

Richland School District

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

(In Accordance With 39831.3 Education Code)

To ensure the safe transport of pupils, all transportation shall be subject to the appropriate provisions and policies of the California Education Code, California Code of Regulations and policies of the Richland School District. Any questions regarding these policies should be directed to the Transportation Department.

Section 39831.3 of the Education Code (Regulation governing use and operation of school buses) is amended to read:

“The county superintendent of schools, the superintendent of a school district, or the owner or operator of a private school that provides Transportation to or from a school or school activity shall prepare a transportation safety plan containing procedures for school personnel to follow to ensure the safe transport of pupils. The plan shall be revised as required.”

Due to the Richland School District’s commitment to the safety of children, the following procedures shall be followed:

Procedures to ensure that a pupil is not left unattended on a school bus.

- A. All students shall be accounted for at all times while riding our school buses. Drivers and aides shall utilize the Child Tracking/Seating Chart to document students as they load and unload the bus to ensure accountability; this chart shall be hung in the drivers’ compartment when not in use.
- B. Upon completion of each run; morning, mid-day, afternoon, or event where students were transported, the driver shall walk the length inside the bus to ensure that all seats, floor between seats, isles, and emergency exits are free of sleeping students left on the bus.
- C. The driver shall place the handheld “STOP” sign in the back window or rear emergency door window.
- D. The supervisor shall patrol the school bus parking lot twice daily (after AM and PM runs) to ensure that each bus has in place a “STOP” sign in the back window or rear emergency door window.
- E. The supervisor shall board any bus that does not have a “STOP” sign in the back window or rear emergency door window to ensure that no students are left behind.

Procedures to ensure that a pupil is not left unattended on a school pupil activity bus or charter bus.

- A. Each bus shall have a designated school employee chaperone other than the bus driver.
- B. Chaperone shall be responsible for completing the "School Pupil Activity Bus Safety Plan."
 - 1. Driver and designated chaperone shall review safety plan and procedures prior to departure.
 - 2. Chaperone shall have a list of every pupil and passengers on the bus.
 - 3. Designated chaperone shall verify all pupils and passengers are accounted for before departure from any location to include any stops during a field trip.
 - 4. After pupils have exited the school pupil activity bus, and before driving away, the driver shall check all areas of the bus, including, but not limited to, overhead compartments and bathrooms (if applicable), to ensure the bus is vacant.
 - 5. The driver shall sign the form with the time and date verifying that all required procedures have been followed.

To maximize the safety of students there shall be no bus stops where students must cross the roadway, on which the bus is stopped, to board or exit the bus without strict adherence to the procedures outlines below.

- A. Any bus stop where students must cross the roadway, upon which the bus is parked, to board or exit the bus, must be approved by the Transportation Lead.
- B. These students will be identified on the bus route sheets, bus route cards,
- C. All students who must cross the roadway, upon which the bus is parked, to board or exit the bus, shall be escorted by the bus driver, in compliance with Vehicle Code 22112.

These safety procedures as follows, shall apply at school sites and any activity trip destination:

1. Be ready for school at the designated time.
2. Wait for your school bus in a safe place.
3. Wait back at least 12 feet from the edge of the roadway until the bus has come to a complete stop and the front door has opened.
4. Get off the bus only at designated stops.
5. When leaving the bus, stay out of the **DANGER ZONE**.
6. Observe safety procedures and be alert for traffic after leaving the bus.
7. Go directly home after getting off the bus. Do not talk to strangers and do not accept rides from strangers.

BUS RULES

1. Sit down at once and remain seated.
2. No profanity.
3. No eating or chewing gum.
4. No fighting, playing or loud conversations.
5. Keep all parts of the body inside the bus at all times.
6. Follow the driver's instructions at all times.
7. If a bus is equipped with passenger restraint systems (seat belts) all passengers shall use them.

Each child on a school bus must behave in a satisfactory manner in order for the driver to be alert to the many hazards of driving. Since the safety of all children on the bus is of prime importance, a child who behaves in an unsatisfactory manner may be denied the use of transportation. PARENTS/GUARDIANS may be responsible for any damage to vehicles caused directly by their child.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Bus conduct reports are initiated by the bus driver and then given to a Transportation Supervisor for necessary action to be taken. After evaluation of the child's misconduct, a site administrator will take action based on one of the categories below.

