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REVISED POLICY - VOL. 16, NO. 2

TRANSPORTATION

It is the policy of the School Board to provide transportation for those students whose distance from their school makes this service necessary within the limitations established by State law and the regulations of the State of Florida. Such laws and rules shall govern any question not covered by this policy.

Provisions for reciprocal agreements with contiguous school districts for school bus transportation services, inspections, and screening requirements shall be in accordance with Florida statute.

School buses shall be purchased, housed, and maintained by the District for the transportation of resident students between their home areas and the schools of the District to which they are assigned.

Students living more than two (2) miles from their home school will be eligible for District provided bus transportation. Students who attend school out of their home school zone will not be eligible for District provided transportation. Students shall board the bus at the nearest designated stop and will not enter or leave the bus at any other designated stop, except upon approval of the principal or principal's designee.

Students living within 2 miles of school may be provided District bus transportation under the following conditions:

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- A. Permanently disabled students, whose Individual Education Plan requires special transportation.
- B. Temporarily disabled students upon request and verification of disability and length of time of disability.
- C. Students whose walking routes to school meet the State criteria for hazardous walking conditions.

Deleted: Elementary students in kindergarten through sixth grade who must walk through an area that meets the State criteria for hazardous walking conditions or area designated by the Board.

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F.S. 1006.23 requires the Board and other governmental entities work cooperatively to identify conditions that are hazardous along student walking routes to school and requires such condition shall be inspected by a representative of the School District and a representative of the State or local governmental entity that has jurisdiction over the perceived hazardous location. If it is determined that the condition meets the criteria established in State law for hazardous walking conditions, the Board shall provide transportation to students who would be subjected to such conditions. State law further requires State or local governmental entities having jurisdiction to correct such hazardous conditions within a reasonable period of time. The Board and Superintendent shall follow State law with respect to correcting hazardous walking conditions.

- D. Elementary students residing within two (2) miles of their school may be provided bus transportation at the discretion of the principal and upon payment of a fee established by the Board. This transportation will only be provided if seats are available on existing buses serving the school and the student gets to an established bus stop.

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Students eligible for transportation who are beyond the accessibility of school bus transportation shall be provided isolated transportation by payment to the parent of an amount established by the Board. Payment of the amount established will be based upon the date of the application or the date the service began whichever occurred first during the current attendance reporting period.

Parents of students who become or are determined to be non-eligible for school bus transportation shall be notified in writing. The student will be allowed to ride the bus for a minimum of three (3) additional days depending on the circumstances of the non-eligibility. If the student was riding the school bus illegally, removal from the bus will be immediate.

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Bus routes shall be established so that an authorized bus stop is available within reasonable walking distance of the home of every resident student entitled to transportation services. The Board shall approve the bus routes annually. The Superintendent is authorized to make any necessary changes in the approved route.

The Board authorizes the installation and use of video recording devices in the school buses to assist the drivers in providing for the safety and well being of the students while on a bus.

[CHOOSE EITHER OPTION 1 OR OPTION 2 BELOW]

() [OPTION 1]

Duties and Responsibilities of the Director of Transportation

- A. Counsel with school bus operators regarding safety and efficiency of service to schools and to make recommendations to them for improvement in service.
- B. Recommend to the Superintendent the initial or continued employment of bus operators, and other transportation personnel.
- C. Instruct school bus operators in procedures to be followed in conducting school bus emergency evacuation drills and confer with each Principal regarding scheduling, conducting, and documenting school bus evacuation drills. These procedures shall include a requirement that all operators of school buses transporting students, teachers, or chaperones on field and activity trips instruct all passengers in the locations and proper use of school bus emergency exits prior to each such trip.

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Hazardous walking conditions will be identified and corrected in accordance with F.S. 1006.23. The Board will work cooperatively with local governmental entities to identify such conditions and provide transportation to students subjected to such conditions. Such transportation shall be provided until correction of the hazardous walking condition or upon the projected completion date, whichever occurs first. ¶

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- D. Counsel with bus operators regarding operator responsibility and authority, as well as job performance.

