

Business and Non-Instructional Operations

School Bus Drivers

Authority

Students transported in a school bus or in a student activity bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus. The driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the students while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway or road.

A notice placed at the entrance of each bus warns against unauthorized entry. The driver or another school official may order any person to disembark if that person enters a bus without proper authorization.

A bus driver shall have the authority to discontinue the operation of a school bus whenever he/she determines that it is unsafe to continue.

Administrative regulations related to bus driver authority shall be made available to parents/guardians, students, teachers and other interested parties.

Qualifications, Training and Monitoring

All drivers employed to operate school buses or student activity buses shall possess, at a minimum, both of the following documents issued by the state Department of Motor Vehicles:

1. A valid driver's license for the appropriate class of vehicle to be driven
2. A certificate which permits the driver to operate either school buses or student activity buses, as applicable.

The Superintendent or designee may use an electronic fingerprinting system, managed by the California Department of Justice, to fingerprint an applicant for an original certificate to driver a school bus of student activity bus.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that school bus drivers receive training that includes:

1. First aid practices
2. The proper actions to be taken in the event that a school bus is hijacked

3. The proper installation of mobile seating devices in the bus securement systems.

School bus drivers shall be subject to drug and alcohol testing in accordance with Board of Education Policy and the requirements of federal law.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the Department of Motor Vehicles within five days whenever any school bus driver has tested positive for drugs or alcohol, is dismissed for a cause related to student transportation safety, or whenever a driver so dismissed has been reinstated.

Responsibilities

The school bus driver's primary responsibility is to safely transport students to and from school and school activities. He/she shall follow procedures contained in the district's transportation safety plan.

Drivers shall not require any student to leave the bus en route between home and school or other destinations.

Drivers shall stop to load or unload students only at a school bus stop designated by the Superintendent or designee, or authorized by the Superintendent or designee for school activity trips.

Drivers shall activate the flashing amber light warning system, if the bus is so equipped, beginning 200 feet before any bus stop where students are loading or unloading. Drivers are required to deactivate the amber warning light system after reaching a bus stop. They shall operate the flashing red signal lights and stop signal arm at all times when the bus is stopped to load or unload students. The flashing amber warning lights, flashing red signal lights and stop signal arm shall not be operated at any other time, or at any place where traffic is controlled by a traffic officer or official traffic control system.

When the bus is stopped on a highway or private road to load or unload students and traffic is not controlled by a traffic officer, the driver shall:

1. Check for approaching traffic in all directions and activate the flashing red light signal system and, if the bus is so equipped, the stop signal arm.
2. Before opening the door, ensure that the flashing red signal lights and stop signal arm are activated and that it is safe to exit the bus.

When the bus is stopped on a highway or private road to load or unload students and traffic is not controlled by a traffic officer or official traffic control system, the driver shall:

1. Escort all students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12 who need to cross the highway or private road, using an approved hand-held "STOP" sign while so doing.
2. Require all students to walk in front of the bus as they cross the road or highway.
3. Ensure that all students who need to cross the road or highway have crossed safely and that all other unloaded students and pedestrians are a safe distance from the bus before setting the bus in motion.

The driver shall activate the amber warning light system, flashing red signal light and stop arm signal and shall escort students in accordance with Vehicle Code 22112.

The driver shall immediately report all school bus accidents to the California Highway Patrol, the superintendent or designee, and the drivers' employer.

Restrictions

School bus drivers are prohibited from driving a school bus while using a wireless telephone except under the following conditions:

1. For emergency purposes, including, but not limited to, an emergency call to a law enforcement agency, health care provider, fire department or other emergency service agency or entity.

Rule

approved: 05/21/02

revised: 09/02/08

revised: 05/19/09