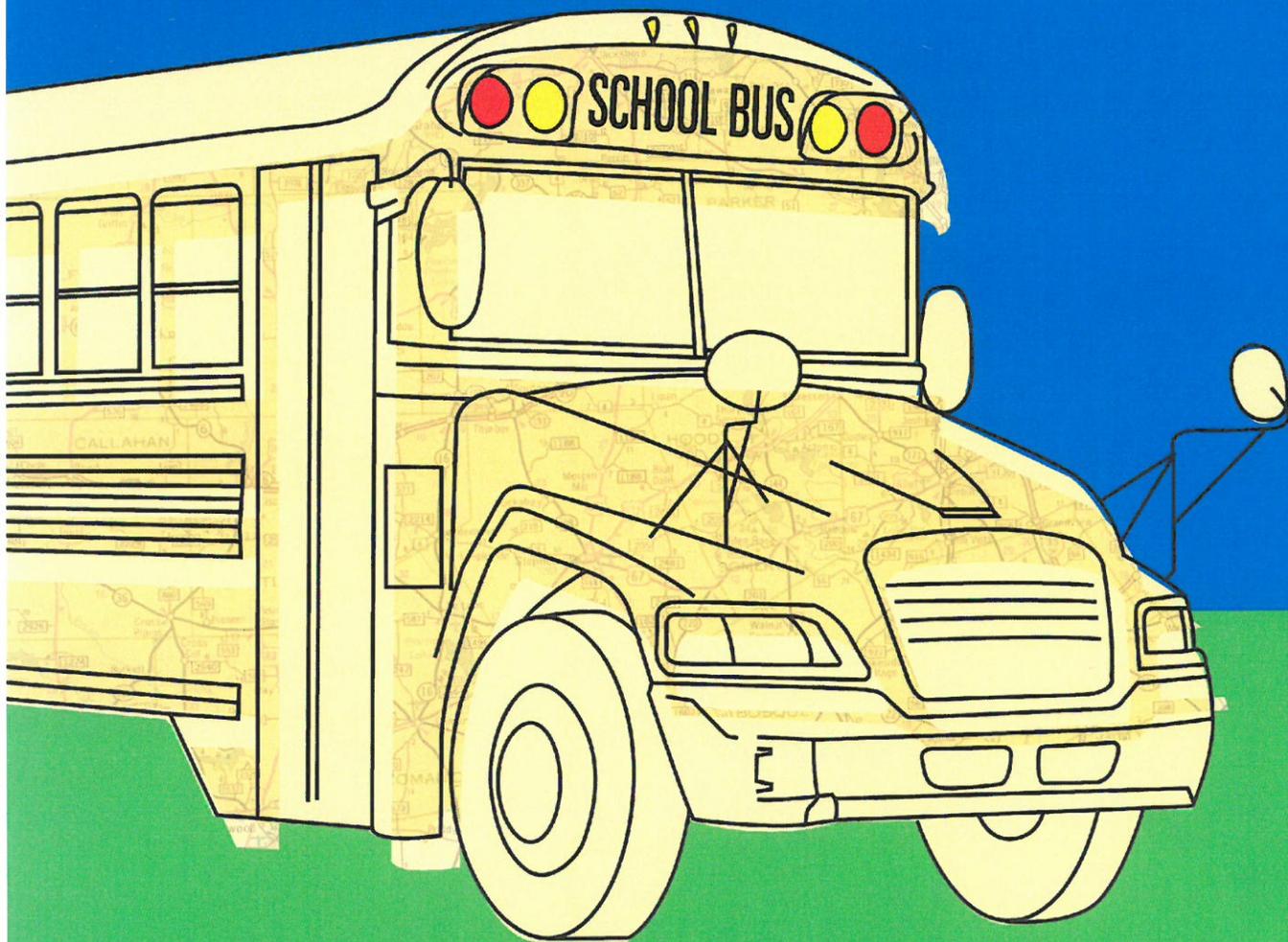


# National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures

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**May 2010**

Adopted by the Fifteenth National Congress on School Transportation

# **NATIONAL SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SPECIFICATIONS and PROCEDURES**

**2010 Revised Edition**

**Adopted by:**

**THE FIFTEENTH NATIONAL CONGRESS ON  
SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

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## ACTIVITY BUS USE FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITY TRIPS

### A. General provisions

#### 1. Pre-service driver training

In addition to successfully completing all pre-service training provided by their employer, school activity bus drivers shall complete at least a state-required course of instruction.

