver indicates it's safe.
- Look both ways before crossing and walk briskly.

Accident or Emergency:

- Older students should help maintain order.
- Stay in the bus unless instructed otherwise.
- Follow the driver's instructions and avoid unnecessary hazards.

LEGAL

- A.A.C. R17-9-104

BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

A.A.C. R17-9-104 states, with respect to the authority of bus drivers, "Passengers shall comply with all instructions given to them by a school bus driver. A passenger or nonpassenger who has boarded the school bus and refuses to comply with the school bus driver's instructions may be surrendered into the custody of a person who is authorized by the school to assume responsibility for the passenger or nonpassenger."

Student behavior on a school bus should be the same as that in a well-ordered classroom with the exception that students are free to talk, but with no screaming or shouting.

BUS DRIVER REQUIREMENTS, TRAINING, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all bus drivers employed by the District or by contractors comply with legal requirements to safely transport students. This includes adherence to federal and state laws, fingerprinting, licensing, and certification processes.

LOCAL

- **Compliance with Laws:**

Bus drivers must comply with the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 and all applicable Arizona state requirements.

- **Fingerprint Clearance Card:**

All bus drivers must submit an Identity Verified Fingerprint Card as required by A.R.S. 15-106. This clearance must be maintained throughout the certification period.

- **Commercial Driver License (CDL):**

Applicants are required to have a CDL issued by the Department of Public Safety. Drivers from adjacent states may use an out-of-state CDL when driving for districts near the state border.

- **Bus Endorsement and Certification:**

Bus drivers must possess a bus endorsement from the Department of Transportation and a school bus certificate from the Department of Public Safety.

- **§15-925 Vehicle Licenses:**

Drivers operating vehicles under §15-925 must have the appropriate license for the vehicle size, a school bus certificate, and a valid fingerprint clearance card.

- **Examination and Licensing Costs:**

The District will cover the cost of required physical examinations, while drivers will assume the cost of obtaining their CDL as required by law.

LEGAL

- A.R.S. 15-106
- A.R.S. 15-925
- A.R.S. 28-857
- A.R.S. 28-3228

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING OF TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEES

The objective of this policy is to ensure that transportation employees adhere to a comprehensive drug and alcohol misuse prevention program, in compliance with the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 and Arizona state regulations.

LOCAL

• Prohibited Conduct:

- No employee with a commercial driver's license (CDL) shall report for duty with an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater or perform safety-sensitive functions while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances.
- Alcohol and controlled substances must not be consumed or possessed during duty unless prescribed by a physician and it does not impair the driver's ability to operate safely.
- Refusal to submit to required alcohol or controlled substance tests will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

• Drug and Alcohol Testing Requirements:

- Employees will be subject to preemployment, random, reasonable suspicion, post-accident, return-to-duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing.
- A positive test result will disqualify the applicant from employment.

• Employee Rehabilitation:

- Employees testing positive must undergo evaluation by a substance abuse professional and may be required to complete a rehabilitation program.
- Return-to-duty is contingent upon negative test results, and follow-up testing will be conducted as per regulations.

• Cost of Testing and Rehabilitation:

- The District assumes the costs for initial evaluations and drug and alcohol testing. However, if the results are positive, the cost may be charged to the employee.

• Supervision and Implementation:

- The Superintendent is responsible for overseeing the District's drug and alcohol misuse prevention program and ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations.
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LEGAL REFERENCES

- A.R.S. 15-513
- A.R.S. 13-3402
- 49 U.S.C. 31306
- 49 C.F.R. Part 40
- 49 C.F.R. Part 382
- 49 C.F.R. Part 395

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The objective of this policy is to ensure that students maintain appropriate behavior while using school bus services to promote a safe and orderly environment during transportation.

LOCAL

- **Expectations for Student Behavior:**

- Students must conduct themselves on the bus, prior to boarding, and after leaving the bus, in a manner consistent with established classroom behavior standards.
- Misconduct will be reported by the bus driver to the principal, who may inform the parents of the behavior.

- **Disciplinary Action:**

- Students who pose serious disciplinary problems related to school transportation may have their bus-riding privileges suspended.
- Parents become responsible for ensuring their children's safe transportation to and from school during the suspension period.

- **Special-Activity Buses:**

- Students on special-activity buses are under the supervision of the bus driver in cooperation with the sponsor(s).
 - Improper behavior may result in denial of future riding privileges on special-activity buses.
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LEGAL REFERENCES

- A.R.S. 15-341

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

This policy aims to maintain a safe and orderly environment on school buses by addressing student behavior that could jeopardize the safety of all passengers. It outlines disciplinary measures for infractions ranging from minor to severe, as well as the procedures for addressing and documenting misconduct.

LOCAL

- **General Offenses:**

The following behaviors are considered disruptive and will result in disciplinary action:

- Failure to remain properly seated.
- Loud, disruptive talking or yelling.
- Failure to take assigned seat.
- Eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the bus.
- Bothering other passengers.
- Throwing objects.
- Crossing behind the bus.
- Failure to follow the driver's directions.
- Profanity, obscene language, or gestures.
- Extending head or arm out of the bus window.
- Vandalizing District property.
- Verbal abuse of another student.
- Defiant behavior toward the bus driver or assistant.

- Spitting on the bus.
- Throwing objects at the bus.

- **Severe Offenses:**

The following behaviors are deemed more serious and may result in stricter disciplinary actions:

- Lighting matches or a lighter on the bus.
- Throwing objects from the bus.
- Verbal abuse or physical assault on the driver or assistant.
- Igniting fireworks, smoke/stink bombs, or any explosive devices on the bus.
- Use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
- Activating or tampering with emergency equipment.
- Possessing or using a weapon, simulated weapon, firearm, or dangerous instrument.
- Shoving a student into the path of an oncoming vehicle.
- Physical assault on a student.
- Spitting on a person.
- Sexual harassment, improper harassment, or discrimination of individuals on the bus.

- **Disciplinary Procedures:**

- When a student violates bus conduct rules, the bus driver will complete a **Bus Misconduct Form** documenting the behavior and prior disciplinary actions.
- The form is submitted to the transportation administrator and school administrator for review by the next school day, barring extenuating circumstances.
- The responsible administrator will take action, ranging from a conference to suspension of bus privileges or legal action. The parent will be notified of the decision.
- Bus drivers may attend conferences regarding the misconduct.
- Parents are required to sign and return a copy of the **Bus Misconduct Form**.

- **Suspension of Bus Riding Privileges:**

- Riding the bus is a privilege, and suspension may result from misconduct. Suspension includes field trips and other school-related activities.
- Suspension does not relieve parents of their responsibility to ensure their child attends school.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- A.R.S. 15-341