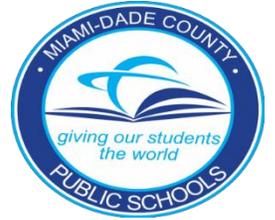


# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



## Handbook for School Bus Drivers & Bus Aides

UPDATED JULY 2024



# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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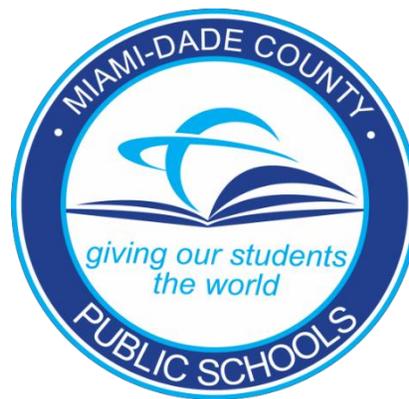
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SECTION 1

TRANSPORTATION MISSION GOALS & ORGANIZATION

**1.01 TRANSPORTATION MISSION AND GOALS**

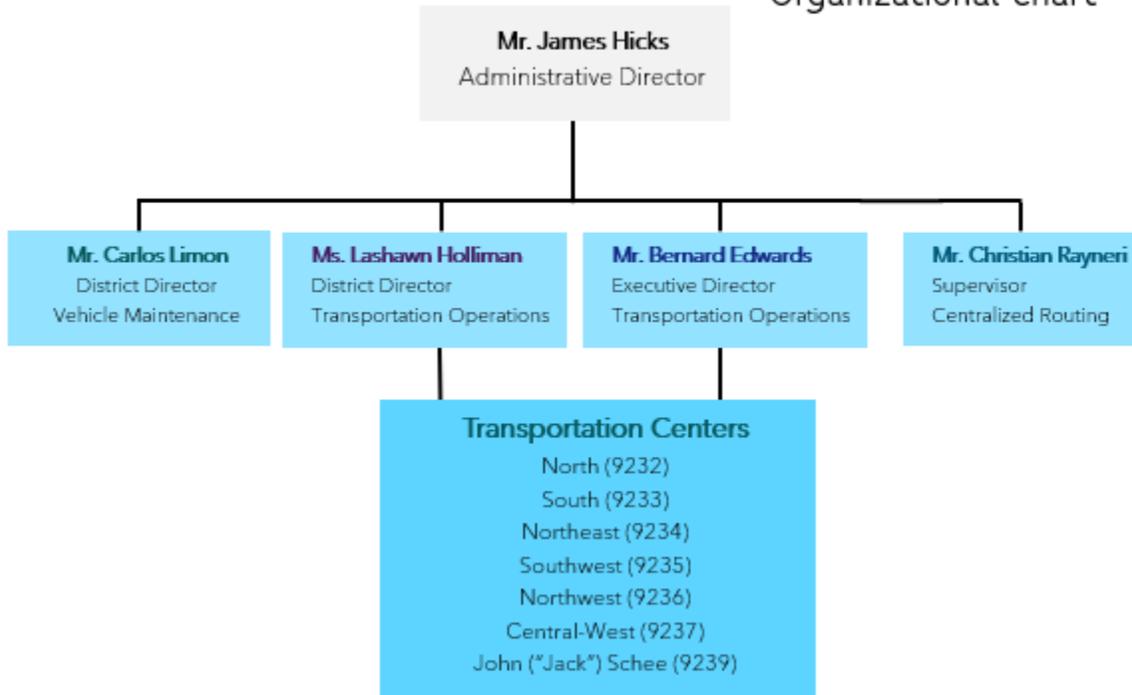
School bus transportation for public school students is expensive. It is carefully monitored so the greatest benefit will be realized from the dollars expended. The MISSION of the Department of Transportation is to provide safe transportation for the students of Miami-Dade County Public Schools in a timely and effective manner. The major GOALS which guide the administration of the Department of Transportation are listed below:

**To provide SAFE transportation**  
**To deliver students ON TIME**  
**To operate the transportation program EFFICIENTLY and EFFECTIVELY**

**1.02 TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION**

The Department of Transportation is organized by three (3) main functions: transportation operations, school bus routing, and vehicle maintenance. The information included on the following pages of this section is intended to give the school bus driver and school bus aide a basic overview of how these three (3) main functions are organized and how they work together to accomplish the Department of Transportation’s mission.

Department of Transportation  
Organizational chart



## Transportation Center Director

The Transportation Center Director is the administrator who oversees the operations of the Center to which he/she is assigned. The Director will have the following staff assigned to assist in supervising and managing the operations of the transportation center.

**Transportation Coordinators and Transportation Operations Managers.** These individuals are also administrators. Each Coordinator or Operations Manager is usually assigned to a shift (morning or afternoon) and directly oversees the operations of that shift, in addition to assisting the Center Director with other administrative duties.

**Field Operations Specialists.** These personnel are not administrators; however, they are directly responsible to work with school bus drivers and school bus aides, to monitor the operation of bus routes, and to assist drivers and aides to resolve concerns and problems with the operation of the bus routes and the students riding on buses. When drivers or aides have a problem or concern about anything regarding their assigned bus route, they should always contact their assigned Field Operations Specialist first and discuss the situation with them. Additionally, Field Operations Specialists will normally be the persons who will go to the scene when there has been an accident/crash or incident involving a school bus.

**Dispatchers.** These individuals are the people who are responsible to make sure that all bus routes are covered and run according to schedule. They assign drivers and aides to routes when the regular driver or aide is out, also responding to driver calls for assistance over the two-way radio.

**Transportation Coordinators and Transportation Operations Managers.** These individuals are also administrators. Each Coordinator or Operations Manager is usually assigned to a shift (morning or afternoon) and directly oversees the operations of that shift, in addition to assisting the Center Director with other administrative duties.

**Transportation Operations Helpers.** These individuals work with the dispatchers, assisting them with various tasks. They may monitor the check-in of drivers and aides and make sure the dispatchers are aware of drivers and aides who have not reported for work by their scheduled report time. The Transportation Operations Helpers are also the persons who assign spare buses to drivers when the regularly assigned bus requires maintenance work.

**Clerical staff.** Includes payroll clerks, field trip clerks, secretaries, and other personnel who help the center staff in various capacities.

## SECTION 2

### SCHOOL BUS DRIVER DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **2.01 OVERVIEW AND GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

The transportation of students to and from school is a vital and essential part of our educational system. In no other area of the public school system do we accept more responsibility for student life and welfare than during the mass movement of children in school buses on public streets and highways.

The school bus driver plays a most important role in providing safe, economical, and efficient school transportation. Plans for school bus transportation are carefully formulated; but it is the professionalism and competency of our school bus drivers that allows us to successfully implement this planning. The following are some examples:

- We have a stringent school bus maintenance program that assures our students are transported in school buses that are maintained to the highest standards. School bus drivers constitute a vital part of our vehicle maintenance program, by completing pre-trip inspections of their buses twice daily and immediately reporting all problems and concerns.
- School bus routes are carefully planned to ensure the safety of transported students and to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of our bus routes. School bus drivers form a vital component of school bus route planning, by promptly reporting all concerns relating to student safety at bus stops, by promptly reporting the need for any changes to the stop locations and times, and by completely and accurately preparing all required reports.

A successful transportation operation is formulated upon all these factors. However, it is the school bus driver who ultimately ensures the success of the operation. All those associated with transportation services, which include the staff at our transportation centers and school bus routing offices, our vehicle maintenance staff, school bus aides, teachers and school staff, and students and their parents are focused upon and rely upon the school bus driver.

Understanding this, our school bus drivers then undergo physical examination, background checks, educational training, and on-the-road experience before beginning their jobs. They are periodically re-examined and re-trained. We transport VERY PRECIOUS CARGO. So, it is infinitely more important that our school bus drivers receive a higher level of training than the average commercially licensed driver. We strive to take every precaution to ensure that our school bus drivers are in excellent physical health, maintain high mental acuity, and are fully prepared to carry out all their duties and responsibilities with regards to the safety and well-being of the children entrusted to our care.

Our school bus drivers are expected to not only safely transport children, but to positively interact with their student passengers, their parents, teachers, school officials, bus maintenance personnel, law enforcement officers, and the general public, particularly the motoring public. Our school bus drivers are expected to be good “ambassadors” representing our school district by exhibiting sensitive and constructive public relations skills. School bus drivers are the focal point for all these citizen’s hopes, fears, and expectations for setting good examples for our children, displaying safe driving skills, and for the safe conveyance of our students to and from school.

## 2.02

There are several Policies of the Miami-Dade County School Board which apply to all employees of the school district, including school bus drivers and school bus aides. These Policies include, but are not limited to:

- Policy 4213, *Student Supervision and Welfare*
- Policy 8462, *Student Abuse and Neglect*
- Policy 5517.01, *Bullying and Harassment*
- Policy 5500, *Student Conduct and Discipline*
- Policy 8670, *Post Trip Inspections of School Buses*
- Policy 5610, *Suspension and Expulsion of Students*
- Policy 5630, *Corporal Punishment and Use of Reasonable Force*
- Policy 4210, *Standards of Ethical Conduct*
- Policy 4210.01, *Code of Ethics*
- Policy 4124, *Drug-Free Workplace*
- Policy 4215, *Use of Tobacco Products and Smoking Devices*
- Policy 4231, *Outside Activities of Support Staff*
- Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*
- Policy 4232, *Political Activities*
- Policy 4362, *Anti-Discrimination/Harassment*
- Policy 4380, *Threatening Behavior Towards Staff Members*
- Policy 4430, *Leaves of Absence*
- Policy 4430.01, *FMLA Leave*
- Policy 8600, *Transportation*

Copies of all the above Policies are provided in Appendix II of this Handbook.

## 2.03 SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

The school bus driver has been called the “other teacher” or the “silent teacher.” The importance of a school bus driver in a child’s life cannot be over-emphasized. The school bus driver shows qualities of good citizenship including courtesy and respect for law and authority. They teach by example. We see our school bus drivers as people we can depend on; that are trustworthy, considerate, and professional, both in demeanor and appearance. The school bus driver sets an example of how to work with and relate to school administration, transportation, and district personnel, the community-at-large, and the officials whose duty it is to see that laws are properly enforced. The school bus driver sets an example by refraining from questionable conduct and speech. He or She teaches their student passengers by displaying a high moral character, driving skills superior to that of the average motorist, and managing student behavior in a firm but sensitive and tactful manner.

**The success of a school district’s pupil transportation program is more dependent on the school bus driver than on any other factor. When the bus is moving, the welfare of the children on board depends on the skill, attitude, and decisions of the driver.**

- a. **General qualifications** for school bus drivers are established by Florida Statute 1012.45, which states:

Each school bus driver must be of good moral character, of good vision and hearing, able-bodied, free from communicable disease, mentally alert, and sufficiently strong physically to handle the bus with ease, and he or she must possess other qualifications prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, including those qualifications described in 49 C.F.R. s. 391, relating to physical qualifications and examinations, and 49 C.F.R. part 40 and part 382, relating to controlled substance and alcohol use and testing, and he or she must hold a valid commercial driver’s license with a passenger endorsement.

b. **Specific qualifications** for school bus drivers are established by rules of the State Board of Education (*Rule 6A-3.0141; Employment of School Bus Drivers*) which states:

- (1) At the time of initial employment, the school board shall assure that the operator of a school bus meets the following requirements:
  - (a) Has five (5) years licensed driving experience.
  - (b) Has submitted to the superintendent a written application for employment in a form prescribed by the school board.
  - (c) Has filed a set of fingerprints for the purpose of the required background check for determining criminal record.
- (2) Prior to transporting students on a school bus each operator shall meet the following requirements:
  - (a) Hold a valid commercial driver's license with a passenger endorsement and a school bus endorsement.
  - (b) Successfully complete forty (40) hours of pre-service training consisting of at least twenty (20) hours of classroom instruction and eight (8) hours of behind-the-wheel training based upon the Department's Basic School Bus Driver Curriculum, Revised 2006.
  - (c) Demonstrate the ability to prepare required written reports.
  - (d) Be physically capable of operating the vehicle as demonstrated by:
    - A physical examination, in accordance with 49 C.F.R. s. 391.41(b), as evidenced by the Medical Examiner's Certificate (Form MCSA-5876), and given by a certified medical examiner, registered with the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners, pursuant to 49 C.F.R. s. 391.43.
    - A dexterity test administered by the school district and recorded on Form ESE 480 (Dexterity Test for School Bus Driver).
  - (e) Demonstrate physical and mental capabilities required to carry out all assigned responsibilities as a school bus driver.
- (3) At least annually, the school district shall assure that the operator of a school bus meets the following requirements:
  - (a) Meets all the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2), above.
  - (b) Successfully completes a minimum of eight (8) hours of in-service training related to the operator's responsibilities for transporting students, which may include training hours from the required certified CPR and first aid training, pursuant to State Board Rule 6A-3.0212(3)(2)(b).
  - (c) Successfully passes a dexterity test administered by the school district and maintains a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate.
- (4) At the time of re-employment, the school board shall assure that each school bus operator meets all of the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2), above. If not more than a twelve (12) continuous calendar break-in-service has occurred, an operator shall be required to complete eight (8) hours of in-service training related to their responsibilities for transporting students prior to driving a school bus with students. If a period exceeding twelve (12) calendar months has occurred, the operator shall be required to complete forty (40) hours of preservice training consisting of at least twenty (20) hours of classroom instruction and eight (8) hours of behind-the-wheel training based upon the Department's Basic School Bus Driver Curriculum, Revised 2006.
- (5) Each school district shall obtain a driver's history record from the Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles for each school bus driver. The schedule for reviewing these records shall be:

- (a) Prior to initial employment (For any school bus driver who is not licensed in the State of Florida, school districts shall obtain and review the driver's history record from the appropriate state.)
  - (b) Prior to the first day of the fall semester
  - (c) Thereafter, the district shall continuously screen driving records using the weekly automated update system.
- (6) Each school district shall establish a school board policy that specifies which infractions of the traffic code shall deem an applicant unqualified for hire and which shall cause any employee to be subject to prescribed follow-up disciplinary action. At a minimum, this policy shall state that any school bus operator or contracted operator who should have known that his or her license has expired or has been suspended or revoked shall be subject to prescribed measures up to and including dismissal by the school board.
- (7) All school bus drivers shall be subject to the Federal requirements of 49 C.F.R., Parts 382 and 391, related to the substance abuse testing and alcohol detection program.
- c. **Requirement for training in CPR and first aid.** A new requirement for school bus drivers and school bus aides to be provided and to complete certified training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid was established by State Board Rule 6A-3.0121 in 2019, which states: *School bus drivers and school bus aides shall be provided certified CPR and first aid training prior to transporting students, and shall receive CPR and first aid refresher in-service training at least biennially; however the driver and aide shall limit his/her assistance to that which may be expected of a reasonable, prudent person, or as specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan). All drivers and aides who are employed and transporting students on or before the effective date of this rule must be provided with certified CPR and first aid training by November 1, 2020.*
- d. **Substance abuse testing and alcohol detection program.** Requirements for drug and alcohol testing of school bus drivers are established by Federal Regulation 49 C.F.R. parts 382 and 391, and Rules of the State Board of Education (Rule 6A-3.0141). In accordance with these rules and regulations, school bus drivers are required to be tested for drugs and alcohol as follows:
- (1) Prior to initial employment. All prospective school bus drivers must take and pass a drug test.
  - (2) Random testing. School bus drivers must be randomly tested for alcohol and/or drugs.
  - (3) Post-accident. Drivers who have an accident while driving a school bus which results in a fatality (regardless of fault) must be tested for drugs and alcohol. Also, drivers who have an at-fault accident while driving a school bus must be tested for drugs and alcohol when either of the following conditions apply:
    - A person had to be transported from the scene for immediate medical treatment.
    - Any vehicle had to be towed from the scene.
  - (4) Reasonable suspicion. School district administrators may require school bus drivers to be tested for alcohol and/or drugs if they determine there is just cause for 'reasonable suspicion' as defined by Federal rules and regulations, and M-DCPS School Board Policy 3124 (*Drug Free Workplace*).
  - (5) Annual testing (required by M-DCPS School Board Policy 3124). School bus drivers must successfully complete a drug screening as part of their required annual physical exam.

**Any school bus driver who refuses to take a required drug or alcohol test, or who fails to successfully complete a required drug or alcohol test without cause, will be recommended to the School Board for dismissal.**

## **2.04 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER** ***(State Board Rule 6A-3.0171)***

Basic responsibilities of school bus drivers are established by Rules of the State Board of Education. Rule 6A-3.0171(2)(e)3, *Responsibilities of the School Bus Driver*, prescribes the following requirements:

- a. To pass all required physical examinations and meet such requirements as may be prescribed by law or rules.
- b. To be clean and neat in appearance and to refrain from wearing shoes which are not securely held on the foot.
- c. To refrain from the use of tobacco while operating the bus, and to use no profane language in the presence of students. Drivers shall not use or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or any substance which may impair a driver's alertness or performance while on duty.
- d. To prescribe, in cooperation with school principals, the seating arrangements of students on all buses.
- e. To report needed changes in school bus transportation to the director or supervisor of transportation, including bus loads, bus deficiencies, road hazards, and routes and schedules.
- f. To study and observe all laws and rules of the State Board of Education and the school board relating to the service of transportation.
- g. To attend and participate in conferences and training classes for school bus drivers and to be prepared at any time to pass a reasonable examination concerning traffic laws, state and local transportation rules and driving skills.
- h. To ascertain and ensure that transported students observe all rules prescribed by law and by the state and local board.
- i. To maintain order and discipline, under the direction of the school principal, on the part of every passenger.
- j. To permit a student to leave the bus only at their assigned stop, except upon written authorization of the school principal or Transportation administrator.
- k. To observe all procedures incorporated in the Florida Department of Education *Basic School Bus Driver Training Curriculum*.
- l. To instruct students in safe riding practices.
- m. To require all passengers to remain seated and to keep aisles and exits clear.
- n. To participate in emergency evacuation drills at least once each school semester under the direction of the school principal or the principal's designee.
- o. To use the bus only to transport students to and from school, except upon specific direction of the superintendent, or from a Transportation administrator upon written authorization from the superintendent.
- p. To prepare immediately after every accident involving the bus or a school bus passenger an accident report to be filed with the driver's supervisor.
- q. To ascertain and ensure that all persons are off the bus before filling the fuel tank.
- r. To cooperate with duly authorized school officials, mechanics, and other personnel in the mechanical maintenance and repair of the bus in overcoming hazards which threaten the safety or efficiency of service.
- s. To inspect the bus at least daily prior to the beginning of the first daily trip or more often as required by the school district and to 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 as specified in the *Basic School Bus Driver Training Curriculum*.
- t. To always keep the bus clean and neat and not affix any stickers or unauthorized items to the interior or exterior of the bus.
- u. To prepare reports, keep all required records, and otherwise assist school officials and transportation staff members in mapping bus routes, planning schedules, and in coordinating information for a continuous study of all phases of transportation service.
- v. To always wear a seat belt while the bus is in operation.