#### 2. In-service driver training

All school activity bus drivers shall receive the state-required amount of in-service training annually and shall be required to maintain a current first aid certificate with instruction in universal precautions.

#### 3. Hours of service

Drivers shall comply with the provisions of CFR 49 395.5.

#### 4. Specially equipped

School activity buses may be designed or modified in accordance with federal motor vehicle safety standards or with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements to transport passengers seated in wheelchairs.

#### 5. Vehicle condition

It shall be unlawful for the driver to drive a school activity bus that is not in safe operating condition or is not equipped, as required by all provisions of law. The driver is solely responsible for the vehicle condition.

#### 6. Pre-trip inspection

Prior to operation, the driver shall inspect each school activity bus to ascertain that it is in safe condition, that it is equipped as required by all provisions of law and that all equipment is in good working order. The inspection shall include, but is not limited to, the following items:

- a. All required emergency equipment, as well as first aid and body fluid cleanup kit(s), fire extinguisher(s) and reflectors;
- b. All gauges, indicators and warning devices;
- c. Horn(s);

- d. Driver's seat and seat belts;
- e. All doors, door emergency releases, overhead hatches and windows;
- f. All seats, handrails and modesty panels;
- g. Interior and exterior lighting systems;
- h. All heating, cooling and ventilating systems;
- i. All glass and mirrors, including adjustment of mirrors;
- j. Windshield wipers and washers;
- k. All tires, wheels, rims and lug nuts;
- l. Wheelchair restraints, tie downs and loading devices (such as ramps and lifts); and
- m. Brake system:
  - (1) Air compressor governor cut-in and cut-out pressures;
  - (2) Static pressure for air loss;
  - (3) Applied brake pressure loss;
  - (4) Low air pressure warning devices;
  - (5) Emergency stopping systems;
  - (6) Parking brake;
  - (7) Antiskid device (if equipped);
  - (8) Vacuum gauge (if equipped), ensuring it reads not less than 15 inches of mercury;
  - (9) Low vacuum warning device(s); and
  - (10) Brake pedal for brake adjustment.

**(Note:** Draining reservoirs in dual air systems is not required.)

7. Daily report

At the completion of the driver's work or tour of duty, each driver shall submit a daily documented report to the employer indicating the condition of the vehicle and noting any defects found. Whether discovered by or reported to the driver, all vehicle defects and deficiencies likely to affect safe operation or cause mechanical breakdown of the school activity bus shall be listed, and a negative report shall indicate that no such conditions are present.

8. Repairs

The driver shall not make any repairs to the bus or its equipment except necessary emergency repairs on the road.

B. Transportation of property

1. Hazardous materials

Motor carriers and drivers shall not transport or knowingly permit passengers to carry any substance, material or device posing an unreasonable risk to health and safety to any passenger. These restrictions shall not apply to the following items:

- a. Portable oxygen tanks medically prescribed for, and in the possession of, a passenger and in a carrier designed for personal use;
- b. Personal-use articles in the immediate possession of a passenger; and
- c. Hazardous materials transported by a carrier subject to federal jurisdiction in compliance with provisions of 49 CFR, Part 177 (E).

2. Fuel

Fuel shall not be transported except in the vehicle's regular fuel tanks.

3. General property

Drivers and motor carriers shall not permit any greater quantity of baggage in vehicles than can be safely and conveniently carried and safely secured. In no event shall aisles, doors, steps or emergency exits be blocked.

4. Animals

A driver or motor carrier may refuse to transport dogs or other animals except certified guide, signal or service animals. All other animals shall be securely crated and stored to eliminate the possibility of injury to passengers.

C. Transportation of passengers

The driver shall not drive a school activity bus transporting passengers in violation of the following provisions:

1. Seating capacity

The number of passengers (excluding infants in arms) shall not exceed the manufacturer-designated number of safe and adequate seating spaces.

2. Weight

Passengers shall not exceed the number whose weight, in addition to the weight of any property transported, can be carried without exceeding the manufacturer's maximum gross vehicle weight rating or the combined maximum rating of the tires supporting each axle.

3. Step wells

Passengers shall not be permitted in front of the "standee line" (if present) while the vehicle is in motion.