The Director of Transportation shall consider the knowledge, skills, and abilities related to student management techniques, as well as the characteristics of students with disabilities, when selecting or assigning operators and attendants for routes serving ESE students.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Principal

- A. Assume responsibility under the direction of the Superintendent for all student disciplinary cases that arise in connection with transportation in accordance with Florida statutes, Florida State Board Rule, and the Student Code of Conduct.
- B. Instruct students as a part of their safety program on the rules pertaining to student transportation, walking to and from school, bicycle, and other vehicle operations.
- C. Develop at the school a parking policy for the safety of students, visitors, and staff while operating or parking personal vehicles on campus.
- D. Conduct, at a minimum, during the first six (6) weeks of each semester, school bus evacuation drills, and maintain documentation for these drills.
- E. Develop a plan for the supervision of transported students who arrive early or remain late.
- F. Designate places for students to get on and off school buses at the school site, and provide supervision of the loading/unloading zone.
- G. Provide instruction for all transported students in safe practices on and off the bus during the first six (6) weeks of the first semester of the school year.

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- H. Request authority in writing for transportation of students on field trips and activity trips, or other special trips, and to plan such trips in accordance with policies approved by the Board.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Bus Operator

- A. Pass all required physical examinations and meet such requirements as may be prescribed by State law, State Board rules, or Board policy.
- B. Be clean and neat in appearance, and to refrain from wearing shoes that are not securely held on the foot.
- C. Refrain from use of tobacco while operating the bus, as well as the use of profane language in the presence of the students. Operators shall not use or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or any substance that may impair the operator's alertness or performance while on duty. Operators shall not carry firearms while on school board property.
- D. Prescribe, in cooperation with the Principal, the seating arrangements of students.
- E. Report needed changes in school bus transportation to the Director of Transportation including, but not limited to, bus loads, bus deficiencies, road hazards, routes, and schedules.
- F. Study and observe all laws, rules of the State Board, and policies of the Board relating to transportation.
- G. Attend and participate in conferences and training classes for school bus operators, and be prepared at any time to pass successfully a reasonable examination concerning traffic laws, State and local transportation rules, and driving skills.
- H. Require that transported students observe all rules prescribed by law, State Board rule, and the policies of the Board.

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- I. Maintain order and discipline, under the direction of the Principal, on the part of every passenger.
- J. Permit students to leave the bus only at their assigned stop, except upon written authorization of the Principal.
- K. Observe all procedures incorporated in the Florida Department of Education Basic School Bus Operator's Curriculum.
- L. Instruct transported students in safe riding practices.
- M. Require all passengers to remain seated and to keep aisles and exits clear.
- N. Participate in emergency evacuation drills at least once each school semester under the direction of the Principal.
- O. Use the bus, if it is publicly owned, only to transport students to and from school, except upon specific direction of the Superintendent or the Principal upon written authorization by the Superintendent.
- P. Prepare immediately after every accident involving the bus or a school bus passenger an accident report to be filed with the Director of Transportation.
- Q. Ascertain and ensure that all persons are off the bus before filling fuel tank.
- R. Drive always at a safe speed and never in excess of the legally posted speed limit in business or residential districts, or fifty-five (55) miles per hour outside business or residential districts.
- S. Cooperate with duly authorized school officials, mechanics and other personnel in the mechanical maintenance and repair of the bus, and in overcoming hazards that threaten the safety or efficiency of service.

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- T. Inspect the bus
- () daily prior to the beginning of the first daily trip,
 - () prior to the beginning of the first trip each morning and the first trip each afternoon,
- and report any defect affecting safety or economy of operation immediately to authorized service personnel. The inspection shall include all items identified in the procedures related to the mandatory daily inspection in the Basic School Bus Operator Curriculum.
- U. Keep the bus clean and neat at all times and not affix any stickers or other unauthorized items to the interior or exterior of buses.
- V. Prepare reports, keep all records required, and otherwise assist school officials in mapping bus routes, planning schedules and in obtaining information for a continuous study of all phases of transportation service.
- W. Wear a seat belt at all times when the bus is in operation.
- X. Use roof-mounted white flashing strobe lights, if the bus is so equipped, whenever headlights are required to be used due to reduced visibility conditions pursuant to F.S. 316.217(1)(b), except that insufficient light due only to the time of day or night shall not require use of the strobe light.
- Y. Report the following immediately to the Director of Transportation, Principal, or other designated officials:
- 1. misconduct on the part of any student while on the bus or under the operator's immediate supervision;
 - 2. complaints requiring attention of school authorities;