- w. To use the roof mounted white flashing strobe lights whenever headlights are required to be used due to reduced visibility conditions pursuant to Florida Statute 316.217(1)(b). Drivers operating school buses owned or contracted by Miami-Dade County Public Schools shall always turn on the low-beam headlights and the roof-mounted white strobe light while the bus is in operation.
- x. To report immediately to the driver's supervisor and the school principal (or the principal's designee):
  - (I) Misconduct on the part of any student while on the bus or while under the driver's immediate supervision.
  - (II) Complaints requiring the attention of school authorities.
  - (III) Any hazards arising which would offer either an actual or potential threat to the safety of the students in the driver's care.
  - (IV) Causes for failure to maintain the school bus time schedule.
  - (V) Overloaded conditions on the bus which exceed the rated seating capacity of the bus.
- y. To perform a complete interior inspection of each bus after each run and trip to ensure no students are left on board.
- z. To maintain, as far as practicable, by patient and considerate treatment of parents a feeling of security in the safety of students being transported.

**2.05 AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL BUS DRIVER**  
*(Florida Statute 1006.10)*

Florida Statute 1006.10 addresses the authority of school bus drivers and school districts transporting students. It states:

- a. The school bus driver shall require order and good behavior on the part of all students being transported on school buses.
- b. The district school board shall require a system of progressive discipline of transported students for actions which are prohibited by the code of student conduct. Disciplinary actions, including suspension of students from riding on school district owned or contracted buses shall be subject to school board policies and procedures, and may be imposed by the school principal or the principal's designee. The school principal or the principal's designee may delegate any disciplinary authority to school bus drivers except for suspension of students from riding the school bus.
- c. The school bus driver shall control students during the time they are students are on the bus but shall not have such authority when students are waiting at the school bus stop or when students are enroute to or from the school bus stop, except when the bus is present at the stop.
- d. If an emergency should develop due to the conduct of students on the bus, the bus driver may take such steps as are immediately necessary to protect the students on the bus.
- e. School bus drivers shall not be required to operate a bus under conditions in which one or more students pose a clear and present danger to the safety of the driver or other students, or the safety of the bus while in operation. The district school board shall have measures in place designed to protect the bus driver from threats or physical injury from students.
- f. In the case of a student having engaged in violent or blatantly unsafe actions while riding the school bus, the district school board shall take corrective measures to ensure, to the extent feasible, that such actions are not repeated prior to reassigning the student to the bus.

**2.06 DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER**

School bus drivers are under the direction of the Transportation Department's Dispatchers, as well as their assigned Field Operations Specialists and their transportation center's Administrators. Drivers shall follow all instructions and complete all work assignments as directed by Dispatchers, Field Operations Specialists, and Center Administrators.

- a. School bus drivers will, always, operate their buses in accordance with the requirements of the Florida Traffic Laws, the requirements of the Florida Board of Education, and the procedures detailed in this Handbook.
- b. School bus drivers will always possess the appropriate Commercial Driver's License (CDL) while employed with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and will maintain their license in good standing. Drivers must have their CDL with them whenever they are operating a school bus or any other School Board owned/leased vehicle.
- c. School bus drivers will possess a current, valid *Medical Examiner's Certificate* (MEC) always while employed by Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Drivers must have their MEC with them whenever they are operating a school bus or any other School Board owned/leased vehicle.
- d. School bus drivers will be issued a photo identification badge which must be always worn when they are on duty.
- e. The school bus driver is responsible for the safety of the children in his/her care. A driver should place the safety, health, and well-being of his/her passengers above everything else while they are on the bus.
  - Drivers will maintain a professional attitude. Drivers should be patient, firm, fair, and friendly.
  - Safety comes first! When in doubt, do not take chances!
- f. School buses will be assigned to each bus route. However, when the assigned bus is not available for any reason, the driver (and aide, if assigned to the route) are responsible to move all equipment from the assigned bus to the spare bus. This includes (but is not limited to) child safety restraint seats and tie-down equipment used to secure wheelchairs. When the regularly assigned bus becomes available, the driver (and aide, if assigned to the route) are responsible to move all equipment back from the spare bus to the regularly assigned bus. Transportation Operations Helpers shall assist the driver and aide with the movement of equipment.
- g. School bus drivers will, to the best of their ability, operate all trips in accordance with established schedules, except when to do so would involve unnecessary hazards or jeopardize safety. Drivers will not deviate from assigned routes and stops, nor create any changes to routes or stops without receiving prior permission from a Dispatcher, a Field Operations Specialist, or transportation center administrator. When picking up students at a school, drivers shall not depart the school until they have verified that all students who are to ride have boarded the bus. Requests for permanent changes to routes or stops must be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Centralized Routing office.
- h. School bus drivers will immediately notify their assigned Dispatch Office by the two-way radio whenever they are running **ten (10) minutes or more** behind the scheduled stop times on their bus route.
- i. On any school day, situations may arise which require Dispatchers to assign work to school bus drivers to ensure all students who require transportation get to and from their school. If the work will be done within the period when the driver is "on the clock" (within the driver's scheduled work hours) drivers are expected to complete the assignment, even though it may not be part of their assigned route.
- j. School bus drivers will immediately report any hazards on the bus route or at bus stops which might offer an actual or potential threat to the safety of transported students. Such concerns shall be reported to the Dispatch Office at the driver's assigned transportation center and to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- k. School bus drivers will report defective, broken, or missing equipment to their TOH, on a *Driver Request for Repair* (DRR) form. This report must be made as soon as possible after the problem is detected. If the driver discovers a mechanical problem during the pre-trip inspection of the bus, a DRR form must be

completed and turned in to the TOH **before** the driver departs the bus compound. If the driver encounters a mechanical problem, while out on the road he/she shall notify the Dispatch Office immediately by two-way radio and then wait for instructions from the vehicle maintenance garage.

- l. School bus drivers are required to always keep the bus clean. The floor of the bus must be kept free of all trash and debris. Trash from the bus must not be swept out of the bus onto parking areas – place all trash into the proper receptacle! The windshield, side windows, and rear windows of the bus will be kept clean to ensure that visibility is not reduced.
- m. The loading and unloading of students from the school bus is an especially critical period for safety awareness!
  - (1) School bus drivers will, without fail, always follow established procedures for the safe loading and unloading of student passengers as set forth in the Florida Department of Education’s *Basic School Bus Driver Training Curriculum* (reference Section 8.02 of this Handbook).
  - (2) School bus drivers will always directly supervise the loading and unloading of all student passengers. Drivers will be always on their buses while students are loading or unloading at schools. Drivers will supervise the activities of students leaving the bus until they have crossed the road safely and will permit students to leave the bus only at their assigned stop unless they have written permission for a student to do so from a school principal or a transportation center administrator.
  - (3) School bus drivers shall always instruct students who are assigned to any bus stop which has a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” designation that they **MUST NOT** walk across that road. Should a driver observe students crossing the road at a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” bus stop he/she shall immediately report it to their Dispatch Office and to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- n. School bus drivers will instruct their student passengers on the proper use of seat belts installed on the seats of the bus and will always instruct the students to “Buckle your seatbelts.” Students who repeatedly fail to comply with these instructions shall be reported to the school principal (or principal’s designee).
- o. In accordance with Rule 6A-3.0171 of the State Board of Education (see Section 2.03 of this *Handbook*), drivers will participate in bus emergency evacuation drills at least once each semester, “under the direction of the school principal or the principal’s designee.” (See Section 11.03 of this *Handbook* for emergency evacuation procedures.)
- p. School bus drivers will coordinate seating arrangements for K-8 students assigned to ride the bus with the school principal and/or the principal’s designee. Drivers will prepare an up-to-date seating chart whenever seating arrangements are changed. A copy of the seating chart will be given to the school principal (or the principal’s designee). Students who fail to sit in their assigned seat shall be given a verbal warning for the first offense; if they continue to refuse to sit in the assigned seat after being instructed to do so, the driver shall then complete a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- q. School bus drivers are required by Florida Statute and Rules of the State Board of Education to ensure order and good behavior is maintained by students riding on their buses. Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior as specified in the Miami- Dade County Public Schools *Code of Student Conduct*, and to obey the Bus Safety Rules posted in the bus. Drivers will make a reasonable effort to deal with infractions of the rules of student conduct and will, to the best of their ability, maintain order and good behavior by students on their buses.
- r. School bus drivers will report, as soon as possible, cases of repeated minor misconduct and/or any serious misconduct. Drivers will complete a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist when they return to the transportation center.

- s. Duty to report suspected child abuse. In accordance with Policy 4210 of the School Board of Miami-Dade County Public Schools all employees (including school bus drivers and school bus aides) have a duty and responsibility to immediately report all cases of suspected or alleged child abuse. Drivers and aides shall immediately inform the administrator on duty at their assigned transportation center any time they have reason to suspect child abuse and any time they become aware of an allegation from any student or parent of a student regarding a possible incident of child abuse.
- t. School bus drivers will report by radio, as soon as possible, any damage to the bus or its equipment caused by student passengers. Drivers shall complete a *Plant Security Report* form (FM-0366) and submit it to their Field Operations Specialists. Additionally, the driver should make every attempt to identify the student(s) who caused the damage. Should the driver be able to identify the student(s) who caused the damage, a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) will be completed and submitted to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- u. School bus drivers will not permit students to bring items on board the bus which could be disruptive or present a safety hazard. (See Section 8.04 of this Handbook – Items Permitted on A School Bus)
- v. School bus drivers will always make sure a clear and unobstructed path to emergency equipment and emergency exits is always maintained.
- w. School bus drivers will never permit a student to:
- Stand at the front of the bus or in the bus aisle while the bus is in operation.
  - Operate the service door handle.
  - Occupy the driver's seat.
- x. School bus drivers will never permit children to hold on to the side or the rear of the bus when skating, riding bicycles, etc.
- y. Post-Trip Inspection. Policy 8670 of the Miami-Dade County School Board states:
- All school bus drivers must conduct post-trip inspections as required in the Department of Transportation *Handbook for School Bus Drivers and School Bus Aides*. This duty cannot be delegated.
  - Post-trip inspections must be performed after the completion of each bus run and at the bus storage compound. Post-trip inspections shall include, but are not limited to, walking from one end of the bus to the other, checking behind and under every bus seat for students remaining on the bus.
  - If a driver fails to perform a post-trip inspection and a child is left on the bus without adult supervision after the completion of a bus run, or at the bus storage compound, the driver will be dismissed.
- z. School bus drivers will check their mailboxes and the bulletin boards at their assigned transportation center at least once daily. Drivers are not to make a special trip to the compound in a school bus for this purpose.
- aa. School bus drivers will accurately complete and submit all required reports. Drivers will comply with established deadlines for completing and submitting required reports. Required reports include, but are not limited to:
- (1) Pre-trip Inspection Checklist
  - (2) Driver Request for Repair
  - (3) School Bus Seating Charts
  - (4) Student Case Management Referral (FM-2981)

- (5) Driver's Report of Incident
- (6) Plant Security Report (FM-0366)
- (7) Driver's report Of Vehicle Accident/Crash
- (8) Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) Survey Reports

- bb. School bus drivers will immediately report all accidents/crashes and incidents which occur while they are driving a school bus to their Dispatch Office, no matter how minor and regardless of damage. An accident/crash is defined as any time a school bus encounter another vehicle or object, regardless of damage. If the accident/crash or incident occurs after normal work hours or at any other time when the Dispatch Office is closed, the driver will immediately notify Miami-Dade County Public Schools Police (305-995-COPS).
- cc. School bus drivers will immediately report all traffic tickets (citations) they receive while driving a school bus to the administrator on duty at their assigned transportation center. All tickets must be reported, regardless of the reason for the citation.
- dd. School bus drivers are expected to attend all training workshops, safety meetings, and other meetings as directed by their Center administrators. Drivers are expected to attend all refresher training sessions as scheduled by Transportation administrators. Unexcused absences from such meetings or training sessions will be considered failure to perform required duties and insubordination and may result in disqualification to drive and disciplinary action as circumstances warrant.
- ee. School bus drivers will not engage in private business arrangements while on duty. This includes, but is not limited to, buying, and selling personal property or items, or purchasing unauthorized equipment for use on buses. However, this provision does not prohibit drivers from purchasing items sold by students as part of a school connected fund-raising project.
- ff. School bus drivers will make sure the Transportation Department always has current information on their home address, telephone number, and emergency point-of-contact by filling out a *Transportation Employee Information Sheet (Locator Sheet)* FM-5112 form whenever such information changes. Drivers must also update their personal information in the school district's information system by using a computer to log onto [www.dadeschools.net](http://www.dadeschools.net) and then utilizing the EMPLOYEE PORTAL for employee information. Computers are available at each transportation center to be used for this purpose, or employees may use their own personal computer.

gg. Working Procedures for Stand-By School Bus Drivers.

- School bus drivers who select a Stand-By position must maintain a satisfactory attendance record. This includes reporting to work on time.
- A Stand-By position that has been selected as part of the bidding process is a route and will be treated as a route. However, stand-by routes DO NOT generate "CBG" time; therefore, drivers will be paid eight (8) hours per day for driving regardless of whether they are given an assignment or not.
- As a stand-by driver you are expected to complete all paperwork that may be associated with your daily route assignments (FEFP reports, Medicaid log, Pre-trip inspection, etc.)
- All bus routes are subject to change. Although Stand-By drivers are assigned specific reporting times, these times may have to be adjusted as the school year progresses and bus routes change. Every effort will be made to avoid having to adjust scheduled work hours.
- Stand-By drivers are required to accept all work assignments within their scheduled work hours.

- There may be times when the work assignment for a Stand-By driver will extend past their regular scheduled work hours. Overtime (time-and-a-half pay) will be paid any time a Stand-By driver works over forty (40) hours per week. If you have a problem with a work assignment that may extend past your regular scheduled work hours, you need to see the administrator on duty at your transportation center.
- Stand-By drivers are required to use whatever bus they are assigned to for the day, if the bus does not have any mechanical defects that preclude it being taken out on the road. As a stand-by driver, you are required to be able to drive all buses in the M-DCPS school bus fleet. If you need training on any type of bus or equipment, see your assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- Stand-By drivers may be assigned to transport students from any school within the M-DCPS school system. You are required to know the locations of all the schools served by your assigned transportation center and to be able to navigate your way around the neighborhoods served by those schools without undue difficulty.
- Stand-By drivers may be transporting regular education students as well as special needs students. You are required to be ready and able to work effectively with all students, including those with special needs, regardless of the disabilities they may have.
- As a Stand-By driver, all personal appointments should be scheduled to take place outside of your regular working schedule. Any exceptions need to be cleared with your center Director, or his/her designee, a day in advance.
- Stand-By drivers must stay in the employee lounge at their transportation center until they are assigned to a run or route. We must know your whereabouts to be able to get buses on the road in a timely manner.

## **2.07 HOW TO USE COMMON SENSE AND PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT TO AVOID LEGAL COMPLICATIONS**

### **a. Interactions with students.**

- Always maintain a professional image and professional conduct. Remember you are the adult and the professional – do not let yourself “get down to their level” no matter what the provocation!
- Refer students to the appropriate resource person for counseling and/or discussions about personal matters.
- DO NOT flirt with students.
- DO NOT discuss your personal life or personal matters with students. DO NOT discuss your husband, wife, girlfriend, boyfriend, or your dates with students.
- Never leave your students unsupervised. If there is a question about how to handle a situation, contact your Dispatch Office.
- Do not touch or put your hands on students. Do not show affection with students by patting or touching them. Avoid hugging students. These behaviors can be misinterpreted and lead to trouble. The old saying, “keep your hands (and other bodyparts) to yourself” is still the wisest course.
- Use verbal praise and reinforcement with your students.
- Know M-DCPS policies and State laws regarding corporal punishment. Establish and follow a consistent behavior management plan. Treat each student with respect. Know the student’s rights as spelled out in the *Code of Student Conduct*.
- Chaperone only school-sponsored functions. DO NOT socialize with students. If you chaperone a field trip do not take children home with you other than your own kids.

- DO NOT make telephone calls, send text messages, “tweets,” e-mails, or give any notes of a personal nature to students.
  - Respect student’s differences. What you intend as humor may be viewed as cultural bias or even harassment!
- b. Record keeping.
- Know the requirements of Florida Law, Rules of the Florida Board of Education, the M-DCPS *Code of Student Conduct*, and this Handbook. Follow them. Know your rights and your responsibilities.
  - Make sure your students know our policies regarding student conduct. Give a clear explanation of it to your students (and parents), so they understand your expectations.
  - Keep your co-workers and supervisors informed; work and communicate as a team; plan together.
- c. Reputation in the community.
- Dress and act appropriately and professionally. **You are a role model in the community as well as in the school system; be always a good example for students.**
  - Use common sense and good judgment. Ask yourself how someone else could perceive your comments and actions. Ask yourself if your comments and actions could be taken out of context and/or misinterpreted.
  - Avoid putting yourself in a position where you will have to defend, explain, or justify your actions. Avoid putting yourself in a position where it is your word against another person’s word.
  - Maintain a professional reputation in the community. Stop and THINK, before you post on Facebook or other social media.

## **2.08 DRIVER ANNUAL RE-CERTIFICATION**

- a. School bus drivers are required to complete eight (8) hours of in-service training, related to their responsibilities for transporting students (*see Section 2.02(b)(3) of this Handbook*). Failure to meet this requirement will be considered failure to perform required duties and insubordination and may result in disqualification to drive and disciplinary action as circumstances warrant.
- b. School bus drivers are also required to successfully complete a dexterity test annually (*see Section 2.02(b)(3) of this Handbook*). The dexterity test will be administered by Transportation Staff and recorded on ESE Form 480 (Dexterity Test for School Bus Driver).
- c. School bus drivers must also always maintain a valid Medical Examiner’s Certificate (MEC) (*see Section 2.02(b)(2) and (3) of this Handbook*). School bus drivers must take and pass the same physical examination which is required of all other drivers of commercial vehicles. The *Medical Examiner’s Certificate (MEC)* may be issued to school bus drivers for a period of up to two (2) years. It is the responsibility of the school bus driver to know when their MEC will expire, and to make sure they take the physical exam and renew their MEC before it expires.