4. Standing passengers

A school activity bus with school student passengers on board shall not be put in motion until all passengers are seated. All passengers must remain seated while the vehicle is in motion, except for an adult chaperone, parent, guardian or school employee acting upon a request by the driver to supervise or assist a passenger, or when it is necessary for a passenger to use the on-board restroom at a location where the bus cannot be stopped in a safe place.

5. Open doors

A school activity bus shall not be put in motion until the doors are closed. The doors shall not be opened until the vehicle is stopped and the parking brake has been applied.

6. Emergency exits

A school activity bus shall not be put in motion with any emergency exit locked or otherwise secured against being opened from the inside or outside.

7. Interior lighting

During darkness, the driver shall ensure that the interior lighting is sufficient for passengers to enter and exit safely and whenever otherwise deemed necessary.

8. Ejection of passengers

The driver of a school activity bus shall not eject any student passenger unless the passenger is given into the custody of a parent, guardian or any person designated by the parent, guardian, school authority or law enforcement official.

9. Fueling restrictions

No fueling will take place while passengers are on board the bus.

10. School activity bus accidents reporting

a. Whenever any school activity bus accident occurs, the driver shall stop at the scene, immediately notify or cause to be notified the state agency responsible for investigating accidents involving buses engaged in the transportation of school student passengers, the driver's employer and the school district, private school, or Head Start Center that the students attend.

b. In the event of an accident or emergency, the driver shall not leave the immediate vicinity of the school activity bus to seek aid unless the bus is empty. If there are passengers on board, no less than two passengers can be sent to summon help. A passerby may be asked to call for help, or the driver or any students may use a cell phone to call for assistance. Students should be sent to summon help only in extreme emergencies and there is no other option.

c. Comply with Title 49 CFR 392.40.

11. Discontinuance from use

When a school activity bus is rendered unsafe for continued operation due to accident damage or a mechanical failure, the driver shall discontinue use of the bus and shall notify the motor carrier of these circumstances. The driver or motor carrier shall then make the necessary arrangements to have the passengers safely transported to their destinations.

12. Other operational issues

a. Smoking is prohibited

b. The driver's view in any direction shall not be obstructed by any passenger.

c. The driver shall wear the lap or lap shoulder belt (as equipped) at all times while the bus is in motion.

- d. Headlamps shall be illuminated at all times while the bus is in motion.
- e. When any passenger is on board, the driver shall not leave the driver's compartment without first stopping the engine, effectively setting the parking brake, placing the transmission in first or reverse gear or park position and removing the ignition keys (if applicable), which shall remain in the driver's possession. (On vehicles with automatic transmissions that do not have a park position, the transmission shall be placed in neutral.)
- f. School districts or Head Start grantees shall ensure that motor carriers require all school activity bus drivers to demonstrate proficiency in the safe operation of each different type and size of bus requiring different driving skills in conditions of daylight, darkness, roadway and terrain before transporting passengers in those conditions or terrain. Drivers shall also receive classroom training in bus operations under all weather conditions likely to be encountered prior to operating such vehicle(s) in those conditions. Once driver proficiency has been recorded, carriers shall ensure that driver proficiency is maintained.

13. Unlawful operation

- a. No motor carrier shall knowingly require or permit the operation of any school activity bus that is not in safe operating condition or is not equipped and maintained as required by any law and shall not knowingly require or permit any driver to drive in violation of any law.
- b. A school activity bus damaged by an accident or other cause shall not be driven from the location where the damage occurred until it has been inspected by a qualified person who has determined that the vehicle is safe to drive.

D. School activity bus stops

1. Designated stops

School activity bus stops made for receiving and discharging passengers shall be approved by the school district prior to the trip. Buses shall stop only at designated stops.

2. Prohibited stops

A school activity bus stop shall not be designated at the following locations:

- a. Within 200 feet of the nearest rail of any railroad crossing or grade, except at railroad stations or on highways that parallel the railroad tracks;

- b. The left hand side of any highway; or
- c. On a divided or multiple-lane highway where passengers must cross the highway to board or after exiting the bus, unless traffic is controlled by a traffic officer or official traffic control signal. For the purposes of this subsection, a multiple-lane highway is defined as “any highway having two or more lanes of travel in each direction.”

3. Fire extinguisher

Every school activity bus shall be equipped with at least one fully charged fire extinguisher having at least a 10 B:C rating. A bus designed to transport wheelchairs shall be equipped with two extinguishers—each one rated at not less than 8B:C—one to be placed in the driver's compartment and the other at the wheelchair loading door or emergency exit.

