

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

The safety and welfare of pupils shall be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. The board directs the chief school administrator to oversee development of regulations to govern:

- A. Pupil conduct on buses;
- B. Inservice education for bus drivers to include:
 - 1. Management of pupils;
 - 2. Safe driving practices; recognition of hazards;
 - 3. Special concerns in transporting pupils with disabilities;
 - 4. Emergency procedures on the road; accident report;
 - 5. Information on required drug and alcohol testing.

Accidents

Forms shall be provided for the immediate reporting of all incidents involving a district-owned or contracted vehicle that include any of the following:

- A. Physical injury to anyone concerned, no matter how minor;
- B. Property damage of any kind, even if the financial loss is negligible;
- C. Failure of any mechanical function of a district-owned or contracted vehicle during operation, even if no injury or damage results.

It shall be the responsibility of the chief school administrator to direct an investigation on the report and to comply with the law. The information gained shall be considered in evaluating personnel performances, and in scheduling inspection of vehicles.

Bus Procedures to Reduce the Spread of Contagion

- A. To the maximum extent practicable, bus drivers will ensure that students and adults comply with appropriate social distancing practices (at least six feet between riders) while on the school bus. Hand sanitizer will be made available at the school bus entrance for use when boarding.
- B. Drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other staff, including hand hygiene and face coverings.
- C. Students must wear face coverings over the mouth and nose while riding on the bus. Accommodations for students who are unable to wear face coverings should be consistent with the student's IEP. For adults, accommodations shall be consistent with those provided by the school district for staff and others; Exceptions to this requirement are as follows:
 - 1. Doing so would inhibit the student's health;
 - 2. The student is in extreme heat outdoors;
 - 3. A student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), precludes the use of face covering;
 - 4. The student is under the age of two (2), due to the risk of suffocation;
 - 5. Face coverings should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, or anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance (e.g. face coverings should not be worn by Pre-K students during nap time);

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6. When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.
- D. Bus drivers will be reminded to implement certain personal hygiene actions (e.g., frequent hand washing) and be afforded the opportunity to do so (such as having sufficient time between routes);
- E. District vehicles will be cleaned and sanitized including seats, rails, and highly touch surfaces before each run.
- F. Contracted transportation providers shall be required to clean and sanitize seats, rails and highly touched surfaces before each run. The district shall collaborate with the contracted service provider to develop these procedures and ensure that they are consistently followed. The contracted service provider shall collaborate with the district in establishing cleaning/sanitation protocols that are consistent with social distancing practices. The contracted service provider shall ensure that employees are fully trained in the implementation of the established protocols:
- G. All personnel responsible for cleaning school buses shall document the cleaning/sanitizing measures taken. Personnel are required to:
 1. Demonstrate an understanding of the established protocols that must be taken to properly clean and sanitize the bus; and
 2. Provide a certification that, before the route commenced, the required process was completed as required.
- H. These procedures will include a minimum of two stages: cleaning, which removes dirt and germs from surfaces; and disinfecting, which kills germs on surfaces that remain after cleaning.
- I. The procedures will identify sanitizing agents that may be used and will be limited to products included on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of products that have been shown to be effective against COVID-19;

Training for Interacting with Students with Special Needs

The board of education contractor that provides student transportation services shall administer the New Jersey Department of Education developed training program on the proper procedures for interacting with students with special needs to all school bus drivers and school bus aides that it employs. The training program includes appropriate behavior management; effective communication; use and operation of adaptive equipment; and understanding behaviors that may be related to specific disabilities.

The training program shall be administered prior to that individual operating a school bus or serving as an aide on a school bus.

The board of education contractor that provides student transportation services requires that a school bus driver or school bus aide file a certification with the board of education contractor that provides student transportation services that the individual has completed the training program within five business days of its completion. The board of education contractor that provides student transportation services shall retain a copy of the certification for the duration of the individual's employment and shall forward a copy of the certification to the New Jersey Department of Education.

The parent or guardian of a student with an individualized education plan shall complete the student information card when the individualized education plan is developed or amended for a student who receives transportation services. The student information card, developed by the New Jersey Department of Education, shall include information that should be readily available to a school bus driver and school bus aide for the purpose of promoting proper interaction with a student with special needs.

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Upon receiving consent from a student's parent or guardian, a copy of the completed student information card shall be provided to the student's assigned school bus driver and school bus aide.

Drills

Emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted regularly throughout the school year to acquaint the pupil riders thoroughly with emergency situations. An emergency evacuation drill shall be held as soon as possible after the opening day of school and then at least twice a year. Pupils who do not require busing shall participate in a drill as necessary before a field trip. All pupils shall receive evacuation instruction at least once within the school year.

Vehicles and Equipment

All district-owned or contracted vehicles used to transport children shall be maintained in such condition as to provide safe and efficient transportation service with a minimum of delays and disruption due to mechanical or equipment failure.

All district-owned or contracted vehicles used to transport children shall conform to state standards for such vehicles and shall be equipped with all safety devices required by code and statute.

All passengers on buses equipped with seat belts shall wear properly adjusted and fastened seat belts or other child restraint systems at all times while the bus is in operation.

Bus Drivers

Drivers of all Type I and Type II school vehicles used to transport district pupils shall be licensed by the State of New Jersey as bus drivers. They shall comply with all state requirements on physical condition, criminal history clearance, etc. The district shall be in compliance with all drug and alcohol testing requirements of the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act and implementing regulations and shall provide all bus drivers with required information on them (see policy 4219.23 Employee Substance Abuse). Bus drivers are responsible for the safety of pupils entering, riding, and departing their vehicle.

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Key Words

Safety, Bus Safety, Transportation Safety, Pupil Transportation, Student Transportation

Legal References: <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:6-7.1	Criminal history record; employee in regular contact with pupils; grounds for disqualification from employment; exception
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:25-2	Authority over pupils
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-1 <u>et seq.</u>	Transportation of pupils remote from school
<u>See particularly:</u>	
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-17, -18, -19.1, -20	
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-19.2 through <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-19.4	Training program for school bus drivers, bus aides relative to students with special needs
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-26	School Bus Safety Act
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-27	Bus Driver Presence Required
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:39-28	Inspection of School Bus for Pupils
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 39:3-10.9 <u>et seq.</u>	New Jersey Commercial Driver License Act
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 39:3B-1.1 <u>et seq.</u>	School Buses, Equipment and Regulations

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See particularly:

N.J.S.A. 39:3B-10
through -12

N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1.1 et seq. Student Transportation

See particularly:

N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.1, -11.2,
-11.3, -11.4, -12.2, -13.3

34 CFR Part 85.100 et seq., Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (nonprocurement) and Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)

49 U.S.C. § 31306 et seq.- Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991

49 C.F.R. Part 40.1 et seq. - Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug Testing Programs

49 C.F.R. Part 382.101 - Controlled Substance and Alcohol Use and Testing

49 C.F.R. Part 391.1 et seq. - Qualification of drivers

Policies and Procedures Manual for Pupil Transportation, N.J. State Department of Education

The Department of Education School Bus Driver and Aide Training for Interacting with Students with Special Need: located on the New Jersey Department of Education website at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/finance/transportation/training/dis/>

The NJDOE Guidance: *The Road Back: Restart and Recovery* at: <https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/>

<u>Cross References:</u>	*3516	Safety
	*3541.1	Transportation routes and services
	*4211	Recruitment, selection and hiring
	*4119.23/4219.23	Employee substance abuse
	*4231/4231.1	Staff development; inservice education/visitations/conferences
	*5131	Conduct/discipline
	*1531.1	Harassment, intimidation and bullying
	*5142	Pupil safety

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.