## **2.09 USE OF BUSES OWNED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD**

- a. School bus drivers will use school buses only for the purposes of:
- Transporting students to and from school on an approved route/run.
  - Transporting students on approved field trips of an educational nature, athletic events, performances as uniformed units (school bands, cheerleaders, etc.) representing the school and/or school district,

- or other school sponsored activities in which students are required to participate.
  - Transporting the transportation disadvantaged in accordance with a School Board sanctioned agreement.
  - Transporting school age children for activities sponsored by non-profit corporations, civic associations, or other groups in accordance with a School Board sanctioned agreement.
  - When properly authorized and approved by the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designees (for example, Transportation administrators and school principals).
- b. School bus drivers will not use school buses for personal errands or for personal business. Drivers will not park their bus on the side of a road or in any parking lot to conduct personal business. "Personal business" includes (but is not limited to) stops made for the purpose of purchasing food or drink and stops made to conduct bank transactions. Drivers shall not leave their bus unattended for any length of time to enter a facility that is not part of the established bus route.
- Emergency stops. School bus drivers or aides are not permitted to make "emergency" stops for the purpose of using a restroom, unless such stop is made at an M-DCPS school, and the bus is parked in the school loading/unloading zone. Students should not be left unattended without an M-DCPS employee. The driver should notify dispatch before the stop.
- c. School bus drivers will return their buses to their assigned transportation center at the completion of the morning runs and/or approved mid-day trips unless they have been approved to park the bus at an alternate mid-day location. Drivers will always return their bus to their assigned transportation center at the completion of the final run or trip of the working day, unless they are on an approved field trip involving an overnight stay outside of the local area. Upon return to the transportation center, school bus drivers will make sure that their bus is clean and fueled (buses must have at least ¼ tank of fuel) before leaving the facility. This applies to the driver's regularly assigned bus, any spare bus they may have been using, and to any bus they may have used for a field trip.

## **2.10 EQUIPMENT NOT AUTHORIZED TO BE INSTALLED ON SCHOOL BUSES**

The following equipment is not authorized to be installed on school buses:

- Portable television sets
- AM/FM radios that are not factory installed.
- I-pods, MP3 players, e-readers, tablets, and computers
- Citizen band radios
- Radar/laser detection or warning devices
- Police scanners
- GPS units (Garmin, etc.) not factory installed.
- Locks on any bus door (unless specifically approved by the Administrative Director of Transportation or the Director of Vehicle Maintenance)

## **2.11 AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS**

- a. Students are required to ride the bus to which they have been assigned. NO occasional riders are to be taken aboard without the school principal's written permission or the approval of an administrator at the driver's assigned transportation center. Drivers who transport a student on their bus who has been given temporary permission to ride by the school principal must turn in the principal's permission slip to their assigned Field Operations Specialist upon their return to the transportation center at the end of the morning or afternoon runs.

- b. School bus drivers will not permit unauthorized passengers on the bus at any time. A list of passengers who are authorized to be transported on the bus follows (anyone not listed is unauthorized):
- c. A student regularly assigned to ride the bus who is enrolled at the school being serviced on the run/trip. A student registered to ride on the bus may not board it when students are being loaded at another school in the vicinity unless the student has permission in writing from the school principal to do so.
- d. A student who has been issued a **Space Available Bus Pass** form (FM-5697) by the Transportation Department., **Space Available riders will be allowed for the 2023-2024 school year upon approval from the Transportation department.**
  - The **Space Available Bus Pass** may not be issued until **after** the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the Fall semester.
  - The Space Available Bus Pass may be issued only when there are open, available seats on the bus that are not needed for eligible students. Should there not be open available seat for a student with a Space Available Bus Pass the driver shall immediately contact the school principal (or the principal's designee) and will also inform his/her assigned Field Operations Specialist of the situation.
  - Students riding on a Space Available Bus Pass may only use existing bus stops that have been established for eligible students. New stops will not be created for students who are not eligible for transportation.
- e. An adult temporarily allowed by the school principal to ride the bus under special circumstances. This approval must be in writing by the school principal or the principal's designee.
- f. Any member of the M-DCPS Department of Transportation staff as designated by a transportation center administrator; also, any official of M-DCPS as approved by the transportation center administrators, the Executive Director for Transportation Operations, the District Director for Transportation Operations, or the Administrative Director of Transportation.
- g. A law enforcement officer authorized to ride the bus by the Superintendent of Schools or his designee.
- h. An individual permitted by the school principal to accompany a group of students on an extracurricular field trip. Drivers are not permitted to bring anyone on night field trips other than an adult who is designated to act as a chaperone. There must be prior written approval from a transportation center administrator and the school for this to occur. A representative of the Department of Transportation may accompany the driver on night field trips with prior approval of the Transportation Center Director, the District Director for Transportation Operations, or the Administrative Director for Transportation.

## **2.12 DRESS CODE FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS**

School bus drivers are expected to be clean and neat in their appearance and shall dress in a manner appropriate for employees who, in the course of their duties, have direct contact with school age children. Drivers will not wear any garment which has on it profane/obscene language, pictures/graphics, emblems, or items which could be offensive to students. Drivers will not wear any garment which has on its language, pictures/graphics, emblems, or items of a political nature endorsing a political candidate or a particular political position. Drivers must be wearing appropriate garments and shoes, in accordance with this dress code, when they report for work. Specific requirements are outlined on the next page.

a. Specific requirements – <b><u>shirts and blouses</u></b>	School bus drivers are required to wear a <b>plainwhite shirt or blouse with a collar</b> . T-shirts designed to be worn as an undergarment are not acceptable for wear as an outer garment. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
b. Specific requirements – <b><u>pants</u></b>	Pants must be <b>full-length trousers or slacks that are dark blue or navy blue in color</b> .Jeans/denim are <b>not</b> authorized for wear.Sweatpants are not acceptable for wear. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
c. Specific requirements – <b><u>skirts</u></b>	Skirts must be <b>plain dark blue or navy bluein color and</b> must be <b>long enough to touch the top of the kneecap when standing</b> .Denim is not authorized for wear. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
d. Specific requirements – <b><u>shorts &amp; culottes</u></b>	“Bermuda” type shorts and culottes must be <b>plain dark blue or navy blue in color and</b> must be <b>long enough to touch the top of the kneecap when standing</b> . Denim is notauthorized for wear. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
e. Specific requirements – <b><u>jackets &amp; vests</u></b>	Jackets and vests must be <b>dark blue or navy. blue in color</b> . Denim is not authorized forwear.
f. Specific requirements – <b><u>shoes</u></b>	Drivers must wear shoes that have both a <b>closed toe and a closed heel, and that are held securely on the foot</b> . Sandals of anykind are not authorized for wear. Heels on shoes may not be more than one (1) inch high. Shoes with platform soles are not acceptable for wear. M-DCPS recommends that drivers, wear athletic type shoes while working.
g. Specific requirements - <b><u>undergarments</u></b>	All drivers will wear appropriate undergarments (includes bras for females).

**Note:** At the determination of the administrator on duty, any school bus driver who is not in compliance with the dress code requirements outlined above when he/she reports for work maynot be permitted to sign-in until he/she is dressed in compliance with the dress code. Driverswho repeatedly fail to meet the dress code requirements shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include the loss of the employee’s uniform allowance payment.

## SECTION 3

### SCHOOL BUS AIDE DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **3.01 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS AIDE** ***(State Board of Education Rule 6A-3.0121)***

Rule 6A-3.0121 of the State Board of Education addresses, in part, the responsibilities of school bus drivers and their assigned bus aides with respect to transported special needs students. It states:

- a. The driver or assistant (aide) of a bus transporting student with special needs shall remain with the bus so that students shall be always under supervision, except to call for assistance in case of an emergency or accident involving the students or the bus.
- b. In cases where a student with disabilities is unable to leave the area of a student stop without assistance, the school bus driver (and aide) shall not assume responsibility for such assistance except in an emergency which threatens the safety of such student or students.
- c. **Requirement for training in CPR and first aid.** A new requirement for school bus drivers and school bus aides to be provided and to complete certified training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid was established by State Board Rule 6A-3.0121 in 2019, which states: *School bus drivers and school bus aides shall be provided certified CPR and first aid training prior to transporting students, and shall receive CPR and first aid refresher in-service training at least biennially; however the driver and aide shall limit his/her assistance to that which may be expected of a reasonable, prudent person, or as specified in the student's Individualized Education Plan). All drivers and aides who are employed and transporting students on or before the effective date of this rule must be provided with certified CPR and first aid training by November 1, 2020.*
- d. Knowledge, skills & abilities related to student management techniques and characteristics of the students shall be considered when selecting or assigning school bus drivers and attendants (aides) for routes.

#### **3.02 SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES**

There are several **Policies of the Miami-Dade County School Board** which apply to all employees of the school district, including school bus drivers and school bus aides. These Policies include, but are not limited to:

- Policy 4213, *Student Supervision and Welfare*
- Policy 8462, *Student Abuse and Neglect*
- Policy 5517.01, *Bullying and Harassment*
- Policy 5500, *Student Conduct and Discipline*
- Policy 8670, *Post Trip Inspections of School Buses*
- Policy 5610, *Suspension and Expulsion of Students*
- Policy 5630, *Corporal Punishment and Use of Reasonable Force*
- Policy 4210, *Standards of Ethical Conduct*
- Policy 4210.01, *Code of Ethics*
- Policy 4124, *Drug-Free Workplace*
- Policy 4215, *Use of Tobacco Products and Smoking Devices*
- Policy 4231, *Outside Activities of Support Staff*
- Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*
- Policy 4232, *Political Activities*
- Policy 4362, *Anti-Discrimination/Harassment*
- Policy 4380, *Threatening Behavior Towards Staff Members*
- Policy 4430, *Leaves of Absence*
- Policy 4430.01, *FMLA Leave*
- Policy 8600, *Transportation*

Copies of all the above policies are provided in Appendix II of this Handbook.

### 3.03 ASSIGNMENT OF SCHOOL BUS AIDES TO BUS ROUTES

- a. In Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the Special Education Department (SPED) makes the decisions about which students will be authorized to have a bus aide assigned to ride with them. These decisions are recorded in the *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* or *"504" Plan* for each special needs student. The Special Education Department (SPED) also establishes the number of positions that will be authorized to Transportation for school bus aides and provides the funding for those positions.
- b. **There is no requirement in the law or in the Rules of the State Board of Education that require the assignment of bus aides to school buses.** The only requirement in the Rules of the State Board of Education is that two (2) persons must be assigned to all school buses that are transporting students in wheelchairs. This is because it takes two.  
(2) people to safely operate the wheelchair lift of a school bus (one person inside the bus and one person outside the bus).
- c. Bus routes transporting students in wheelchairs **always** take priority over all other routes for a bus aide. School Bus aides will always be assigned **first** to routes that are transporting students in wheelchairs. Once a bus aide has been assigned to all routes that are transporting students in wheelchairs, additional factors which will be considered in determining the order in which bus routes will have a bus aide assigned to them include, but are not limited to, the number of "aide required" students being transported on the route and the nature of the disabilities and special needs of the students being transported.
- d. On any given school day, the bus aide assigned to a route transporting student in wheelchairs may be absent from work. When this happens, such routes will have priority to be given a **stand-by aide** for the morning and/or afternoon, as needed. If a stand-by aide is **not** available to be assigned to the route, then an aide from another bus route that is **not** transporting students in wheelchairs shall be temporarily assigned to the route that has students in wheelchairs. Such re-assignment shall be only until the regularly assigned aide returns to work, or when a stand-by aide becomes available.
- e. Field Trips. School Bus aides may not ride on any bus which does not have one or more students assigned who require an aide per their IEP. If the driver of the route to which the aide is assigned has a field trip, the aide may not accompany the bus unless there is a specific requirement for a bus aide. This means the aide may be required to ride another bus from a school back to their transportation center if the driver does not have time to return to the compound before starting the field trip.

### 3.04 DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS AIDE

School bus aides are assigned to ride on bus routes to assist drivers with the safe loading and unloading of special needs students and to provide supervision of such students while the bus is enroute to and from the school. The school bus driver has the final responsibility for assuring a safe ride for all students being transported. School bus aides work under the direction of the driver. The duties of school bus aides include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. School bus aides will assist the driver in securing special needs students in equipment such as wheelchairs, infant/toddler restraint seats, safety vests, and seat belts. School Bus aides must understand how to operate all the securement devices used on the bus. ***The bus aide and driver should work together as a team*** when securing wheelchairs in place on the bus. The bus aide and driver should check each other's work to ensure securement devices are properly connected and secured. The goal is to ensure the safest possible ride for students with disabilities!
- b. School buses will be assigned to each bus route. However, when the assigned bus is not available for any reason, the driver and the aide are responsible to move all equipment from their assigned bus to the spare bus. This includes (but is not limited to) child safety restraint seats and tie-down equipment used to secure wheelchairs. When the regularly assigned bus becomes available, the driver and aide are responsible to move all equipment back from the spare bus to the regularly assigned bus. Transportation Operations

Helpers shall assist the driver and the aide with the movement of equipment.

- c. School bus aides may move and position physically disabled students on the bus but should never lift or carry students. School Bus aides shall understand how to load and unload students according to their disabilities. They will assist the driver in loading and unloading students from the bus, as needed.
- d. The school bus aide is responsible for the safety of the children in his/her care. An aide should place the safety, health, and well-being of his/her passengers above everything else while they are on the bus.
  - Aides will maintain a professional attitude. Aides should be patient, firm, fair, and friendly.
  - Safety comes first! When in doubt, do not take chances!
- e. School bus aides monitor student compliance with bus safety rules and are responsible to ensure student discipline is maintained on the bus. They provide input to the driver regarding seating assignments based on their knowledge of the students' personalities, special needs, and behavior.
  - Aides should be familiar with the special needs of the students entrusted to their care, particularly as it relates to behavior. Aides must understand how a student's particular disabilities may influence his/her behavior and conduct on the bus. Teachers, the behavioral specialist for the school, and other school personnel can give the aide guidance and advice on these issues. Aides need to be prepared to handle individual student behaviors and respond appropriately to episodes of student misconduct. They must always have consideration for a student's disabilities and how such disabilities may be affecting and influencing the student's behavior and conduct on the bus.
  - Aides also help to provide a means of communication with the bus driver for nonverbal students.
  - Aides and school bus drivers are both responsible for writing misconduct referrals for all students. Misconduct referrals will be tied to behavior goal violations as stated in the student's *Individual Education Plan* (IEP) whenever possible.
  - Aides will sit with or behind the last student on the bus to be able to see and observe the condition and behavior of all the students on the bus. If an exception to this policy is needed because of the specific needs of a student, the bus aide shall obtain approval from their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- f. School bus aides should also be familiar with any special physical/medical needs of the students entrusted to their care. Aides are not permitted to administer medication to students but shall administer first aid up to the limits of their training and ability in accordance with what can reasonably be expected of a prudent person and in accordance with the student's *Individualized Education Plan* (IEP).
- g. Duty to report suspected child abuse. In accordance with Policy 4210 of the School Board of Miami-Dade County Public Schools all employees (including school bus drivers and school bus aides) have a duty and responsibility to immediately report all cases of suspected or alleged child abuse. Drivers and aides shall immediately inform the administrator on duty at their assigned transportation center any time they have reason to suspect child abuse and any time they become aware of an allegation from any student or parent of a student regarding a possible incident of child abuse.
- h. School bus aides shall become familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the bus driver and be ready to assist the driver in the event of an emergency. Aides must learn and be prepared to assist the driver in the emergency evacuation of students from the school bus. As required by State Board Rule (see Section 2.03n of this Handbook), school bus drivers and aides will participate in bus emergency evacuation drills at least once each semester, "under the direction of the school principal or the principal's designee." (See Section 8.2 of this *Handbook* for emergency evacuation procedures.)
- i. School bus aides shall assist the bus driver in preparing required reports and in checking the working

condition of safety equipment on the bus. School bus aides shall assist the bus driver during the pre-trip inspection for the AM and PM routes. This includes assistance with the wheelchair lift to ensure it is functioning properly prior to leaving the bus compound as well as securement of the equipment on the bus. Under no circumstances should the bus aide stand directly behind the school bus while the bus is running to check for brake lights, back up lights, etc.

- j. School bus aides shall be familiar with the bus route to which they are assigned and will be prepared to assist a substitute bus driver with getting to and from the stops on the route in the event the regularly assigned driver is not at work or otherwise unavailable.
- k. School bus aides must be clean and neat in appearance and refrain from wearing shoes that are not securely held on the foot.
- l. School bus aides shall refrain from the use of tobacco, and must not be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or any substance which may impair their alertness or performance while on duty. School bus aides shall use no profane language while in the presence of students.
- m. School bus aides will be issued a photo identification badge which must be always worn when they are on duty.
- n. School bus aides must abide by all safety rule and regulations which pertain to bus drivers, except those pertaining specifically to actual driving tasks. Aides will assist drivers with instructing students in safe riding practices and the bus safety rules posted in the bus.
- o. School bus aides will assist the bus driver with always keeping the bus clean.
- p. School bus aides shall always make sure a clear and unobstructed path to emergency exits is maintained at all times.
- q. School bus aides will check their mailboxes and the bulletin boards at their assigned transportation center at least once daily.
- r. School bus aides are expected to attend all training workshops, safety meetings, and other meetings as directed by their Center administrators. Unexcused absences from such meetings will be considered failure to perform required duties and insubordination and may result in disciplinary action as circumstances warrant.
- s. School bus aides will not engage in private business arrangements while on duty. This includes, but is not limited to, buying, and selling personal property or items, or purchasing unauthorized equipment for use on buses. However, this provision does not prohibit aides from purchasing items sold by students as part of a school connected fund-raising project.
- t. School bus aides will make sure the Department of Transportation always has current information on their home address, telephone number, and emergency point-of-contact by filling out a *Personal Information* form whenever such information changes. Aides shall also make sure their personal information is updated in the school district's information system by using a computer to log on to [www.dadeschools.net](http://www.dadeschools.net) and then utilizing the EMPLOYEE PORTAL for employee information. Computers are available at each transportation center to be used for this purpose, or employees may use their own personal computer.
- u. Working Procedures for Stand-By School Bus Aides.
  - School bus aides who are selected for a Stand-By position must maintain a satisfactory attendance record. This includes reporting to work on time.
  - Stand-By position that has been assigned as part of the bidding process is a route and will be treated as a route. Stand-By aides will be paid eight (8) hours per day, regardless of whether they are given an assignment or not.