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3. any hazards arising that would offer either an actual or a potential threat to the safety of students in the operator's care;
 4. causes for failure to maintain school bus time schedule; and
 5. overloaded conditions on the bus that exceed the rated capacity of the bus.
- Z. Perform a complete interior inspection of each bus after each run and trip to ensure no students are left on board.
- AA. Maintain as far as practicable by patient and considerate treatment of parents a feeling of security in the safety of students transported.

The Superintendent shall require that bus operators, and attendants if used, are instructed as to their responsibilities for students who are transported at public expense as follows:

- A. The operator or attendant of a bus transporting students shall remain with the bus so that students aboard will be under supervision at all times, except to call for assistance in case of an emergency or accident involving the students or bus.
- B. In cases where a student with physical disabilities is unable to leave the area of a student stop without assistance, the school bus operator shall not assume responsibility for such assistance except in an emergency that threatens the safety of such student or students.
- C. The operator and attendant (if used) shall be provided training related to students; however, the operator and attendant (if used) shall not give medicine and shall limit his/her assistance to that which may normally be expected of a reasonable, prudent person or as specified in the student's Individual Educational Plan.

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The Superintendent shall also require that bus operators and attendants are provided instructions, in writing, as to any special conditions or non-medical care which a student may need while on the bus.

Parents, guardians, and students shall be informed at least annually in writing of their responsibilities for the following:

- A. to ensure the safe travel of their students during the portions of each trip to and from school and home when the students are not under the custody and control of the District, including during each trip to and from home and the assigned bus stop when the District provides bus transportation;
- B. to ensure that students ride only on their assigned school buses and get off only at assigned bus stops, except when the District has approved, upon the request of the parent or guardian, alternative buses or arrangements;
- C. to ensure students are aware of and follow the District's adopted Code of Student Conduct while the students are at school bus stops and provide necessary supervision during times when the bus is not present; and
- D. to ensure that, when the physical disability of the student renders the student unable to get on and off the bus without assistance, the parent or guardian provides the necessary assistance to help the student get on and off at the bus stop, as required by District policy or the student's individual educational plan.

[END OPTION 1]

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(x) [OPTION 2]

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The Superintendent shall comply and require the compliance by the Director of Transportation, Principals, and bus drivers with State Board of Education Rules governing transportation, which are found in F.A.C. Chapter 6A-3, and shall take steps necessary so that the Director of Transportation, bus drivers, principals, and parents are fully and timely informed of their respective powers and responsibilities thereunder.

The Superintendent shall require that bus operators, and attendants if used, be instructed as to their responsibilities for students who are transported at public expense as follows:

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The Superintendent shall require that bus operators and attendants are provided instructions, in writing, as to any special conditions or non-medical care which a student may need while on the bus.

Further, the Superintendent shall require the Director of Transportation to consider the knowledge, skills, and abilities related to student management techniques, as well as the characteristics of students with disabilities, when selecting or assigning operators and attendants for routes serving ESE students.

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- C. to ensure students are aware of and follow the District's adopted Code of Student Conduct while the students are at school bus stops and provide necessary supervision during times when the bus is not present;
- D. to ensure that, when the physical disability of the student renders the student unable to get on and off the bus without assistance, the parent or guardian provides the necessary assistance to help the student get on and off at the bus stop, as required by District policy or the student's individual educational plan.

[End of Option 2]

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[Option 3]

Public Reporting of Improper Driving or Operation by a Bus Driver

Pursuant to State law, the Board hereby establishes _____ as a toll-free telephone hotline for motorists or others who observe improper driving or operation by a school bus driver to report such violations to the Board for investigation and corrective or disciplinary action.

F.S. 316.183(3), 316.217(1)(b), 1006.21, 1006.22, 1006.23, 1011.68, 1012.45
F.A.C. Chapter 6A-3