Depending on the severity of misconduct, **SUSPENSIONS** will be issued for an appropriate period of time. A parent conference may be necessary before bus riding privileges can be resumed.

Disciplinary action taken by the site administrator will be based on one of the following categories:

A. Warning

This action will be considered when a child's misconduct is of a minor nature which does not jeopardize the safety of other students or the operation of the bus.

B. Suspension

When a child's misconduct is deemed to jeopardize the safety of the bus passengers and its operation, or when repeated warnings fail to correct abusive behavior, or when a student incurs damages to the bus or continued problems of no authorized person to receive the child at home, a suspension of bus service will be considered.

C. Exclusion of Bus Service

Depending on the degree of misconduct, this action may be necessary. It will be applied in cases where safe operation of the bus and its occupants' safety is willfully and seriously threatened.

Note: Suspension or exclusion of bus service does not mean a student is suspended from school, only bus riding privileges.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF PROCEDURES

All children must be ready for pick-up at the scheduled time. These times may vary as much as five (5) minutes. Drivers are asked **NOT** to honk the horn. It is encouraged that children capable of **WAITING OUTSIDE** for the bus, do so. Many children and classes are affected by bus schedules; therefore, drivers will wait **TWO (2)** minutes after arriving for pick-up and then proceed on their route. Parents are responsible for getting their child **TO THE BUS** and drivers are responsible from that point on. Drivers will **NOT** go to your door to pick-up children.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

All pupils in Richland programs will receive instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety as follows:

A. Upon registration and/or on the first day of attendance of any school year, students and/or parents shall be provided with a list of bus riding rules as required by EC 39831.5 that contains information on school bus safety.

1. The list of bus rules will be provided to parents and guardians by Principals, teachers and/or bus drivers.

B. At least once each year, generally in the fall, all pupils will receive safety instruction from the bus driver which includes, but is not limited to, proper loading and

unloading procedures, including instructions for pupils requiring escorting by the driver, proper passenger conduct, bus evacuation, and location of emergency equipment. During this time the bus driver will conduct an emergency bus evacuation drill with pupils evacuating the school bus through emergency exit doors.

- C. Prior to departure on a school activity trip, all pupils riding on a Richland school bus will receive safety instruction which includes, but is not limited to, location of emergency exits, and location and use of emergency equipment. (VC 27316)
- D. Seat belts must be worn at all times if the bus is equipped. The driver will cover safety instructions which will include, but not limited to, acceptable placement of the passenger restraint systems when not in use.
- E. Authority of the Driver Pupils transported in a school bus or in a school pupil activity bus shall be under the authority of, and responsibility directly to, the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway or road. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation.
- F. Authority of District Boards The governing board of any school district, county superintendent of schools, or equivalent private school entity or official, may adopt and enforce additional requirements governing the transportation of pupils. Such requirements shall not conflict with any law or state administrative regulation.

STUDENT ILLNESS

Parents are urged to notify Transportation Services when they do not intend to send their special needs child to school. Advance notice of this is extremely helpful and in many cases saves Transportation unnecessary miles. Transportation Services can be contacted by phone, (661) 746-8621 or (661) 978-1131.

When something unexpected occurs and parents are unable to contact Transportation, the "A" card provided should be placed in the window which is most visible to the driver. Much time, money and effort can be saved by following this procedure. If Transportation is not notified and a child does not ride the bus for **THREE (3) CONSECUTIVE** days, Transportation will be **DISCONTINUED** until notified. It is essential that Transportation has current **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION** for all students.

MEDICATION

All medication must be given to the bus driver by the parent or school site staff. This medication is to be placed in an envelope and sealed while in the presence of the parent or staff member.

ROUTES AND CHANGES

Parents should be prepared for **CHANGES** in drivers, buses, routes, and time of pick-up **THROUGHOUT** the school year as a result of additions or withdrawals of students in the program. Overall route travel time will vary from route to route depending on class times and student home locations. After an initial adjustment period at the start of school or upon reorganization of routes, the pick-up and delivery time should be consistent within approximately 15 minutes. Buses may run later during days of unfavorable weather conditions, such as fog and rain. At the start of each school year, bus stop locations are advertised in our local Shafter News Paper (Shafter Press). These bus stops are typically the same each year but are subject to change.