- All bus routes are subject to change. Although Stand-By aides are assigned specific reporting times, these times may have to be adjusted as the school year progresses and bus routes change. Every effort will be made to avoid having to adjust scheduled work hours.
- Stand-By aides are required to accept all work assignments within their scheduled work hours.
- There may be times when the work assignment for a Stand-By aide will extend past their regular scheduled work hours. Overtime (time-and-a-half pay) will be paid any time a Stand-By aide works over forty (40) hours per week. If you have a problem with a work assignment that may extend past your regular scheduled work hours you need to see the administrator on duty at your transportation center.
- Stand-By aides are required to work on whatever bus they are assigned to for the day, if the bus does not have any mechanical defects that preclude it being taken out on the road. As a stand-by aide, you are required to be able to work on all buses in the M-DCPS school bus fleet. If you need training on any bus or equipment, see your assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- Stand-By aides may be assigned to transport students from any school within the M- DCPS school system. You may be transporting regular education students as well as special needs students. Stand-By aides are required to be ready and able to work effectively with all students, including those with special needs, regardless of the disabilities they may have.
- Stand-By aide, personal appointments should be scheduled to take place outside of your regular working schedule. Any exceptions need to be cleared with your center Director, or his/her designee, a day in advance.
- Stand-By aides must stay in the employee lounge at their transportation center until they are assigned to a run or route. We must know your whereabouts to be able to get buses on the road in a timely manner.

### **3.05 HOW TO USE COMMON SENSE AND PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT TO AVOID LEGAL COMPLICATIONS**

#### a. Interactions with students.

- Always maintain a professional image and professional conduct. Remember you are the adult and the professional – do not let yourself “get down to their level” no matter what the provocation!
- Refer students to the appropriate resource person for counseling and/or discussions about personal matters.
- DO NOT flirt with students.
- DO NOT discuss your personal life or personal matters with students. DO NOT discuss your husband, wife, girlfriend, boyfriend, or your dates with students.
- Never leave your students unsupervised. If there is any question about how to handle a situation, have your bus driver contact your Dispatch Office.
- Do not touch or put your hands on students. Do not show affection with students by patting them or touching them. Avoid hugging students. These behaviors can be misinterpreted and lead to trouble. The old saying, “keep your hands (and other bodyparts) to yourself” is still the wisest course.
- Use verbal praise and reinforcement with your students.
- Know M-DCPS policies and State laws regarding corporal punishment. Establish and follow a consistent behavior management plan. Treat each student with respect. Know the student’s rights as spelled out

in the *Code Of Student Conduct*.

- Chaperone only school-sponsored functions. DO NOT socialize with students. If you chaperone a field trip do not take children home with you other than your own kids. DO NOT make telephone calls, send text messages, "tweets," e-mails, or give any notes of a personal nature to students.
- Respect student's differences. What you intend as humor may be viewed as cultural bias or even harassment!

b. Record keeping.

- Know the requirements of Florida Law, Rules of the Florida Board of Education, the M-DCPS *Code of Student Conduct*, and this Handbook. Follow them. Know your rights and your responsibilities.
- Make sure your students know our policies regarding student conduct. Give a clear explanation of it to your students (and parents), so they understand your expectations.
- Keep your co-workers and supervisors informed; work and communicate as a team; plan together.

c. Reputation in the community.

- Dress and act appropriately and professionally. **You are a role model in the community as well as in the school system; be always a good example for students.**
- Use common sense and good judgment. Ask yourself how someone else could perceive your comments and actions. Ask yourself if your comments and actions could be taken out of context and/or misinterpreted.
- Avoid putting yourself in a position where you will have to defend, explain, or justify your actions. Avoid putting yourself in a position where it is your word against another person's word.
- Maintain a professional reputation in the community. Stop and THINK, before you post on Facebook or other social media.

### **3.06 DRESS CODE FOR SCHOOL BUS AIDES**

School bus aides are expected to be clean and neat in their appearance and shall dress in a manner appropriate for employees who, in the course of their duties, have direct contact with school age children. Aides will not wear any garment which has on it profane/obscene language, pictures, emblems, or items which could be offensive to students. Aides must be wearing appropriate garments and shoes, in accordance with this dress code, when they report for work. Specific requirements are detailed on the next page.

Specific requirements – <b><u>shirts and blouses</u></b>	School bus aides are required to wear a <b>plain white shirt or blouse with a collar</b> . T-shirts designed to be worn as an undergarment are not acceptable for wear as an outer garment. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
Specific requirements – <b><u>pants</u></b>	Pants must be <b>full-length trousers or slacks that are dark blue or navy blue in color</b> . Jeans/denim are <b>not</b> authorized for wear. Sweatpants are not acceptable for wear. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
Specific requirements – <b><u>skirts</u></b>	Skirts must be <b>plain dark blue or navy blue in color and must be long enough to touch the top of the kneecap when standing</b> . Denim is not authorized for wear. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
Specific requirements – <b><u>shorts &amp; culottes</u></b>	“Bermuda” type shorts and culottes must be <b>plain dark blue or navy blue in color and must be long enough to touch the top of the kneecap when standing</b> . Denim is not authorized for wear. Tight fitting Lycra/spandex garments are not acceptable for wear.
Specific requirements – <b><u>jackets &amp; vests</u></b>	Jackets and vests must be <b>dark blue or navy blue in color</b> . Denim is not authorized for wear.
Specific requirements - <b><u>shoes</u></b>	Aides must wear shoes that have both a <b>closed toe and a closed heel, and that are held securely on the foot</b> . Sandals of any kind are not authorized for wear. Heels on shoes may not be more than one (1) inch high. Shoes with platform soles are not acceptable for wear. M- DCPS recommends that aides wear athletic type shoes while working.
Specific requirements - <b><u>undergarments</u></b>	All aides will wear appropriate undergarments (includes bras for females).

**Note:** At the determination of the administrator on duty, any school bus aide who is not in compliance with the dress code requirements outlined above when he/she reports for work may not be permitted to sign-in until he/she is dressed in compliance with the dress code. Aides who repeatedly fail to meet the dress code requirements shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include the loss of the employee’s uniform allowance payment.

## SECTION 4

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS & STAFF – PARENTS & STUDENTS

#### **4.01 RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND STAFF** ***(State Board of Education Rule 6A-3.0171(2)(e)2)***

Rule 6A-3.0171(2)(e)2 of the State Board of Education addresses the responsibilities of school principals.

School Principals or their designees shall:

- c. Assume responsibility under the direction of the Superintendent for all student disciplinary cases which arise in connection with transportation.
- d. Plan the program of the school so that transported students who arrive early or remain late will be under school supervision at all times.
- e. Plan and assign places for students to get on and off school buses at the school and ensure the safety of the loading/unloading zone and provide for the supervision of students.
- f. Direct school bus emergency evacuation drills on each bus serving the school during the first six (6) weeks of each semester of the school year and maintain documentation for all such evacuation drills.
- 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.
- h. Request authority, in writing, for transportation of students on field trips and activity trips, or other special trips, and plan such trips in accordance with the policies approved by the School Board.

#### **4.02 AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS REGARDING TRANSPORTATION** ***(Florida Statute 1006.09)***

Florida Statute 1006.09(1)(a) addresses the authority of school principals with respect to transported students. It states:

Subject to law and to the rules of the State Board of Education and the district school board, the principal in charge of the school or the principal's designee shall develop policies for delegating to any ... bus driver transporting students at the school responsibility for the control and direction of students. The principal or the principal's designee shall consider the recommendation for discipline made by a ... bus driver when planning regarding student referral for discipline.

#### **4.03 SCHOOL PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Statutory requirements. In addition to Florida Statute 1006.09, Florida Statutes 1003.31 and 1003.32 set forth responsibilities of school districts and school principals for control of students. In accordance with these statutes:

- School principals (or their designees) may suspend the riding privileges of any student transported to or from a school at public expense for violations of the district's ***Code of Student Conduct***, school bus safety rules, and transportation policies.
- School principals shall delegate to school bus drivers such authority as may be necessary for the control of students transported to or from a school at public expense.

- School bus drivers must report to the school principal (or his/her designee) any student who persists in disorderly conduct, and any student who engages in violent, abusive, or uncontrollable behavior which:
  - endangers the safety of the students, driver, and/or bus aide riding on the bus.
  - endangers the safe operation of the bus.

#### **4.04 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT – ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

The safety and welfare of transported students is the concern of every school bus driver and school administrator. Most students know and obey the rules and regulations of the school and the Transportation Department and exhibit proper behavior on the bus. To ensure the well-behaved majority can ride safely and comfortably, the following steps provide a method by which disruptive students may be properly disciplined.

- a. Rules for student conduct are set forth in the School Board’s *Code of Student Conduct* policy, in the bus safety rules, and in Transportation policies. School bus drivers and bus aides will make a reasonable effort to deal with minor infractions of the rules for student conduct before submitting a *Student Case Management Referral* form.
- b. In cases of **repeated** minor misconduct incidents, or when a serious misconduct incident occurs, the offending pupil will be reported to the school principal or the principal’s designated representative. School bus drivers will complete a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2891) and give it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- c. The school principal (or the principal’s designee) will determine appropriate disciplinary measures to address the student’s misconduct based on the driver’s report and any other input deemed necessary. Disciplinary measures will be enacted in accordance with the requirements of the Miami-Dade County School Board *Code of Student Conduct* policy. Disciplinary measures school principals are authorized to take are listed in the following section.
- d. The Miami-Dade County School Board *Code of Student Conduct* policy establishes.
  - (5) levels of corrective strategies for student misconduct. School Principals must take corrective measures to address student misconduct based on the level of the behavior engaged in by the student.
    - (1) For cases of repeated minor misconduct, school principals (or their designee) may take any of the following corrective measures, as circumstances warrant.
      - Verbal or Written Reprimand from the School Principal (or his/her designee)
      - Parent/Guardian conference
      - Participation in counseling session related to the infraction.
      - Temporary loss of bus riding privileges (up to 10 days)
    - (2) In any case where the student has engaged in misconduct that was:
      - Violent
      - Blatantly unsafe (*posed a clear and present danger to the safety of the school busdriver, school bus aide, or other students on the bus*)
      - Blatantly unsafe (*posed a clear and present danger to the safety of the bus while in operation*)

The school principal (or his/her designee) must make sure corrective measures have been put in place to ensure there is no reoccurrence of the misconduct **before** the student is allowed to begin riding the bus again.

- (3) Additionally, if a student has engaged in an offense which is defined as LEVEL 3, 4 or 5 behaviors in the *Code of Student Conduct* policy – the school principal may also recommend termination of the student’s bus riding privileges.
- (4) In the case of a special needs student who has transportation included as a related service in his/her IEP or 504 Plan (see Section 5.05 of this Handbook), there are some requirements and procedures in addition to those outlined above. Specifically, in the case of a student with a disability, suspension of bus riding privileges must be appropriate considering the student’s IEP or 504 Plan. A Manifestation Determination (MD) hearing should be conducted any time a student with a disability has been suspended from riding a bus for five (5) or more days and must be conducted when the student has been suspended for ten (10) days. MD Hearings must be arranged with staff from the SPED department.

#### **4.05 TEMPORARY AND SPACE AVAILABLE BUS PASSES**

- a. **Temporary Bus Pass.** The **Temporary Bus Pass** is used to allow new students who are **eligible** for transportation and are waiting for a bus assignment to ride to and from existing stops. The school principal (or his/her designee) shall contact the School Bus Routing Office to request a **Temporary Bus Pass** for an eligible student to make sure the student is eligible for transportation.
- b. **Space Available Bus Pass.**

The **Space Available Bus Pass** is used to allow students who are **not eligible** for transportation to ride from existing stops for eligible students.

- The **Space Available Bus Pass** may not be issued until **after** the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the Fall semester.
- The Space Available Bus Pass may be issued only when there are open, available seats on the bus that are not needed for eligible students. The school principal (or his/her designee) shall contact the School Bus Routing office to request a Space Available Bus Pass for a student.
- Students riding on a Space Available Bus Pass may use only existing bus stops that have been established for eligible students. New stops will not be created for students who are not eligible for transportation.
- Should the seat being used by a student riding on a Space Available Bus Pass become needed for a student who is eligible for transportation, it is the responsibility of the principal (or his/her designee) to withdraw the Space Available Bus Pass.

#### **4.06 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS**

- a. State Board Rule 6A-3.0121 addresses the responsibilities of parents and guardians of students who are transported at public expense. It states:
  - Parents and guardians shall ensure the safe travel of their students to and from home and the assigned bus stop.
  - Parents and guardians shall ensure that students ride only on their assigned school buses and get off only at the assigned bus stop.
  - While waiting at a designated school bus stop, parents and guardians shall ensure that their students

observe social distancing (at least 3 feet apart from others) and that their students have a mask to wear while riding on the bus.

- Parents and guardians shall ensure that their students are aware of and follow the district’s adopted code of student conduct while students are at bus stops and provide the necessary supervision when the bus is not present.
- Parents and guardians are responsible to make sure their students are waiting at the assigned bus stop in accordance with the scheduled pick-up time. Drivers will not wait for tardy students.

#### **4.07 BUS SAFETY RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRANSPORTED STUDENTS**

Students riding on school buses are required to observe the Miami-Dade County School Board *Code of Student Conduct* policy, school bus safety rules, and the following policies of the Transportation Department.

- a. Students may ride only in their assigned bus and get off only at their assigned bus stop.

Students **are not required to** wear a **mask; it is optional** when they are on the bus.

- b. Students must stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- c. Students must cross the road **only in front of the bus** and only when all traffic has been completely stopped. Students must NEVER cross the road behind the bus.
- d. Seating charts for students assigned to school buses (in K-8) will be produced using the *Bus Planner* school bus routing system. School bus drivers and aides shall inform students of their seat assignment using these seating charts.
- e. Students must enter and leave the bus at schools and at student stops in an orderly fashion. This requires students to always proceed:
  - Without haste and without loitering
  - Without crowding, pushing, or shoving, and
- f. Students, upon boarding the bus, must go directly to their assigned seat and sit down as quickly as possible. Students shall not change or trade seats. Students must remain seated in their assigned seat for the entire duration of the trip.
- g. School buses operated by Miami-Dade County Public Schools are equipped with lapbelts. While school bus drivers can not compel a student to use the lap belt, all students should fasten their lap belts and keep them fastened for the entire trip to and from school. Students who do not comply with this safety rule shall be referred to the school principal.
- h. Students must pay attention to the school bus driver (and school bus aide, if assigned) and follow their instructions. The driver and aide are responsible for the safety of the students entrusted to their care.
- i. Students must remain quiet enough so as not to distract the driver’s attention from the road. Students must always:
  - Refrain from shouting, yelling, and other boisterous activities.
  - Refrain from unnecessary conversation with the driver
  - Refrain from any activity that worries or distracts the driver, and which may put the student’s own safety and the safety of others at risk.

- j. When crossing railroad tracks – students must remain **quiet**.
- k. Students may play music devices when riding on buses only when wearing ear buds or headphones.
- l. Students may not eat, drink, or smoke when on the school bus.
- m. Students must NEVER extend hands, arms, heads, or any other parts of the body out of the windows of the bus.
- n. No littering. Students must not throw or scatter wastepaper, wrappers, bottles, or other items on the bus floor or out the windows of the bus.
- o. Students must not purposely mark, deface, damage, or destroy any part of the bus, the equipment on it, or the area surrounding the bus stop location.
- p. Students may not serve as bus monitors.

## SECTION 5

### SCHOOL BUS ROUTING PROCEDURES

#### **5.01 OVERVIEW**

Detailed requirements and procedures for school bus routing are contained in the Transportation Department's *Routing Guidelines, Requirements, & Procedures Document*. The information contained in this Handbook is intended to give school bus drivers and aides a basic understanding of the requirements and procedures for school bus routing.

#### **5.02 TRANSPORTATION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN – WHEN PROVIDED**

- a. Florida Statute 1006.21(3) sets forth the basic criteria for transportation of school children at public expense. Transportation is the responsibility of the School Board for students meeting the following criteria:
  - (1) Shall provide transportation for each student in pre-kindergarten disability programs and in kindergarten through grade 12 membership in a public school when, and only when, transportation is necessary to provide adequate educational facilities and opportunities which otherwise would not be available and to transport students whose homes are more than a reasonable walking distance, as defined by rules of the State Board of Education, from the nearest appropriate school.
  - (2) Shall provide transportation for public elementary school students in membership whose grade level does not exceed grade 6, if such students are subjected to hazardous walking conditions as provided in Florida Statute 1006.23 while enroute to or from school.
  - (3) May provide transportation for public school migrant, exceptional, nursery, and other public-school students in membership below kindergarten; kindergarten through grade 12 students in membership in a public school; and adult students in membership in adult vocational, basic, and high school graduation programs when, and only when, transportation is necessary to provide adequate educational facilities and opportunities which would not otherwise be available.
  - (4) May provide transportation for the transportation disadvantaged as defined in Florida Statute 427.11 and for other school-age children as provided for in Florida statute 1006.261.
  - (5) Shall provide necessary transportation to pregnant students or student parents, and the children of those students, as part of a teenage parent program pursuant to Florida statute 1003.54.
  - (6) May provide transportation for other persons to events and activities in which the district school board or school has agreed to participate or co-sponsor. The district school board shall adopt a policy to address liability for trips pursuant to this paragraph.
  - (7) May provide transportation for welfare transition program participants as defined in Florida Statute 414.0252.
- b. State Board of Education Rule 6A-3.001 (*Basic Principles for Transportation of Students*): A reasonable walking distance for any student who is not physically disabled is any distance not more than two (2) miles between the home and the school or one-and-one-half (1½) miles between the home and the assigned bus stop. Such distance shall be measured from the closest pedestrian entry point of the assigned school building or to the bus stop. The district shall determine the shortest pedestrian route whether it is accessible to motor vehicle traffic.

### **5.03 GENERAL SCHOOL BUS ROUTING PROCEDURES**

- a. Basic criteria for determining the eligibility of a student for school bus transportation is set forth in Florida Statute 1006.21 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-3.001, as shown above in Section 5.02 of this document. With certain exceptions (such as hazardous walking conditions or students with special transportation needs), school bus transportation will not be provided for students living within two miles of the school they are assigned to attend.
- b. Students eligible for school bus transportation as determined by the requirements of Florida Statutes, Rules of the State Board of Education, and the policies of the M-DCPS School Board shall be assigned to the proper bus stop and bus route by the staff of the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Offices.
- c. Students who are eligible for school bus transportation will be transported from the stop closest to their residence and back to the same stop unless the student has identified special transportation needs. Students with specialized transportation needs may be transported from their residence when the need is documented in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or "504" Plan and safety considerations permit (see Section 5.05).
- d. Students eligible for school bus transportation will not be permitted to ride one bus to school in the morning and another back home in the afternoon unless they have been so scheduled by the staff of the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Office.
- e. School bus stop locations will be determined in accordance with the criteria set forth in Section 5.04 of this document.
- f. A school bus route will not be changed, nor will a bus stop be relocated, until the staff of the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Offices has reviewed and approved the change.
- g. All other rules of the M-DCPS School Board and the Department of Transportation notwithstanding the following procedures apply specifically to students enrolled in a Teenage Parent Program.
  - (1) School bus transportation will be provided for students enrolled in a teenage parent program and their babies. When safety and geographic conditions permit, students and their babies will be transported from and to their residence. Otherwise, transportation will be provided from and to the nearest street corner from their residence.
  - (2) Students in teenage parent programs will be responsible for bringing their baby or babies on board the school bus, securing them in their seats, and removing them from the bus at school and at home. All infants and children transported in these programs will be transported in approved child safety seats.