- a. Each fire extinguisher shall have been rated and labeled by one of the following test laboratories approved by the State Fire Marshal to test and label portable fire extinguisher for sale in the respective state:

- 1. Underwriter's Laboratories, Northbrook, Illinois (all sizes and classifications); or
- 2. Factory Mutual Research Corporation, Norwood, Massachusetts (sizes 10B:C, 1A 10B:C, 2A 40B:C, 3A 40B:C, and 4A 80B:C fire extinguisher filled with Halon 1211 or Halon 301).

- b. Securement

Each fire extinguisher shall be securely mounted in the school activity bus in a conspicuous place or a clearly marked compartment and readily accessible.

- c. Maintenance

Each fire extinguisher shall be maintained in prescribed operating condition with a current inspection certification and equipped with a gauge or some other means of determining if it is fully charged.

4. First aid and body fluid cleanup kit(s)

A school activity bus shall carry a readily visible, accessible and plainly marked first aid kit and a body fluid cleanup kit. The kits shall be constructed to prevent dust and moisture from reaching the contents and must be maintained in good condition. The kits shall be removable from the place secured. The required contents of school activity bus first aid and body fluid kits shall conform to the requirements of each respective state.

5. Emergency procedures and passenger safety training

Passengers transported in school activity buses shall receive emergency procedure and passenger safety training as prescribed by state law and/or regulations for school student-passengers transported in yellow school buses.

## EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR ACTIVITY TRIPS AND FIELD TRIPS

(**Note:** See also APPENDIX D: Guidelines for En Route Emergency Bus Evacuation Procedures.) In order to ensure the safety of school bus passengers in an actual emergency, every school bus driver assigned to transport students on activity trips or field trips may assign an evacuation team prior to each trip. The team may consist of teachers, coaches, students or any other passenger. A roster should be provided to the driver, accounting for all passengers.

Passengers assigned to evacuation teams must be seated where they can effectively carry out their responsibilities in an emergency.

Each evacuation team will consist of at least the following:

1. A passenger assigned to set the parking brake, turn off the engine, turn on warning flashers and call on the radio or other means and report the incident to the Transportation Department, in case the driver is unable to do so;
2. A passenger assigned to lead passengers to a safe location at least 100 feet from the bus and to take the first aid kit off the bus;
3. Two passengers assigned to stand outside the bus, next to the entrance door, to help students exit the bus and to take the fire extinguisher; and
4. Two passengers assigned to stand outside the bus, next to the emergency exit door, to help students exit the bus.

In addition to assigning an evacuation team, the following information shall be discussed and/or demonstrated prior to each activity trip or field trip:

1. Location and use of the fire extinguisher;
2. Location of the first aid kit;
3. Location of the warning reflectors;
4. Location and use of all emergency exits;
5. How to shut off the engine and set the parking brake;
6. How to open the entrance door, to include, safety releases on manual, air or vacuum doors, if so equipped; and
7. The importance of passengers keeping aisles clear at all times and not blocking emergency exits.

THE DRIVER OF THIS TRIP DID ASSIGN AN EVACUATION TEAM AND EXPLAINED THE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SAFE TRAVEL RULES TO OUR GROUP.

Sponsor's/trip leader's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## SAMPLE TRIP REQUEST FORM

Trip date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Trip destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Depart from: \_\_\_\_\_ No. passengers: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure time: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival time: \_\_\_\_\_

Extra equipment: \_\_\_\_\_

Meal stop required?  yes  no If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment that will need to be transported: \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs equipment requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

Overnight travel requirement: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of adults accompanying the students: \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation requested by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reimbursement category: \_\_\_\_\_

### TRANSPORTATION USE:

Vehicle assigned: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Spot load time: \_\_\_\_\_ Spot location: \_\_\_\_\_

Routing information: \_\_\_\_\_

Dispatcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time out: \_\_\_\_\_ Time in: \_\_\_\_\_ Total time: \_\_\_\_\_

Mileage out: \_\_\_\_\_ Mileage in: \_\_\_\_\_ Total miles: \_\_\_\_\_

Actual no. passengers: \_\_\_\_\_ Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-trip mechanical check completed (for overnight trips or trips exceeding \_\_\_\_\_ miles):

Technician's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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