MOVING

If a student **MOVES** during the school year or a **CHANGE** in a **PHONE NUMBER** occurs, Transportation must be notified. It is important that Transportation have **CURRENT AND CORRECT ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS** (home, emergency, neighbor, etc.).

ROAD CONDITIONS

Transportation Services may re-assign the pick-up and drop-off bus stop location if road conditions are felt to be unsuitable for school bus travel (poorly maintained roads, hazardous conditions, steep grades, mud, dust, etc.). Transportation will inspect such road conditions and will determine their suitability for bus travel. If this condition exists, you will be given the nearest possible bus stop location and time of pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to transport their child to and from this bus stop location.

WHEELCHAIRS AND TRAVEL CHAIRS

The safest possible lifts and tie-down equipment have been purchased for the transportation of students. Parental help is also needed to maintain safe transportation of wheelchairs and travel chairs. Section 1293G C.C.R.: "WHEELCHAIRS SHALL BE EQUIPPED WITH **BRAKES AND A RESTRAINING BELT** PROPERLY MAINTAINED BY THE OWNER OF THE CHAIR." Transportation may be **DISCONTINUED** unless these devices are properly maintained by the owner.

Safety vests may be used for the safe transportation of students. If a school bus driver feels it is in your child's best interest to implement the use of a safety vest; approval will be obtained from the parent by a supervisor prior to use.

WHEELCHAIR LIFT OPERATION

Drivers and transportation aides are specially trained on the wheelchair lift operation. Although assistance in loading and unloading is appreciated, we ask that **ONLY THE DRIVER AND TRANSPORTATION AIDES OPERATE THE LIFT CONTROLS.**

PERSONAL ARTICLES

For safety reasons: large toys, glass bottles, insects, animals, plastic bags, knives, or any other articles which may cause an injury, will **NOT** be allowed on the bus. Parents should consult with the Transportation office before a child is allowed to carry an item that is too large to fit in the child's pocket (except lunch pails). Transportation **ASSUMES NO** responsibility for **LOST ITEMS**, but every effort will be made to locate such items and return them to their rightful owner. The **CHILD'S NAME** should be on all items which could be easily lost (lunch pails, coats, sweaters, etc.). Unclaimed items left on the buses will be turned in to the Transportation office. Please call Transportation at (661) 746-8621 concerning lost items.

PARKING

Bus drivers are encouraged **NOT** to pull in and out of private driveways. It is extremely helpful if room can be left at the curb in front of homes for loading and unloading purposes. Bus drivers are encouraged **NOT** to do any backing if it is at all possible to avoid.

LOW VISIBILITY PROCEDURES

34501.6 VC The governing board of a local educational agency that provides for the transportation of pupils shall adopt procedures that limit the operation of school buses when atmospheric conditions reduce visibility on the roadway to 200 feet or less during regular home-to-school transportation service. Operational policies for school activity trips shall give school bus drivers discretionary authority to discontinue school bus operation if the driver determines that it is unsafe to continue operation because of reduced visibility.

Any time visibility becomes too low to proceed safely, it will be the responsibility of the driver to pull off the road into a safe location and wait until it has cleared sufficiently to proceed.

Students and parents should be instructed that school will operate on a regular schedule unless they are notified otherwise. They should be instructed to listen to the radio on those mornings when fog conditions indicate the possibility of school fog delay or closure. Parents should not call the radio station, transportation office or the CHP.

STROBE LIGHTS – The strobe light may only be lighted when visibility is reduced to 500 feet or less due to atmospheric conditions, including but not limited to fog, rain, smoke or dust. Reduced visibility due to atmospheric does not include the time of darkness from ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise. Drivers are to notify the dispatch office when the strobe light is activated due to reduced visibility, and to discontinue the use of the strobe light as well as other vehicle lights when stopped off the roadway due to reduced visibility.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Kern County presents two major weather conditions which can cause a major delay or cancellation of a student's pick-up time. Fog and snow can affect areas differently; therefore, the bus driver has the discretion to discontinue the route if he/she feels it is unsafe to proceed. It may be foggy in areas other than your immediate location so we advise you to listen to your radio, local television stations or log on to Alert Line at <http://alertline.kern.org> every day during fog season. These reports are broadcast every 15 or 20 minutes on most of the local stations. To check to see if Richland has called a fog delay or school closing, call our fog hotline (661) 746-8660.