### **5.04 GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTION OF BUS STOP LOCATIONS**

- School bus drivers, aides, and Transportation Center staff need to be familiar with the basic criteria for selection and placement of school bus stops. It is extremely important that drivers promptly inform their assigned Field Operations Specialist about any school bus stop they believe may not meet the criteria set forth in this section. Likewise, Transportation Center staff must promptly inform the staff of the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Offices about any such concerns.
- Basic principles. School bus stops will be placed at locations which provide the maximum safety, adequate protection of health, and convenience for the students living in the area served by the stop.
- *When possible, a school bus shall not stop where the visibility is obscured for a distance of 200 feet either way from the bus. (FS 316.172)*

- The following guidelines and requirements will be used when selecting locations for school bus stops.
  - (a) Intersections.
    - Bus drivers must stop at a safe distance from any intersection.
    - Stops should not be in a right turn lane, acceleration lane, or bicycle lane.
    - If the bus will need to make a turn a short distance from a stop, the stop should be placed on the least busy road.
  - (b) Railroad tracks. Stops should be at least two hundred (200) feet away from railroad tracks.
  - (c) Hills and overpasses.
    - Bus drivers must stop at a safe distance from any hill.
    - If a stop must be placed near a hill, the stop location should allow for at least two (200) hundred feet visibility. (FS 316.172)
  - (d) If a stop must be placed near a hill or overpass, it should be located on the top and the location should allow for at least two hundred (200) feet of visibility in both directions. (FS 316.172)
  - (e) Curves.
    - Stops should not be placed near curves.
    - If a stop must be placed near a curve, the stop location should allow for at least two (200) hundred feet visibility in both directions. (FS 316.172)
  - (f) Roads. Stops should be placed on lower speed roads when feasible.
  - (g) Waiting area for students. Whenever possible, the stop should have an area where students can wait for the bus that is ten (10) to fifteen (15) feet from the road.
  - (h) Visibility.
    - The stop location should be clearly visible for at least two hundred (200) feet from any direction that a vehicle might approach. (FS 316.172)
    - Students must be able to walk at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus before crossing the road.
  - (i) Accessibility.
    - As a rule, students must not have to walk more than one and one-half (1½) miles to get to the stop. *Note: the rule on walking distances may not always apply to students in Magnet programs.*
    - No stops shall be placed within the 2-mile walk zone for a school, except for certain special needs students who have a requirement for an individualized stop on their IEP or “504” Plan (see Section 5.06).
    - Stops for all students, except ESE students who are authorized for individualized transportation, should be separated by at least two-tenths (2/10) of a mile, except when stops are required on both sides of the street because of conditions of the roadway, or because there are other unsafe conditions as determined by the School Bus Routing Office staff.

- To the extent possible, the maximum number of students that should be assigned to a stop is no more than fifteen (15) students. More than this number of students may be assigned to a stop where an apartment or housing complex designates a special area for students to be picked up and dropped off. All such locations must be surveyed to ensure they are safe stop locations before approving them for use.

(j) Lighting. Bus stops should be placed in lighted areas, whenever possible.

(k) Backing. Bus stops should be placed to minimize and preferably eliminate the need for backing, whenever possible. School bus drivers should contact their assigned Field Operations Specialist when they have a concern about a stop that has been placed at a home on a dead-end street or cul-de-sac.

(l) “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” Stops. Students will not be assigned to bus stops at any location where they would have to cross one or more lanes of traffic that are not required to stop in accordance with the requirements of the Florida Statute 316.172 (*School Bus Stop Law*). In practical terms, this means that all students must be picked up and dropped off on the same side of the road as their residence if their bus stop is located on a road meeting any one of the following conditions:

- Divided highway with an unpaved space of at least five (5) feet
- Any road with a raised median separating opposing lanes of traffic
- Any road with a physical barrier separating opposing lanes of traffic.

**In short, if the bus driver cannot stop all traffic on the road, the student must not be required to cross it and must be picked up and dropped off on the same side of the road as their residence.**

Drivers are never to tell any student using a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” stop that it is permissible to cross the roadway to get to or from the bus. Drivers must instruct students using a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” stop that it is NOT SAFE for them to cross the roadway because the driver cannot stop all traffic on it.

**Drivers must immediately notify their assigned Field Operations Specialist any time they observe any student crossing the roadway at a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” stop either to get on the bus when being picked up in the morning, or after getting off the bus in the afternoon.**

## 5.05 EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION (ESE) PROGRAMS

- a. The Federal Laws. The rules and statutes pertaining to transportation of regular education students do not always apply to students with certain disabilities. There are two (2) Federal Laws that address education requirements for students with disabilities or handicaps. These two laws are (1) the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), and (2) *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. In accordance with the requirements of these two Federal laws, school districts are required to provide transportation services to students who have qualifying disabilities or handicaps, regardless of the distance they live from their assigned school. *IDEA* and *Section 504* are extremely complex laws, but the basic requirements of them can be summarized as follows:

- Students with qualifying disabilities must be provided with a “free and appropriate education.” This means that transportation must be provided to whatever school is determined to provide the most appropriate educational program to meet the specific needs of the student, in most cases regardless of the distance involved.
- Students with qualifying disabilities must be provided with an education in the “least restrictive environment.” For transportation this means that, when it is deemed appropriate, students must be transported on a regular bus route along with regular education students.

- b. In addition to the Federal Laws, the State Board of Education has established some rules pertaining to transportation of students with special needs. State Board Rule 6A-3.0121 (*Responsibility of School Districts for Students with Special Transportation Needs*) states:
- (1) The school district shall determine what safety measures shall be used in transportation of students with special transportation needs ... including the method of securement or positioning of the student. Such safety measures shall include the designation of roads, bus turning areas, and student stop locations which shall not be left to the discretion of the bus driver or parent.
  - (2) The district shall provide bus drivers and bus aides with instructions, in writing, as to any special conditions or non-medical care which a student may need while on the bus.
  - (3) School transportation shall not be provided for students with special transportation needs when parents of such students fail to assume their responsibilities in accordance with district policies with respect to appropriate supervision at the bus stop.
  - (4) Knowledge, skills, and abilities related to student management techniques and characteristics of students with special transportation needs shall be considered when selecting or assigning drivers and aides for route serving such students.
- c. The IEP processes. The process to establish specialized transportation requirements for a student with disabilities begins with the *Individualized Education Plan* (IEP). The process is the same for students with a "504" Plan. IDEA requires that an IEP or "504" Plan be prepared for every student who has a qualifying disability under the law.
- The IEP or "504" Plan for a student with disabilities is prepared during a conference that the Region Staffing Specialists will have with the parents of the student. Representatives from the Transportation Department (either from Routing or from the Transportation Center staff) may also attend this meeting, depending on the circumstances. During the "staffing meeting" a determination will be made as to whether *specialized* transportation should be included as a related service.
  - Once a determination is made that specialized transportation will be a required related service, then the staffing specialist will prepare a statement that will be included as part of the student's IEP or "504" Plan. The Transportation Page of the IEP or "504" Plan will spell out exactly what specialized transportation services are to be provided (bus with wheelchair lift, individualized stop with supervision, etc.).
  - Once the IEP or "504" Plan has been completed and specialized transportation requirements documented, the information will be downloaded into the Transportation school bus routing system – **Bus Planner** – so the Routing Specialist can identify the specialized transportation needs of the student and route them appropriately.

- d. ESE Transportation Codes. The special transportation needs of students with an IEP or “504” Plan are identified in **Bus Planner** by means of ESE Transportation Codes. There are two (2) kinds of ESE Transportation Codes – Primary and Secondary.

- (1) Primary ESE Transportation Codes. All ESE students who have a requirement in their IEP or “504” Plan for specialized transportation will have a **Primary ESE Transportation Code** on their **Bus Planner** record.

CODE	DEFINITION
1	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP: NO PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED
2	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP WITH PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED; CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINT SEAT REQUIRED
3	REGULAR TRANSPORTATION (NO SPECIALIZED SERVICE REQUIRED)
4	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP WITH PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED
5	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP WITH PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED; BUS WITH WHEELCHAIR LIFT REQUIRED
6	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP: NO PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED; BUS WITH WHEELCHAIR LIFT REQUIRED
7	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP WITH PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED; SAFETY VEST REQUIRED
8	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP WITH PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED; SAFETY BELT REQUIRED
9	INDIVIDUALIZED STOP WITH PARENT SUPERVISION REQUIRED; ALTERNATIVE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION REQUIRED.

Individualized (NOT “door-to-door”) bus stops will be located as close to the residence of the student as is practical and safe. In certain cases, it may not be possible to locate an individualized bus stop right at the entrance to a student’s residence. The determination of where an individualized bus stop will be located shall be made by the staff of the School Bus Routing Offices, in consultation with the staff of the Transportation Centers, as needed. Decisions concerning the location of individualized bus stops shall not be left to the discretion of school bus drivers, parents, school staff, or the District’s ESE staff.

- (2) Secondary ESE Transportation Codes. ESE students who have a requirement in their IEP or “504” Plan for specialized transportation **may or may not have one or more Secondary ESE Transportation Codes** on their record in addition to the Primary ESE Transportation Code, depending on the specific needs of the student.

SECONDARY ESE/SPED TRANSPORTATION CODES

CODE	DEFINITION
A	BUS AIDE REQUIRED
C	AIR-CONDITIONED TRANSPORTATION REQUIRED
F	MEDICALLY FRAGILE STUDENT
H	COMMUNITY BASED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (CBVE)
I	COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM (CBI)
J	TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZED FOR STUDENT LIVING WITHIN 2 MILES OF SCHOOL
K	PROJECT VICTORY
M	MEDICAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED
O	TRANSPORTED OUT OF DISTRICT
P	OCCUPATIONAL/PHYSICAL THERAPY
S	SHORTENED SCHOOL DAY
V	VOCATIONAL/TIME SHARE DAY

- e. Transportation to alternate bus stop. In certain situations, transportation may be needed to or from an address other than a student's residence. Typically, the alternate address is for before or after school care, or therapy. The Miami-Dade County School Board has chosen to provide transportation to addresses other than a student's residence when certain conditions are met, even though such transportation is not required by Law and is courtesy transportation. Miami-Dade County School Board Policy establishes criteria for when transportation may be provided to an alternate address. ESE students may be transported to a different stop from where they would normally be picked up and/or dropped off only if the following conditions are met:
- (1) There must be an existing bus, with an available seat, to which the alternate stop can be assigned.
  - (2) The change must not increase the mileage for the trip by more than ¾ of a mile, or the riding time for other students on the bus by more than 8 minutes.
  - (3) The school bus must be able to safely access the requested location for the alternate stop. In particular:
    - There must be appropriate access – the bus must be able to safely approach, enter, and exit the location.
    - If the bus will need to enter and exit a parking lot, there must be sufficient clearance for the bus to be able to safely drive through the parking lot.
  - (4) School bus drivers and aides WILL NOT escort students from the bus to building entrances, or from buildings to the bus. Parents are responsible to make all necessary arrangements to have a responsible adult bring the student to/from the bus.
  - (5) Alternate stops may be changed only one (1) time during any school year.
  - (6) All requests for transportation to an alternate address must be submitted to, reviewed, and approved by the staff of the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Offices.

## 5.06 ROUTE REPORTS AND RUN REPORTS

The Transportation Department's two School Bus Routing Offices now use the **Bus Planner** computerized routing system to prepare school bus runs and routes, and to assign students to bus stops.

Student data is drawn directly from the school district's student information system (DSIS). Transportation cannot make changes/corrections to any of the information contained in DSIS. Only schools can do this for their students. This is important, because changes cannot be made to student bus assignments until the information contained in DSIS is up to date.

### a. **Bus Planner** ROUTE REPORT.

There are three (3) versions of the **Bus Planner Route Report** available for drivers, dispatchers, and Transportation staff. Drivers may obtain copies of the **Route Report** for their assigned bus route from their dispatchers or Field Operations Specialists

- Route Report
- Route Report with Student Lists
- Route Report with Driver Directions

Information contained on the **Bus Planner Route Report**.

REPORT TIME checkpoint – the time the driver is required to report for work (sign in at Dispatch)

DEPART COMPOUND checkpoint – the time the bus needs to leave the compound in order to get to the first

stop on the route at the scheduled stop time.

**BUS STOP DESCRIPTIONS**

CORNER STOP	The first roadway listed on a Stop Description for a corner stop is always the one on which the bus should be traveling. For example: NW 18 AVE & NW 18 TER – Bus should be on NW 18 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, stopping at NW 18 <sup>th</sup> Avenue (a safe distance from the NW 18 <sup>th</sup> Terrace intersection).
CORNER STOP	Stop Descriptions may also have notes on them specifying the direction of travel and/or side of an intersection on which the stop is to be made.
STREET ADDRESS	If an actual street address is specified for a Stop Description, then the driver is expected to always stop the bus at the actual street address.
NO CROSSING ALLOWED	Students using this stop may not cross the roadway to get to the bus when being picked up in the morning and may not cross the roadway after getting off the bus when being dropped off in the afternoon.
STUDENT INFORMATION	Information on the students assigned to each stop will be listed underneath the stop to which the student is assigned. On the Route Report only ESE students will be listed. The name, student ID number, and ESE Transportation Codes for each ESE student will be listed.
STUDENT INFORMATION	To obtain a complete listing of all students assigned to a bus route (not just ESE students), use the Route Report with Student Lists.

**EFFECTIVE DATE** – this field is used to document when a new stop takes effect, or when a change to an existing stop takes effect.

**STOP LOAD** – this field shows the number of students assigned to each stop. Also, at the bottom of each run on the route, the total number of students assigned to the run will be shown.

**ARRIVE SCHOOL** checkpoint – the time the bus is scheduled to arrive at a school.

**DEPART SCHOOL** checkpoint – the time the bus is scheduled to depart from the school.

**SPED STUDENT COUNTS** – at the bottom of each run on the route, the total number of students who require a bus aide, a wheelchair lift, a safety vest, and/or a safety belt will be shown.

b. **Bus Planner** RUN REPORT.

As with the **Bus Planner Route Report**, there are three (3) versions of the **Bus Planner Run Report** available for drivers, dispatchers, and Transportation staff. Drivers may obtain copies of **Run Reports** from their dispatchers or Field Operations Specialists.

- Run Report
- Run Report with Student Lists
- Run Report with Driver Directions

Information contained on the **Bus Planner Run Report**. The **Run Reports** are formatted the same as the **Route Reports** and give the same information. The only difference is that a **Run Report** contains information just for one run (trip), whereas the **Route Report** has information on everything (all runs) assigned to a route.

## 5.07 SCHEDULE COMPLIANCE

School bus drivers shall ensure that:

- a. Stops shall be made in accordance with the times indicated on the **Bus Planner Route Report** and/or **Run Report**, and in the sequence on which the stops are listed on the **Bus Planner Route Report** and/or **Run Report**. Drivers are not to depart from any stop before the time listed for the stop on the **Bus Planner Route Report** and/or **Run Report**.
- b. When picking up students at schools, drivers shall not depart the school location until they have made sure all students who are to ride on the bus have boarded. Drivers shall wait the full seven (7) minute period scheduled for loading of students, if necessary, to ensure all students to be transported are on the bus.
- c. Drivers shall not change the order of the stops on the **Bus Planner Route Report** and/or **Run Report**, nor shall they modify stop times or locations in any way unless and until approval has been obtained to do so from the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Office.
- d. If a driver believes changes need to be made to stop times or locations, or the order of stops modified, then the driver shall contact their assigned Field Operations Specialist. If the Field Operations Specialist concurs with driver's request, then the Field Operations Specialist shall contact the School Bus Routing Office. Drivers shall not contact the School Bus Routing Office directly before consulting with their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- e. Any driver who is found to have modified stop times or locations, or to have changed the order of stops as shown on the **Bus Planner Route Report** and/or **Run Report** without having obtained approval from the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Office, shall face disciplinary action as appropriate to the situation, in accordance with the policies of the Miami-Dade County School Board and the provisions of the AFSCME Contract.
- f. Any time a driver is delayed on their run/route by ten (10) minutes or more, he/she shall promptly notify their Dispatch Office of that fact. Drivers shall never exceed posted speed limits to compensate for lost time; such is never an acceptable practice.
- g. If the bus should become inoperative due to mechanical breakdown or excessive vandalism, the driver shall immediately notify their Dispatch Office. The Dispatch Office is responsible to notify the school affected by the breakdown.

## 5.08 SCHOOL BUS CAPACITIES

Pursuant to Florida Statute 1006.22(12), the routing and scheduling of buses shall be planned in such a manner as to eliminate the necessity for students to stand while a bus is in motion. When circumstances of an emergency temporarily necessitate transporting students on buses more than rated seating capacity, such buses shall proceed at a reduced rate of speed as to maximize the safety of the students. The Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Offices shall be responsible for prompt relief of the emergency condition by re-routing and/or re-scheduling buses and ensuring any other appropriate remedial actions are taken, as needed.

- a. Definitions.
  - Rated Seating Capacity. The maximum number of passengers that can legally be transported on the bus (except in emergency situations).
  - Overloaded bus. A bus is "overloaded" when the number of passengers exceeds the rated seating capacity of the vehicle.

- Overcrowded bus. A bus is “overcrowded” when all passengers cannot be properly seated. For example, in some cases, it will not be possible to properly seat three middle school students per seat, due to the physical size of the students.
- b. Recommended bus loads. Seats on school buses are designed to accommodate up to three (3) students per seat. M-DCPS recognizes that it is not always practical or safe to place three (3) students to a seat on school buses. While most elementary school students can be comfortably accommodated at three students per seat, the same is not necessarily true for middle school students. For this reason, the following guidelines will be used when assigning students to school buses:
- Elementary = 3 per seat
  - Middle school = 2 or 3 per seat (depending on the size of each student)
  - High school = 2 per seat
- c. Seating charts. Seating charts will be produced using the *Bus Planner* school bus routing system. Drivers and aides will inform students of their seat assignments as often as needed. Students who do not comply with the instructions of the driver and aide with respect to seat assignments shall be reported to the school principal (or the principal’s designee).

## SECTION 6

### ATTENDANCE POLICY & PAYROLL PROCEDURE

#### **6.01 ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

School bus drivers and school bus aides are expected to be prompt and punctual in their attendance on all workdays in accordance with the current calendar, their assigned schedule, and the union contract.

