

# TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

## Background

The Division has a responsibility to ensure that transportation services provided for students are safe.

## Procedures

1. The ability of the bus operator is the prime factor in providing a safe transportation system.
  - 1.1. All bus drivers are expected to employ good communication practices with their families, schools, and Transportation Services.
  - 1.2. All Division bus operators will be approved by Transportation Services.
  - 1.3. Contracted bus operators will meet the conditions and criteria described in the Student Transportation Agreement with the Contractor.
  - 1.4. Transportation Services will be responsible for revoking approvals of operators of Division owned buses.
  - 1.5. All Division and contract bus drivers will ensure that they are not under the influence of any substance which could affect performance of their duties during hours of work. Without restriction, the foregoing substance includes:
    - 1.5.1. alcohol;
    - 1.5.2. legal or illegal narcotics or other controlled substances;
    - 1.5.3. prescription or nonprescription medication which carries a warning of the possibility of drowsiness, reduced vision, decrease in hand-eye coordination or other motor functions as a result of the use of the said medication.
  - 1.6. If a Division driver requires a substance that will adversely affect their performance of duties, Transportation Services will be notified as soon as possible so that a spare driver can be dispatched.
    - 1.6.1. If a contracted bus operator requires a substance that will adversely affect their performance, they must arrange for a spare to be dispatched.
  - 1.7. As per section 88.02 of the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act*, the Immediate Roadside Sanctions (IRS) Commercial program, there is a zero tolerance approach for any alcohol or drugs, or both. If a driver is found under the influence of any substance which affects performance of duties, Transportation Services will take appropriate action.
  - 1.8. If a driver is found to have violated any transportation safety laws, Board Policies or administrative procedures, Transportation Services will take appropriate action.
2. Satisfactory student conduct and discipline is essential to safe student transportation.

- 2.1. The bus operator will be responsible for maintaining satisfactory discipline on a school bus.
  - 2.2. Operators will immediately report a student who is a persistent or a serious discipline problem to the student's principal and to Transportation Services.
  - 2.3. The operator may refuse to transport any student who they feel will present a threat to the safety and welfare of the student, or to the other students on the bus.
    - 2.3.1. When this does occur, the operator will immediately contact Transportation Services
    - 2.3.2. Transportation Services will inform the student's parents and the principal as soon as possible.
  - 2.4. If, at any time, the operator finds the behaviour of a student to be uncontrollable, he/she is to use the mobile radio or go to the nearest telephone, and immediately contact Transportation Services, who will inform the principal of the school involved in the situation.
    - 2.4.1. The bus driver will not put a student off the bus between home and school for disciplinary reasons.
    - 2.4.2. In extreme cases or where no other assistance can be obtained, Transportation Services will contact the RCMP.
    - 2.4.3. The bus driver is to remain with the students.
  - 2.5. If Transportation Services becomes aware of a student who is frequently a discipline problem on the school bus, they may recommend to the principal that the student be suspended from riding the bus.
3. The condition and maintenance of the bus fleet is vital to a safe transportation system.
    - 3.1. Bus operators are expected to immediately inform Transportation Services if their bus requires any servicing.
    - 3.2. See AP 563 for procedures involving a bus accident.
4. The reduction of hazards due to climatic conditions is important to transportation safety.
    - 4.1. During periods of inclement weather, and/or hazardous road conditions, the school bus transportation provisions of Administrative Procedure 132 – Emergency Closure of Schools and/or School Bus Transportation will apply.
    - 4.2. When a bus does not operate on any school day, the operator will contact parents. Transportation Services will advise the principals of the receiving schools that the bus is not running.
    - 4.3. The operator's remuneration will not be reduced as a result of a decision not to operate a school bus due to inclement weather and/or hazardous conditions if Transportation Services is satisfied that such conditions did in fact exist.
    - 4.4. In the event that circumstances dictate early departures of bus students from school, parents will be informed by the school principal. Bus coordination will be arranged with Transportation Services prior to the departure of the bus.
    - 4.5. Operators will ensure that they arrive at their first receiving school not more than twenty (20) and not less than five (5) minutes before school opening time, except as where otherwise directed by Transportation Services.

- 4.6. In the afternoon, operators must be at their first school of pick-up not later than five (5) minutes before the school's dismissal time.
- 4.7. Operators will not depart from a school until seven (7) minutes after the school dismissal time unless the bus load is complete.
- 4.8. If an operator is early at a pick-up without prior notice, they must wait until the regular pick-up time.
  - 4.8.1. Students are expected to be at their bus-stop five (5) minutes before their regular pick-up time.
  - 4.8.2. If a student is within sight, the operator is to wait.
  - 4.8.3. Students who are frequently tardy will be reported to the principal.
- 4.9. In the event of an emergency situation, students may be taken to school or be taken home at the discretion of Transportation Services.
- 4.10. Students riding on a school bus must be properly dressed during the winter season.
  - 4.10.1. The bus operator will inform the parent and principal if the student does not have appropriate footwear, head-gear, coat, and gloves or mitts.
5. The reduction of hazards due to equipment is important to transportation safety.
  - 5.1. To provide reasonable safety to passengers and driver, while allowing accessibility to school programs to all students, Transportation Services will determine what articles can or cannot be transported on a bus.
  - 5.2. Musical instruments may be transported providing that:
    - 5.2.1. Instruments are enclosed in cases;
    - 5.2.2. Instruments are stored safely under the seats or held firmly on the passenger's lap;
    - 5.2.3. Those persons carrying instruments will occupy the front seats of the bus, to minimize the possibility of injury to other students while loading and unloading the bus.
    - 5.2.4. Failure to observe these rules may result in denial of the privilege of carrying musical instruments on the bus.
  - 5.3. Skates may be transported but must be equipped with guards at all times or carried in a closed equipment bag.
  - 5.4. Hockey sticks must be stored away under the front bus seats.
  - 5.5. Where luggage or equipment is being transported in connection with trips authorized under these procedures and provision cannot be made outside of the passenger area, the luggage or equipment will be stored under the seats, in such a manner that it will not:
    - 5.5.1. Block the aisles or emergency exits; or
    - 5.5.2. Be dislodged to move about the bus in case of an accident, application of the brakes, or acceleration.
  - 5.6. Ball gloves, clothing, books, and school lunches may be transported but must be handled in a responsible manner so as not to jeopardize the safety of other students on the bus.

- 5.7. For the safety of all students on the bus, other items, especially of a heavy, sharp, or solid nature, will not be transported at any time.
- 5.8. With the exception of a service dog, transportation of animals on the bus is forbidden.

Reference: Section 33,52,53,59,68,222,225 Education Act  
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act  
Traffic Safety Act  
Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation 121/2009  
Student Transportation Regulation 250/98 (Amended A.R. 125/2005)  
Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation 304/2002  
Vehicle Equipment Regulation 122/2009

Approved: November 2005

Amended: June 18, 2008; March 21, 2018; July 1, 2018; May 22, 2020; March 15, 2022