#### **6.02 CHECK-IN POLICY**

- a. At the beginning of every school year, school bus drivers and school bus aides will be provided with a *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form to document the scheduled hours for which they will be paid daily. The scheduled REPORT time for the driver/aide will be included on this form. The *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form will be updated throughout the course of the school year as necessary to reflect changes to the driver's/aide's assigned bus route.
- b. **School bus drivers and school bus aides are expected to report for work on time, every workday, for every scheduled shift (morning and afternoon.)**
- c. School bus drivers and school bus aides must be properly dressed and must be wearing appropriate shoes in accordance with the requirements of the dress code for drivers and aides (reference Section 2.11 and Section 3.05 of this Handbook). Drivers must have their Florida Commercial Driver's License and their *Medical Examiner's Certificate* in their possession. Drivers and aides must be wearing the photo identification badge issued to them by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Department of Transportation. Any driver or aide who is found not in compliance with these requirements at the time they report for work may not be allowed to check until in compliance with these requirements.
- d. It is essential to the operation of the district's school bus routes for school bus drivers and school bus aides to report for work by their scheduled REPORT time on all workdays. School bus drivers and school bus aides who report to work **six (6) or more minutes after their scheduled REPORT time** will be "tardy."
  - The Center's dispatchers may assign a stand-by or substituted driver or aide to the route of the tardy employee. When Dispatch replaces a tardy driver or aide, the tardy employee will then be assigned as a substitute for other routes needing coverage as requirements dictate.
  - The Administrator on duty at the transportation center may, at his/her discretion, determine a tardy employee who is **more than 15 minutes late** reporting for work to be "absent without leave." In such cases, if there is no remaining bus route to which the tardy driver or aide can be assigned, the employee will **not** be permitted to work and will be placed on **unauthorized leave without pay**.
  - A record will be kept documenting all cases of tardiness. Lost time will be accumulated for tardiness and employees will be docked pay in one-half (½) day increments. Additionally, employees who have been placed on unauthorized leave without pay due to tardiness will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Miami-Dade School Board Policy and the AFSCME Union Contract.
  - If the tardy employee has what they consider to be extenuating circumstances, they may appeal to the transportation center Director (or his/her designee) for a review of the situation. It is the responsibility of the employee to submit appropriate documentation to support the request for the tardiness to be excused. Repeated occurrences such as "car broke down for the third time this week," will not be considered extenuating.

### 6.03 SIGN-IN PROCEDURES

- a. Miami-Dade County Public Schools now requires **all** full-time employees to sign in using the district's mobile app. This is in addition to the regular sign-in procedures at the transportation center. All drivers and aides should download the M-DCPS mobile app to their cell phone, if possible. When reporting for work, open the Full-Time Employee Sign-In app and then sign in. If the employee is going to be absent, they must follow the procedures in Section 6.04 of this Handbook (Notification of Absences).
- b. Upon arrival at the bus compound for the morning and afternoon runs, drivers and aides who are assigned to bus routes shall proceed directly to their assigned bus. Drivers will call in over the two-way radio to confirm they are present on bus and ready for work. Drivers will also call in over the two-way radio to report that their aide is present and ready for work if an aide is assigned to the route.

### 6.04 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

The Contract between the Miami-Dade County School Board and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) states: **"Employees are required to notify their work location, prior to the beginning of the workday, when they are unable to report to work or intend to be absent."**

- a. School bus drivers and school bus aides must call the Dispatch Office at their assigned transportation center as soon as they have determined they are unable to report to work, and always **before** their scheduled **REPORT** time. ***When possible, school bus drivers and school bus aides should call the Dispatch Office at least 15 minutes before their scheduled report time, to give dispatchers sufficient time to make sure the route is properly covered.*** School bus drivers and school bus aides must not decide on their own for a substitute. All arrangements must be made by the Dispatch Office at the employee's assigned transportation center.
- b. If a school bus driver or school bus aide cannot report to work because of an emergency, the employee must call the Dispatch Office at their assigned transportation center as soon as possible. If the employee is unable to call their Dispatch Office because the situation requires them to leave the local area (or for any other reason) then the employee must have someone (a relative or friend) call the Dispatch Office on their behalf.
- c. If a school bus driver or school bus aide knows they will need to be absent from work sometime in the future, they should give the Dispatch Office at their assigned transportation center as much advance notification as possible.
- d. When a school bus driver or school bus aide calls the Dispatch Office at their assigned transportation center about an absence, an explanation for the absence should be given (sick or personal) and the estimated date/time of return to work.

If a school bus driver or school bus aide is going to be off work for more than one day, the employee must call the Dispatch office at their assigned transportation center each day, **before** their scheduled **REPORT** time.

The only times a driver or aide does not have to contact their Dispatch Office daily are:

- Admission to a hospital as a patient
- Employee has submitted a doctor's work release for a specified number of days.
- Approved extended sick leave.
- Approved Parental Leave
- Approved Leave of Absence

## **6.05 UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY**

The Contract between the Miami-Dade County School Board and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) addresses the subject of **unauthorized** absences. It states:

ARTICLE V, Section 27. Unauthorized Absence – Any absence without pay which has not been requested by the employee and approved by the supervisor, in writing, at least five days in advance.

Employees are required to notify the work location, prior to the beginning of the workday, when they are unable to report to work or intend to be absent.

Absences of the employee, where notice is made prior to the start of the workday but are not covered by the employee having accrued sick or personal leave, shall be charged as unauthorized absence in accordance with Article XI. Upon the employee reporting back to work, the employee shall be apprised of the unauthorized leave status; however, if the employee can demonstrate that there were extenuating circumstances (i.e., hospitalization or another unanticipated emergency), then consideration will be given to changing the status of the leave. The work location supervisor has the authority to change an unauthorized leave; however, nothing herein precludes requested leave being determined to be unauthorized where the employee does not have available sick or sufficient personal leave.

Article XI, Section 4B. Excessive Absenteeism/Abandonment of Position – An unauthorized absence for three (3) consecutive workdays shall be evidence of abandonment of position. Unauthorized absences totaling ten (10) or more workdays during the previous twelve (12) month period shall be evidence of excessive absenteeism. Either of the foregoing shall constitute grounds for termination. An employee recommended for termination under these provisions shall have the right to request of the chief personnel officer for Human Resources a review of the facts concerning the unauthorized leave. Such right shall exist for a period of ten (10) working days after the first day of notification of the unauthorized absence.

## **6.06 PROCEDURES TO APPLY FOR AN UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

1. When a School Board employee needs to be absent from work for an extended period which exceeds the amount of leave time, they have available they may be required to apply for an **unpaid Leave of Absence**. The types of **unpaid** Leaves of Absence that may be available to school bus drivers and school bus aides are specified in Article XIII of the AFSCME Union Contract. They include:

- Illness of Self \*
- Need to care for a family member who is ill \*
- Pregnancy/Birth of child to immediate family \*
- Adoption of pre-school age child \*
- Military Leave
- Personal Leave

**\* Note: Employees who need to be absent from work for these reasons may be eligible for unpaid leave under the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).**

2. It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain and submit all documentation required to support and substantiate the need to be absent for work on an unpaid Leave of Absence. The determination of whether an employee qualifies for an unpaid Leave of Absence under the provisions of FMLA or Miami-Dade County School Board policies is made by the **M-DCPS Leave Office**.
  - School bus drivers and school bus aides who will need to apply for an unpaid Leave of Absence should contact the Director at their assigned transportation center as soon as they determine that they will need to apply for such leave.

Per the AFSCME Union Contract, school bus drivers and school bus aides who need to apply for an unpaid Personal Leave of Absence must apply for such leave, in writing, at least five (5) days prior to the requested start date for the leave. Personal Leaves of Absence are also limited to no more than thirty (30) days.

## 6.07 PAYROLL PROCEDURES

**School bus drivers and school bus aides are responsible for submitting all required paperwork used to process paychecks correctly and on time. The procedures listed below explain the process:**

- a. Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet. At the beginning of every school year, school bus drivers and school bus aides will be provided with a *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form to document the scheduled hours for which they will be paid daily. The *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form will be updated throughout the course of the school year as necessary to reflect changes to the driver's/aide's assigned bus route. School bus drivers and school bus aides should review their *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form with their Field Operations Specialist and make sure they understand what is on it before the FOS sends it to the payroll clerk.
- b. "Extra Duty Time" slip. School bus drivers and school bus aides who are assigned extra work by the administrator must complete an *Extra Services Individual Time Report – Daily* form (FM-4673). The same applies to school bus drivers and school bus aides who do field trips.
  - The "Extra Duty Time" slip is to be used when – and only when – the extra work done by the employee causes them to work extra time beyond their normal scheduled work hours as shown on the employee's *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form. For example, if the Dispatch Office has a driver cover an extra run for a school which is not on the employee's route, but the driver is able to complete the work and return to their transportation center at their normally scheduled time per their *Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet* form, then the driver would not submit an "Extra Duty Time" slip.
  - School bus drivers and school bus aides **MUST** fill out an "Extra Duty Time" slip **each day** on which they do extra work that causes them to work extra time beyond their normal scheduled work hours as shown on their *Scheduled Work Hours' Time Sheet* form.
  - School bus drivers and school bus aides **MUST** turn in their completed "Extra Duty Time" slips **every day** on which they do extra work that causes them to work extra time beyond their normal scheduled work hours as shown on their *Scheduled Work Hours' Time Sheet* form. "Extra Duty Time" slips **MUST** be placed in the designated box **before the employee departs the transportation center at the end of the workday**. If the office is **closed** when the employee returns to their transportation center, then the employee **MUST** turn in the completed "Extra Duty Time" slip **on the next workday**.
  - Unless the employee has good and reasonable extenuating circumstances for not completing and turning in "Extra Duty Time" slips within the required timelines as stated above, **school bus drivers and school aides who fail to abide by these procedures will not be paid for the requested extra time**.
3. Absence form. School bus drivers and school bus aides who are absent from work must complete a *Short-Term Leave* form – FM5949 (also commonly called a "leave slip" or "bubble card") A *Short-Term Leave* form **MUST** be completed by the employee each time the employee is absent from work unless the employee has been approved for a Leave of Absence (see Section 6.05 of this Handbook).
  - School bus drivers and school bus aides shall complete the *Short-Term Leave* form and turn it in to the Dispatch Office at their assigned transportation center on the first workday upon their return to duty. Failure to comply with this procedure may result in the employee being charged with **unauthorized** leave without pay, unless there are good and reasonable extenuating circumstances as determined by the Director of the employee's assigned transportation center.

## SECTION 7

### FIELD TRIPS

School buses owned by Miami-Dade County Public Schools may be used to provide transportation of students for field trips of an educational nature, athletic events, performances of uniformed units (school bands, cheerleaders) representing the school and the school district, or other school sponsored activities in which students are required or choose to participate. All such trips will be accepted and scheduled in accordance with established School Board policy, Transportation Department procedures, and the requirements of the AFSCME Union Contract.

#### **7.01 ASSIGNMENT OF DRIVERS**

- a. Field trips, extra-curricular trips, and activity trips shall be considered as regular employment and school bus drivers shall be compensated at the appropriate rate.
- b. School bus drivers will be assigned field trips in accordance with the provisions of Appendix III, Section L 2 of the Miami-Dade County School Board contract with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). It states:

- During the bidding process, drivers will have the opportunity to sign-up or decline field trip assignments. Prior to the beginning of the school year, the final field trip roster (by seniority) will be posted, and a copy sent to the Union.
- All field trips shall be assigned from the field trip roster by seniority on a rotation basis. Drivers who do not accept a trip will be skipped in rotation and not offered another trip until their name comes up again on the field trip roster. Acceptance of emergency trips shall not be held against the driver on the seniority rotation.

Note: A driver's schedule must permit them to be available to do a field trip for them to be considered for assignment. Drivers shall not be given a field trip assignment if it would cause them to be unable to complete any part of their assigned bus route. Mid-day runs and evening activity runs that are part of a driver's assigned route will not be "covered" to permit drivers to do a field trip.

- The Director of each transportation center (or his/her designee) will be responsible for posting rosters of bus drivers and indicating the field trips assigned and declined. Each bus driver will be responsible for checking the roster and assuring that they are aware and available for the assignment or for prior notification from the center Director (or his/her designee) of their non-availability on the appropriate form.
  - School bus drivers are required to do all assigned field trips. In cases of illness or emergencies that prevent the driver from doing a trip, the driver will be responsible for notifying the center Director (or his/her designee) on the appropriate form. The center Director (or his/her designee) will reassign the trip in order of seniority on the rotation roster, based on scheduling of the trip and the driver's availability to do the field trip. If the next two drivers on the rotation roster are unavailable, the center Director (or his/her designee) shall document his/her actions and assign the trip to an available driver, using substitute (job code 8022) drivers only in an urgent situation.
- c. Schools and other organizations requesting buses for a field trip are required, by policy of the Miami-Dade County School Board, to submit requests for transportation to the Transportation Department at least ten (10) working days in advance of the trip. However, on some occasions it may not be possible for the school to provide such advance notice. When a last-minute request is received by the Transportation Department, staff will make a reasonable effort to select a driver in accordance with the procedures set forth in paragraph b, above.

## 7.02 PAYMENT TO DRIVERS

- a. School bus drivers who are assigned field trips shall be paid for travel time to and from their assigned transportation center.
- b. Drivers of field trips that are **cancelled** at the school shall be paid as follows:
  - School days: actual time on the bus (including travel time to and from the transportation center), plus sixty (60) minutes.
  - Non-school days: Seven (7) hours during the regular school year  
Five (5) hours during the summer session

## 7.03 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR FIELD TRIPS

- a. Newer buses shall be assigned to night/weekend field trips and to field trips that will be going outside of Miami-Dade County. Drivers who need a bus other than the one they normally drive shall contact the Transportation Operations Helper at their transportation center to get another bus for use during the field trip.
- b. It is the responsibility of the driver to know where the field trip destination is located and how to get to it. Drivers must plan out the route they will take with particular attention to:
  - Special situations or potential problems along the route (low clearance bridges, construction, etc.).
  - Parking at the field trip destination. (Note: if there will be a fee charged for parking the teacher or chaperone is responsible to pay it.)
- c. School bus drivers must also be prepared to handle any emergencies along the field trip route. If the field trip will take the bus outside of the normal area of operations the driver may not always be able to use the 2-way radio. Drivers should therefore have the telephone numbers of the transportation centers nearest to their destination so they can call for assistance if needed.
- d. School bus drivers are not permitted to bring members of their own family on a field trip, unless the family member is a part of the group for which the field trip has been contracted.
- e. School bus drivers doing night trips are not permitted to bring anyone on the trip who is not a designated teacher, coach, or adult who shall act as a chaperone. The driver must be given approval in writing from the school or the Transportation Department before allowing such individuals to accompany the field trip. A representative of the Transportation Department may accompany the driver on night trips, with the approval of the Director of the driver's assigned transportation center.
- f. School bus drivers must never leave the bus unattended, or the passengers stranded. If a field trip driver must leave the bus to use restroom facilities, obtain food, or for any other reason, the driver must first get permission to leave from the teacher or chaperone in charge of the field trip, and must have a clear understanding with the teacher or chaperone about exactly where he/she will be going and the time at which they will return. Under no circumstances shall a driver ever be away from the field trip location for more than one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) hour.
- g. Teachers/chaperons will be responsible for notifying the school bus driver when it is okay to depart from the school or the event location.

- h. School bus drivers shall always give the following briefing to their field trip passengers before departing from the pick-up location to start the trip:
- (1) The driver will introduce himself/herself to the students and the teachers/coaches/chaperones riding the bus for the field trip.
  - (2) Direct the attention of the passengers to the sign with the bus safety rules in the front of the bus. Briefly review the safety rules.
  - (3) Point out the location of the EMERGENCY EXITS on the bus and briefly explain how to operate the emergency exit doors and windows.
  - (4) Explain to the passengers how they would be expected to evacuate the bus in an emergency situation.
  - (5) Point out the location of the FIRE EXTINGUISHER and the FIRST AID KIT to the adult passengers.
  - (6) Appoint a teacher/coach/chaperone to operate the 2-way radio in the event of an emergency. Explain to that person how to key the radio mic to request HELP.

#### **7.04 PAPERWORK**

School bus drivers will be given a copy of the *Requisition for Special School Bus Transportation* form (FM-1596) before they depart on a field trip. Drivers shall complete the information on the form for the times for "Compound Start," "Arrive at School," "Return to School," and "Return to Compound." The teacher or chaperone riding on the bus must sign the form. The driver shall sign the form and turn it in to the Field Trip Clerk or other designated person at their compound by 12 pm (noon) on the next workday after the trip.

## SECTION 8

### SCHOOL BUS OPERATING PROCEDURES

#### **8.01**    SCHOOL BUS OPERATION

**School bus drivers must always operate their bus in accordance with requirements of the Florida Uniform Traffic Control Law (Florida Statutes, Chapter 316) and the Rules of the Florida State Board of Education pertaining to transportation of school children (State Board Rule 6A-3).**

- a. Drivers will perform a complete pre-trip inspection of their assigned school bus at least twice daily. This duty may not be delegated to any other person. The pre-trip inspection must be accomplished before the driver departs the compound with the bus. Pre-trip inspection results must be documented on the form provided for this purpose. Vehicle defects will be promptly reported to the Dispatch Office. Completed pre-trip inspection forms must be turned in to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist by the third working day of the following month (for example, the pre-trip inspection form for the month September must be turned in by the third working day in the month of October).
- b. Drivers will be familiar with the operation of all gauges and instruments on the school bus.
- c. The driver's seat belt will be always worn when the school bus is in operation. The seat belt must be extended fully from any wind-up device and adjusted to fit snugly across the driver's hips.
- d. The headlights on a school bus must be always turned on (low beam) when the bus is in operation. The roof mounted strobe light will be always activated when the bus is in operation.
- e. The two-way radio on the school bus must be always turned on when the bus is in operation. School bus drivers must keep in mind that the use of a two-way radio while operating a vehicle can provide a distraction which may impair a driver's ability to respond and react to road hazards. For this reason, drivers must exercise due care and caution when using the two-way radio; be careful not to let yourself get distracted to the point where you lose your awareness of what is happening on the road! Detailed procedures for use of the two-way radio are included in Section 9 of this Handbook.
- f. Use of cellular telephones. Policy 8606 of the School Board of Miami-Dade County specifically **prohibits the use of cell phones** while operating a school bus. In an emergency, drivers will use the two-way radio to notify their Dispatch Office of the situation so that required assistance can be provided. See also Section 8.15 of this Handbook.
- g. School bus doors must be securely closed whenever the bus is in motion.
- h. Keep all mirrors (interior and exterior) properly adjusted.
- i. Speed limits for school buses. School bus drivers shall drive always at a safe speed for the conditions of the road and never more than the legally posted speed limit.
- j. **Slow down** near highway department crews and other persons working on or near the road.
- k. Inclement weather conditions such as rain, fog, flooded areas, and high winds call for reduced speed and careful driving. **If conditions become too hazardous, pull the bus off the road at a safe place and wait until conditions improve.** Notify your Dispatch Office by two-way radio of your actions.
- l. Do not attempt to cross flooded areas, bridges, or culverts which may be weakened by floods without the permission of highway or police officials in charge.

- m. Schedule compliance. It is extremely important for drivers to make every reasonable effort to operate their routes and trips in accordance with the established schedules. Students, parents, and school staff count on our drivers to be at bus stops and schools on time!
  - (1) School bus drivers will, to the best of their ability, operate all trips in accordance with established schedules, except when to do so would jeopardize safety. Student stops will be made at the time indicated on the route schedule. **Drivers must try not to arrive at a stop ahead of schedule, even if it is only a minute or so early.**
  - (2) If you fall behind on your pick-up or drop-off times do not try to get back on schedule by exceeding posted speed limits or driving in an unsafe manner. **Notify your Dispatch Office if you are running more than ten (10) minutes behind schedule.**
- n. **Slowdown in school zones.** Children cannot be expected to use the same good judgment as adults!
- o. Be extremely cautious near schools that you do not normally service. Local traffic patterns and hazards may be unfamiliar to you. Remember – students are unpredictable!
- p. School bus drivers will **never** permit a student to:
  - (1) Stand at the front of the bus or in the bus aisle while the bus is in operation.
  - (2) Operate the service door handle.
  - (3) Occupy the driver's seat.
- q. School bus drivers will **never** permit children to hold on to the side or rear of the bus when skating, riding bicycles, etc.
- r. Upon completion of each run/trip, school bus drivers will walk to the rear of the bus and return up the aisle while checking each seat for sleeping children, forgotten book bags, lunches, and any other items left by student passengers. Drivers will complete this check of the bus regardless of whether a school bus aide is assigned to the route and may not delegate this task to a bus aide or anyone else.

## **8.02 LOADING AND UNLOADING OF STUDENT PASSENGERS**

There are few operations involved in driving a school bus more critical, more closely observed, or fraught with responsibility and the need for sound judgment than the loading and unloading of a school bus with students. This is because there is danger involved for the students. The driver of a school bus must always keep in mind that students and motorists are unpredictable. Loading and unloading of student passengers requires the unfailing execution of proper procedures to include interacting with other vehicular traffic, directing students crossing the street, and managing students who are getting on or off the bus at bus stops and in the school site authorized loading zone.

### **a. School Bus Stop Law (Florida Statute 316.172)**

- (1) Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle on or over the roads or highways of this state shall, upon approaching any school bus used in transporting school pupils to or from a school which is properly identified in substantial accordance with the provisions of F.S. 1006.25 and which displays the stop signal, bring such vehicle to a full stop while the bus is stopped, and the vehicle shall not pass the school bus until the signal has been withdrawn. A person who violates this section commits a moving violation, punishable as provided in Chapter 318.
- (2) Any person passing to the right side of a school bus which is displaying a stop signal in accordance with the provisions of this section shall also be subject to a mandatory hearing under the provisions of F.S. 318.19.
- (3) The driver of a vehicle upon a divided highway with an unpaved space of at least 5 feet, or a physical barrier, shall not be required to stop when traveling in the opposite direction of the school bus which is

stopped in accordance with the provisions of this section.

- (4) Every school bus shall stop as far to the right of the street as possible and shall display warning lights and signals as required by rules of the State Board of Education before discharging or loading passengers and, when possible, shall not stop where visibility is obscured for a distance of 200 feet either way from the bus.
- b. Use of flashing amber and red loading/unloading lights. A school bus is a moving traffic signal. Accordingly, it is extremely important drivers know the legal and proper use of the flashing loading/unloading lights and stop arms.
- (1) Flashing loading/unloading lights and stop arms will be always used during the loading and unloading of students on streets.
  - (2) Flashing loading/unloading lights will **NOT** be used while:
    - Loading or unloading students at a school.
    - When stopping at railroad tracks
    - While backing or making turnarounds
    - When driving in bad weather
    - To assist another bus which is loading or unloading students.
- c. Procedures for LOADING students on streets. The procedures for loading students on streets are outlined in **Figure 8-1** on page 72. School bus drivers will follow these procedures **without fail** whenever they are loading students on their bus from a street. In addition to the procedures included in **Figure 8-1**, drivers will comply with the following requirements:
- (1) Drivers will load students on streets only at established stop locations. If a driver has a concern about the safety of an established stop location, he/she shall immediately report the concern to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
  - (2) Drivers shall always instruct students who are assigned to any bus stop which has a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” designation that they **MUST NOT** walk across that street. Drivers will instruct students using a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” that it is **NOT SAFE** for them to cross the street because the driver cannot stop all traffic on it. Should a driver observe students crossing a street at a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” bus stop, he/she shall immediately report it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
  - (3) Keep kids in sight! Any time a driver loses sight of a child when loading the bus the driver must wait until the child is accounted for. The bus must never be put in motion until all children have been accounted for.
  - (4) Tardy students. Students are expected to load the bus promptly. When students intentionally lag to cause an unnecessary delay to the bus schedule or to create a nuisance, drivers will follow these steps:
    - First and second occurrence – wait for the student and tell him/her that this behavior is not acceptable.
    - Third occurrence – fill out a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to your assigned Field Operations Specialist. Tell the student that he/she will be left behind if another case of tardiness occurs.
    - Fourth and subsequent occurrences – Do not wait for the tardy student. Fill out a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to your assigned Field Operations Specialist.
    - **NOTE:** Drivers **WILL NOT** leave any student who is visibly trying to get to the bus, even when that

student is tardy, unless waiting for the student would expose him/her to hazards from other traffic.

- d. Procedures for UNLOADING students on streets. The procedures for unloading students on streets are outlined in **Figure 8-2** on page 73. School bus drivers will follow these procedures **without fail** whenever they are unloading students on their bus to a street. In addition to the procedures included in **Figure 8-2**, drivers will comply with the following requirements.
- (1) Drivers will unload students on streets only at established stop locations. If a driver has a concern about the safety of an established stop location, he/she shall immediately report the concern to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
  - (2) Drivers shall always instruct students who are assigned to any bus stop which has a "NO CROSSING ALLOWED" designation that they **MUST NOT** walk across that street. Drivers will instruct students using a "NO CROSSING ALLOWED" that it is **NOT SAFE** for them to cross the street because the driver cannot stop all traffic on it. Should a driver observe students crossing a street at a "NO CROSSING ALLOWED" bus stop, he/she shall immediately report it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
  - (3) Loose articles of clothing and book bags have been known to become snagged in the handrails of the service doorsteps of buses. This has resulted in injuries and even fatalities. Drivers must be sure they know where every one of their students are always when they are exiting the bus. Take special care to check around the service door and the stair well before moving away from the bus stop.
  - (4) Keep kids in sight! Any time a driver loses sight of a child when unloading the bus, the driver must wait until the child is accounted for. The bus must never be put in motion until all children have been accounted for.
- e. Procedures for LOADING and UNLOADING students at school sites. Schools and drivers must follow procedures when dropping off students at designated drop off zones at school sites.
- (1) Drivers will load and unload students at the school site only in the established bus loading zone. If a driver is concerned about the safety of an established location, he/she should immediately inform their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
  - (2) When unloading students at the school site, drivers should ensure there is visible supervision from school site personnel in the bus loading zone prior to unloading the students.
  - (3) Drivers should not arrive to the school site in the AM no more than 10 minutes prior to the bus scheduled arrival time to ensure there is school site staff in the loading zone, for students unloading the bus.
  - (4) Students who require parental supervision at the bus stop.**
    - (a) Special needs students with the following transportation codes require parental supervision at the bus stop: codes **2, 4, 5, 7, and 8**. A student who has one of these transportation codes **MUST NOT** be allowed to exit the bus unless a parent or guardian is at the stop to receive the student. Drivers shall release a student only to the child's parents or guardians unless the driver has been given written authorization by the school principal (or the principal's designee) to release the child to another individual. If there is a question about whether a person is authorized to take custody of a student at a bus stop, the driver shall contact their Dispatch Office.
    - (b) If a parent or guardian is **not** at a bus stop to receive student who has a transportation code of 2, 4, 5, 7, or 8:
      - The driver shall contact the Dispatch Office by two-way radio and advise them of the situation.
      - The driver shall then complete the remainder of the run – and then return to the stop.
      - If the parent/guardian is still not at the stop when the driver gets to it for the second time the driver shall contact the Dispatch Office and advise them of the situation. The Dispatch Office will then instruct the driver on where to take the student.

f. Instructions to students. School bus drivers will instruct students on the following safety practices:

- (1) Move well away from the bus after getting off it.
- (2) Do not get mail from a roadside mailbox until after the bus has pulled away.
- (3) Students who must cross the street must always do so in FRONT of the bus (never behind it!).

Although all school buses owned/operated by Miami-Dade County Public Schools are equipped with “super stopper” crossing guard arms, students must still be instructed in the following procedure in case the “super stopper” arm should ever fail to properly swing out into position: Students should always take at least ten (10) BIG steps from the front of the bus before stepping onto the roadway (students must be far enough in front of the bus for the driver to be able to clearly see their feet).

As previously stated, drivers must always instruct students who are assigned to a bus stop that has a “NO CROSSING ALLOWED” designation that they **MUST NOT** walk across that street.

- (4) Students who must cross the street are to WAIT at the traffic side of the bus until the school bus driver gives them the signal that it is safe to proceed to cross the rest of the road. (Students should always look *left*, look *right*, and then look *left* again to make sure all traffic has stopped before stepping away from the bus to cross the road.)
- (5) Students who drop an object should not try to stop to pick it up! Move immediately to a point of safety and then get the driver’s attention so the dropped object can be safely retrieved.
- (6) If the drivers blow the bus horn that means “**DANGER!!**” Students should immediately clear the street.

g. School bus loading zones. Drivers must be especially cautious at bus loading areas at schools. School locations are often especially congested with traffic and pedestrians. The scene is sometimes confused with kids getting in and out of private cars as well as buses.

- (1) Approach the loading area very cautiously and at a slow rate of speed. The speed limit in school bus loading areas is **five (5) miles per hour**.
- (2) Drive the bus in the correct direction so that the service door will open directly on to the sidewalk. Park the bus, if possible, at a designated location so students do not have to cross between other vehicles or walk across driving areas.
- (3) If you are the first driver to arrive at a bus loading area, go all the way to the far end. This will allow buses arriving after yours to have room to park. Each bus arriving in turn should pull up directly behind the previous one. Do not try to “save a space” for another bus.
- (4) Do not pass another bus in the loading area when students are being loaded or unloaded from it.
- (5) Flashing amber or red loading/unloading light will not be used at bus loading areas at schools.
- (6) Be considerate and courteous to other motorists, especially those who may not be familiar with the normal traffic patterns on school grounds. If there is a vehicle parked in the bus loading area pull in front or behind it, as the situation permits. Do not park alongside the vehicle and block all traffic in the loading area (unless specifically instructed to do so by the school principal or his/her designee).
- (7) School bus drivers must be on their buses when students board the bus. Students will not be permitted on buses if the driver is not present. Drivers must also stay with their bus when students are being unloaded, until the last student has departed the bus.
- (8) Once all students are off the bus, if the driver must leave the vehicle, he/she will:
  - Engage the emergency or parking brake.
  - Set gearshift to Neutral or Park
  - Remove the ignition key

### LOADING STUDENTS ON THE STREET

- Check mirrors and traffic.
- Slow down
- Turn master switch on
- Activate flashing amber loading/unloading lights at least 200 feet in advance of the stop location.
- Pull as far to the right as possible, staying on the travelled portion of the road.
- Stop at least 12 feet away from the waiting students.
- Activate red flashing loading/unloading lights and stop arms.
- Engage emergency or parking brake, then shift to Neutral or Park
- Raise hand toward students outside the bus (open palm) to indicate "STOP."
- Check all mirrors and look for moving traffic and hazards.
- After traffic has come to a complete stop and you have determined that it is safe to begin loading students, open the service door and give students the signal that they may begin to board.
- Load students in an orderly manner. Make sure all students are on the bus. Check and re-check mirrors to be sure.
- In case of danger, use horn to signal students to clear the road.
- When all students are on the bus, close the service door and check the inside rearview mirror to ensure they are all seated.
- Place transmission in Drive and release emergency or parking brake
- Deactivate the flashing red loading/unloading lights. Turn off master switch.
- Check all mirrors. Proceed when safe.

**FIGURE 8-1**

### UNLOADING STUDENTS ON THE STREET

- Follow the same procedure which is used for loading as you bring your bus to a stop:
  - Check mirrors and traffic.
  - Slow down
  - Turn master switch on
  - Activate flashing amber loading/unloading lights at least 200 feet in advance of the stop location.
  - Pull as far to the right as possible, staying on the traveled portion of the road.
  - Activate red flashing loading/unloading lights and stop arms.
  - Engage emergency or parking brake, then shift to Neutral or Park
- Check all mirrors and look for moving traffic and hazards.
- DO NOT open the service door until you have determined that it is safe for students to depart the bus and cross the road. Students must remain seated until the service door is opened.
- When safe, open the service door. Count the students as they exit the bus. Make sure students who must cross the street step to the FRONT of the bus and that all such students are far enough in front of the bus that you can clearly see their feet.
- Check again for moving traffic and hazards. When safe, give students the signal to cross the street. In case of danger, use horn to signal students to clear the road.
- Close service door. Count students again and make sure all are a safe distance away from the bus.
- Place transmission in Drive and release emergency or parking brake.
- Deactivate the flashing red loading/unloading lights and stop arms. Turn off master switch.
- Check all mirrors. Proceed when safe.

**FIGURE 8-2**

### 8.03 SEAT BELTS

All school buses owned and operated by Miami-Dade County Public Schools are equipped with passenger lap belts. In accordance with the provisions of Florida Statute 316.6145, school bus drivers and school bus aides will not be held liable for personal injury to a school bus passenger caused solely because the injured party was not wearing a lap belt. Nor will school bus drivers and school bus aides be held liable for personal injury to a school bus passenger caused solely by another passenger's use or nonuse of a lap belt in an inappropriate, dangerous, or unsafe manner.

- a. School bus drivers will inspect the passenger lap belts on their buses as part of their daily pre-trip inspections. Lap belts and buckles must be checked to ensure they are in good working order and are clean (free of gum, etc.). Defects in lap belts/buckles will be recorded on the driver's pre-trip inspection checklist and complete a *Driver's Request for Repair* form and turn it into their Dispatch Office.
- b. What happens if a lap belt is broken or otherwise not working properly? The bus does not have to be taken out of service, but no student may be allowed to sit in that seat position until the buckle/belt is fixed. A student who would normally be sitting in the seat position with the broken seat belt must be moved to another seat that does have a working seat belt. If there is a full student load and all students cannot be seated with working lap belts, then a substitute bus should be assigned to the driver until the problem is fixed.
- c. Instructions to students.
  - (1) Florida Statute 316.6145(2) requires that "Each passenger on a school bus shall wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt at all times while the bus is in motion."
  - (2) School bus drivers will always tell their passengers to "Fasten Your Seat Belts."

At the beginning of each school year, drivers will instruct their student passengers on the proper use of the seat belts on the school bus. This instruction will include:

- (a) Proper way to fasten and unfasten the buckle mechanism.
- (b) Proper positioning for the seat belt (low and snug around the hips)
- (c) Re-fasten the buckle on the seat belt when leaving the seat.

Drivers will continue to remind students to "Fasten Your Seat Belts," when picking up students at bus stops and schools. They will also remind students to re-fasten the buckle on the seat belt as students depart the bus.

- (3) Non-compliance with procedures by student passengers.

Any student who refuses to properly fasten their seat belt upon boarding a school bus will be given a verbal reminder by the driver. If the student repeatedly continues to refuse to comply with the driver's instructions, then the driver will complete a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.

Students are to re-fasten the buckles of their seat belts when they get ready to exit the bus. This should help to greatly reduce and hopefully eliminate incidents of students inappropriately or dangerously using seat belts. All incidents of seat belt misuse or abuse by students must be promptly reported by drivers on a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submitted to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.

## 8.04 ITEMS NOT PERMITTED ON A SCHOOL BUS

- a. Students are not permitted to bring items on board a school bus which could be disruptive or present a safety hazard. The following items shall not be brought on a school bus:
- (1) Glass containers and other items made of glass that could break if dropped.
  - (2) Live animals, which include but are not limited to birds, cats, dogs\*, frogs, insects, hamsters/guinea pigs, rabbits, etc.  
**\* Note: Registered service dogs will be allowed to accompany students on school buses, when the requirement for the service dog is included as part of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or "504" Plan.**
  - (3) Weapons or any dangerous object (includes firecrackers).
  - (4) Sharp objects or cutting instruments of any kind.
  - (5) Facsimiles of guns or knives.
  - (6) Alcohol.
  - (7) Cigarettes and tobacco products.
  - (8) Illegal/illicit drugs of any type.
- b. Large bulky items (or band instruments) which block the entrance ways, aisles, or seats, or which deprive a student of a seat shall not be brought on a school bus. If band instruments are brought on the bus, they cannot be placed on seats if it causes a student to have to stand. Listed below are some (but not all) of the musical instruments which meet the criteria to permit them to be carried on school buses by students:

Piccolo	Flute	Clarinet
Alto Clarinet	Oboe	English Horn
Trumpet (Coronet)	Flugel Horn	Trombone (tenor)
Alto Saxophone	Violin	Viola

- c. Batons and drumsticks will be permitted on school buses only in their proper carrying cases. Tennis rackets with an appropriate case are permitted. No balls, bats, roller skates, or skateboards are allowed.
- d. School bus drivers shall always make sure a clear and unobstructed path to emergency exits and emergency equipment is always maintained.
- e. In the event a student attempts to board a school bus with a prohibited item, the driver will immediately contact their Dispatch Office by two-way radio to report the incident and get instructions on how to proceed.

## 8.05 SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: RIGHT-OF-WAY

- a. School bus drivers must never attempt to exercise the right-of-way when by doing so they might create a chance for an accident/crash. If you have any doubts about the intentions of another driver, let him/her go first. Above all, never use the size of your bus to assert your right-of-way. Doing so will invite criticism of you and the Transportation Department.
- b. School bus drivers should always keep their bus in the right lane of the road, except when:
- When overtaking slow moving vehicles
  - Preparing to make a left turn on a multi-lane road.
  - The right lane, if the lane is for right turns only and you do not want to turn.
- c. School bus drivers must always keep in mind that other vehicles may not always follow the rules-of-the-road or do the predictable thing. For this reason, intersections, merge lanes, driveways and the like must always be approached with due caution. When approaching an intersection, where there are other vehicles which

could potentially pull out into the path of the bus, the driver should take his/her foot off the accelerator pedal and lightly rest the foot over the brake pedal (“cover” the brake). This will permit the driver to begin braking instantly should another vehicle pull out into the path of the bus.

- d. School bus drivers should not proceed into an intersection when the control signal is **yellow**. The length of the bus (35-40 feet) is such that you may not be able to completely clear the intersection before the light changes to red.
- e. School bus drivers who encounter an intersection where the traffic control signals are not working, or stop signs have been knocked down, shall treat it as a **4-way stop**. Also, report it to your Dispatch office.
- f. Emergency vehicles such as police cars, fire/rescue trucks, and ambulances always have the right-of-way when they are giving warnings by means of warning lights and/or sirens. Upon the approach of such vehicles, drivers must pull their bus over as far to the right as possible and stop until the emergency vehicle has passed. If it is not possible to pull over to the right, then you should stop the bus and allow the emergency vehicle to go around the bus.
  - (1) If you are in the process of **unloading** students when approached by an emergency vehicle leave your flashing red lights and stop arms running, but immediately close the door to the bus and direct students to wait on the bus until the emergency vehicle has passed the bus. If students have already departed the bus blow your horn and, if necessary, wave to any students to get their attention and let them know they must immediately clear the road.
  - (2) If you are in the process of **loading** students when approached by an emergency vehicle leave your flashing red lights and stop arms running, but immediately close the door to the bus and direct students to wait off the road until the emergency vehicle has passed the bus. Blow your horn and, if necessary, wave to any students who have already departed the bus to get their attention and let them know they must immediately clear the road.
- g. School bus drivers should never break into a funeral procession.
- h. Military convoys in close formation have the right-of-way.

## **8.06**    **SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: PASSING**

- a. School bus drivers should pass a slower moving vehicle only when they are certain they have adequate clear space on the road ahead to complete the procedure without endangering the bus or other vehicles on the road. Drivers must always keep in mind that the bus is longer and heavier than a passenger car, SUV, or small truck and that it will therefore take a significantly greater amount of time and space to complete a passing procedure. Drivers must also make sure they check traffic behind the bus for approaching/overtaking vehicles before starting to pass another vehicle.
- b. School bus drivers should never attempt to pass more than one vehicle at a time. If you try to pass a line of vehicles you may find yourself in a position where you cannot return to the right-hand lane should the need arise.
- c. When being passed by another vehicle reduce your speed, if necessary, to allow it to get by your bus safely. School bus drivers should always keep in mind that other motorists may not correctly judge the length of the bus and/or the speed at which it is traveling, and therefore may not allow sufficient time to safely complete the passing procedure.
- d. School bus drivers should never signal to an overtaking vehicle that it is safe to pass. This transfers the responsibility for safe passing from the overtaking vehicle to yourself. In the event of an accident/crash you could be ticketed!

## **8.07** SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: FOLLOWING DISTANCES

School bus drivers must never follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, having due regard for the speed of other vehicles, traffic density, and road conditions. Under normal driving conditions (daylight, clear weather, no road obstructions) school bus drivers shall observe the “**4 second rule.**” At night, during inclement weather, and when road conditions are less than optimal drivers shall **increase the following distance** as appropriate to the circumstances.

## **8.08** SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: DRIVING AT NIGHT

- a. School bus drivers must always keep in mind that their ability to see is greatly reduced when driving at night. Drivers must therefore operate with extra caution during hours of darkness, reducing speed and increasing following distances as needed.
- b. If driving at night with the headlights on high beam and another vehicle approaches, schoolbus drivers must switch the headlights to low beam to avoid blinding the operator of the oncoming vehicle. Headlights should be dimmed whenever an approaching vehicle comes within 500 feet of the bus, regardless of whether the other driver responds in kind.

## **8.09** SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: TURNS

- a. School bus drivers should always slow down and make sure they move their bus into the proper lane when they need to make a turn. **Think** about where you need to go and **plan** so you can get there without having to make abrupt, last-minute lane changes. If you are unable to position your bus in the proper lane to make a turn, **go straight**, and then make your turn at the next appropriate intersection.
- b. The appropriate turn signal must be activated at least **two hundred (200) feet** before the point at which you will start your turn.
- c. When turning left and there are two turning lanes, school bus drivers should use the outside turn lane.
- d. When making tight turns, school bus drivers must remember that the pivot point of the bus is at the rear wheels and adjust the turning point accordingly. There can be no excuse for running the rear wheels of the bus up over a curb. Drivers must also carefully check the position of other vehicles to make sure they have adequate clearance before starting a turn.

## **8.10** SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: BACKING

- a. Turn-around stops are not recommended and should be avoided whenever possible. Schoolbus drivers must never pick up or drop off students at a stop which requires them to back the bus unless it has been authorized by their assigned Field Operations Specialist or a Transportation Department administrator. In the event a new stop is placed on a bus route which would require backing of the bus drivers will immediately notify their assigned Field Operations Specialist so the situation can be reviewed. Drivers must never assume they have approval to back a bus; they must always verify that the situation has been reviewed and that approval has been given to do so.
- b. Always load students **before** starting a backing procedure. Never allow students to exit the bus until **after** you have completed the backing procedure. **Students must always be on board the bus while you are backing.**

- c. School bus drivers must make sure they have a clear view of the area behind their bus before they start a backing procedure. If necessary, get up out of your seat and walk to the rear of the bus to survey the area.
- d. If the assistance of another person is required for you to safely back the bus, make sure he/she is in a position where they have a clear view of the area and that you can see as well as hear their instructions clearly. Also, talk with the person who will be assisting you before you begin any backing action to make sure you both clearly understand any signals which will be used to communicate instructions. Remember: The ultimate responsibility to drive safely rests with the driver; the final responsibility for safely backing up rests with the **driver**, not the helper!

## **8.11 SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: STOPPING AND PARKING**

- a. School bus drivers must always maintain the appropriate following distance, having due regard for the speed of other vehicles, traffic density, and road conditions. Under normal driving conditions (daylight, clear weather, no road obstructions) school bus drivers shall observe the **“4 second rule.”** At night, during inclement weather, and when road conditions are less than optimal drivers shall **increase the following distance** as appropriate to the circumstances. There can be no excuse for a driver leaving insufficient distance to be able to safely stop the school bus. Whenever there is a possibility that a quick application of the brakes might be required (at intersections, for example) drivers should lightly rest their foot over the brake pedal (“cover” the brake).
- b. School bus drivers should not stop or park their bus on an open road or highway unless there is an emergency. If it does become necessary to stop and park, drivers shall pull off the pavement and over to the right as far as possible. If the road or highway does not have a shoulder, pull the bus as far to the right as possible, activate the 4-way flashers (hazard lights) and put out the three triangle reflectors carried on the bus. Place reflectors as required by Florida Statute 316.301(2)(b)1-3 and in accordance with the instructions given in the School Bus Driver Training Class.

## **8.12 SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: RAILROAD CROSSINGS**

**School bus drivers must carefully follow the requirements of the Florida Uniform Traffic Control Laws (Statute 316.159) and the Rules of the State Board of Education (Chapter 6A-3.0171) when approaching and crossing any set of railroad tracks.**

The main reasons for crashes between trains and motor vehicles, as identified by Federal safety officials are:

- There are fewer trains than there used to be, so drivers are less alert.
- Noise from radios and other sources (such as students talking) distracts drivers and drowns out the sound of train horns.
- Freight trains don’t always run on specific schedules, so drivers are not anticipating them.
- Trains travel at relatively high speeds. Buses accelerate slowly. It takes about ten (10) seconds for a typical bus to fully cross a typical set of train tracks.

All accidents at railroad crossings can be eliminated through properly executed procedures for crossing the tracks. The vehicles which are most likely to be destroyed by a train are those driven by people who have used the fatal crossing hundreds of times. They have used it so often, in fact, that they have blotted it right out of their mind. The round advance warning sign, the big “X” painted on the roadway, even the red flashing warning lights have become invisible to these drivers. Such disregard can be fatal. **There are no “second chances” at railroad crossings!**

- a. General procedures for crossing railroad tracks. The general procedures for crossing railroad tracks are outlined in **Figure 8-3** on page 81. Drivers must follow this procedure without fail whenever they must cross a set of railroad tracks.
- b. Crossing railroad tracks where the crossing is controlled by warning signals (red flashing lights/bells). School

bus drivers will stop, look, and listen at every crossing regardless of whether the crossing is controlled by warning signals. Drivers shall not proceed across railroad tracks when such warning devices have been activated, regardless of whether a train is visible, unless directed that it is safe to do by a railroad official or law enforcement officer.

c. Crossing railroad tracks where the crossing is controlled by crossing gates/barriers.

- The same procedures for crossing railroad tracks controlled by warning signals (paragraph b, above) also apply to crossings with gates/barriers. No driver shall drive his/her bus through, around, or under any gate or barrier at a railroad crossing while such gate/barrier is closed or being opened or closed.
- School bus drivers must never interpret a lack of movement as an indication that a crossing gate or barrier is either in or out of order, bus must always presume the crossing is dangerous. In a situation where a crossing gate or barrier is fully, or partially closed and other warning devices (red flashing lights and bells) have not activated the driver will not proceed to cross the tracks until he/she has conclusively determined that no train is approaching.

d. Multi-track railroad crossings.

(1) School bus drivers must first determine if the bus must be stopped for each set of tracks, or if it is permissible to cross all of them at once. If there is enough room for the bus, plus fifteen (15) feet in front of and behind the bus, you must stop for each set of tracks.

(2) If the bus must be stopped for more than one set of tracks the complete crossing procedure (see **Figure 8-3**, page 81) must be followed for each set of tracks.

(3) If you will be crossing more than one set of railroad tracks all at once:

- Make sure no train is approaching on any of the tracks.
- If a train is approaching, wait until it has cleared the crossing to the point that all tracks are completely visible (be certain another train has not been hidden from view by the first train).

e. No-stop conditions. School bus drivers are not required to stop before crossing abandoned railroad tracks. In order for a railroad crossing to be considered abandoned, all of the following conditions must apply:

- The tracks must have been covered or removed.
- All signs, signals and other warning devices have been removed.

f. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES. If a school bus stalls while crossing a set of railroad tracks, or if any portion of the vehicle is left on the crossing for any reason, and a train is approaching the driver will **IMMEDIATELY** take the following actions: Evacuate the bus and direct the passengers to move away from the bus **in the direction the train is approaching**, to avoid being hit by flying wreckage.

### GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR CROSSING RAILROAD TRACKS

1. Drivers should approach and cross railroad tracks from the **right** lane of traffic whenever possible. If a driver must cross railroad tracks in the left lane of traffic due to the way the bus route is set up, the driver will immediately contact their assigned Field Operations Specialist and request re-routing of the bus to avoid the need to cross railroad tracks from other than the right lane.
2. **Deactivate the Master Switch** for the student loading/unloading lights. Neither the amber nor the red flashing loading/unloading lights shall be used at railroad crossings.
3. **Activate the hazard lights (4-way flashers) at least 200 feet away from the railroad tracks.** (Note: Other vehicles may attempt to pass the bus when the hazard lights are activated, and the driver begins to slow down the school bus. Drivers must always be alert to this possibility and watch for vehicles abruptly pulling out to pass.)
4. Turn off all noise making devices.
5. Open the window next to the driver's seat completely.
6. Bring the bus to a complete stop **at least fifteen (15) feet but no more than fifty (50) feet from the nearest rail** of the railroad crossing.
7. When stopped, apply the emergency or parking brake.
8. Shift to Neutral.
9. Fully open the service door.
10. **Look** carefully in **both directions** and **listen** for approaching trains.
11. When it is clear to do so, shift to Drive, release the emergency or parking brake, and close the service door. (Never let the bus sit in Neutral without the emergency or parking brake being engaged!)
12. **Look** both ways and **listen again**.
13. If the tracks are still clear, GO. **Drivers will not shift gears or stop until the bus has completely cleared the railroad crossing. Always make sure there is sufficient space on the other side of the tracks to completely clear the crossing without any part of the bus being left on the crossing.** Any time the route is such that the railroad crossing is immediately preceding an intersection the driver must be certain he/she can proceed without the need to stop before beginning to cross the tracks.
14. Turn off hazard lights and close window next to the drivers' seat.

**FIGURE 8-3**

### 8.13 SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES: RESTRICTED CLEARANCES

- a. To accurately judge the clearances required for school buses, the following dimensions are provided (these measurements apply to regular/conventional buses and to transit type/"pusher" buses):

HEIGHT	11 feet
WIDTH	10 feet
LENGTH	40 feet

- b. Drivers must be certain before they start to cross railroad tracks that there is sufficient space on the road ahead for the entire bus to completely clear the tracks. If there is any doubt, the driver must wait until traffic ahead has cleared.
- c. The restricted width of some smaller bridges may not permit two large vehicles traveling in opposite directions to pass each other safely. If there is any doubt, the driver should wait and let the other vehicle cross over first.
- d. School bus drivers should always be on the lookout for overhanging or projecting obstructions when driving near curbs or narrow roads. Beware of low hanging tree limbs! Make sure you know the clearance of roof structures and confirm your bus will fit before driving under them. If you encounter an unsafe condition, complete a *Driver Report on Road Hazard* form, and give it to your assigned Field Operations Specialist.

### 8.14 DEFENSIVE DRIVING

A "defensive driver" is defined as a person ready to avoid the mistakes of other drivers. School bus drivers should always practice defensive driving. Drive as though you never have the "right-of-way." Exercise good judgment and keep your mind and your eyes on the business of safe driving.

- a. Drive ahead. You can see traffic far in front of the bus. This gives you the chance to spot dangerous situations and react to them. The farther ahead you are looking, the more time you have to react. Your eyes should be constantly scanning the traffic ahead. If an accident/crash occurs, you will have the time to take evasive action to bring your bus to a safe stop. Learn to spot dangerous situations. Remember that signals from other vehicles do not always indicate the exact intentions of the other driver. Be constantly alert for other motorists who are angry, driving under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs, half asleep, daydreaming, talking on their cell phone or texting, or ill. Many other motorists are on the road who are not mentally alert!
- b. Turn your head before you turn the wheel.
- c. Keep all your mirrors properly adjusted.
- d. Drivers can help minimize by moving in the seat. By leaning forward and backward while looking in the mirrors, drivers can get a variety of views of the outside of the bus. This will help to diminish the area not visible at first glance.
- e. Start stopping early. The less you use the brakes, the longer they will last and the better they will operate. When you apply the brakes make it a habit to apply them gently and reduce pressure as you complete your stop. When you develop the habit of stopping early you will avoid having to make panic stops.
- f. Change your driving habits when operating on wet pavement. Traction is poor on wet roads. It can easily require twice the distance to stop on wet roads than on dry roads. Double your normal following distance (normal distance – 4 second rule). Move to the right to avoid potential head-on collisions. Roads are most slippery just after rain starts to fall. The water combines with grease and oil on the pavement, which can make

for a surface as slippery as ice. Avoid high speeds when the road is covered with water because the vehicle can hydroplane, losing contact with the surface of the road.

## **8.15 USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES**

- a. Policy 8606 of the Miami-Dade County School Board states: "School bus drivers shall not use or operate any communication or data transmission device while operating a school bus." In accordance with this policy, the use of cell phones by school bus drivers while operating a school bus is strictly prohibited.
- b. In an **emergency**, school bus drivers will always contact their Dispatch Office by the two-way radio for assistance. Should a driver be unable to contact their Dispatch Office by the two-way radio (because it is at night or on an weekend when the Dispatch Office is closed, or because the driver is on a field trip which has taken them outside of the local area), drivers may use a cell phone provided:
  - (1) The bus has been brought to a complete stop in the safest location possible.
  - (2) **Cell phones may be used only for the following purposes in an emergency:**
    - To contact an emergency response operator, "911" public safety communications dispatcher, a hospital or emergency room, an ambulance or fire department rescue service, a fire department, or police department.
    - To notify Transportation Department administrators and/or Field Operations Specialists of an emergency.
    - To call for assistance in the event of a mechanical breakdown or other mechanical problem that impairs the safe operation of the vehicle.

## **8.16 WHEELCHAIRS AND SAFETY/MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**

- a. If a driver or aide encounters a problem with a wheelchair that would prevent a student from being transported the driver shall immediately contact the dispatch office by two-way radio to advise them of the problem. The same goes for problems with any other safety or medical equipment that would prevent the student from being transported on a bus. Once the driver returns to the transportation center, he/she shall immediately notify their assigned Field Operations Specialist of the situation.
- b. If a driver or aide encounters a problem with a wheelchair – but it is **not** something that would prevent the student from being transported – the driver shall transport the student and then make sure personnel at the student's school are told about the problem. The same thing applies to problems with any other safety or medical equipment. Once the driver returns to the transportation center, he/she shall immediately notify their assigned Field Operations Specialist of the situation.

## **8.17 COMPOUND TRAFFIC AND STORAGE OF BUSES**

- a. The speed limit within Transportation Department compounds is ten (10) miles-per-hour.
- b. Fueling of buses. The procedure detailed below will be followed when refueling school buses:
  - (1) Drivers are not permitted to refuel school buses during their scheduled route time. Emergency situations must be reviewed and approved by an administrator at the Transportation Center.

- (2) Set the emergency/parking brake, shift to Neutral or Park, and shut off the engine.
  - (3) All passengers must get off the bus and wait at least fifty (50) feet away while the bus is being fueled.
  - (4) The driver must stay with the bus while it is being fueled.
  - (5) The bus must never be backed away from the fuel pumps unless a supervisor instructs the driver to do so and there is someone available to direct the driver while he/she backs the bus.
  - (6) When driving a spare or substitute bus, drivers must make sure it is fully fueled and parked in the assigned space at the end of the trip.
  - (7)
- c. When returning from the morning or afternoon runs, or a field trip or any other trip, drivers must complete the **post-trip inspection**.
- (1) **Check for adequate fuel.** If there is any doubt that the amount of fuel is enough to complete the next trip, fill the tank. Your fuel tank should always be at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  full. There can be no excuse for allowing your bus to run out of fuel!
  - (2) **The driver must check carefully for sleeping students.** Check under seats after every trip for students left on the bus. This duty cannot be delegated to anyone else.
  - (3) Check for vandalism of seats, interior paneling, and windows that took place while you were out on the road. If you do find vandalism, complete a *Vandalism Report* form.
  - (4) Collect any materials or clothing students may have left behind on the bus. Have them ready to give back to the owners the next time you see them.
  - (5) Clean up any mess and pick up trash and refuse. Sweep the bus and place trash/refuse into the proper receptacle (DO NOT sweep trash/refuse out the bus and on to the ground!).
  - (6) Make sure the windows, especially those in the front and back of the vehicle as well as those on both sides of the driver's seat are clear and clean them as needed.
  - (7) Make note of any supplies you need (for example, items for the First Aid kit or report/inspection forms). Remember to get what you need before departing on the next trip.
  - (8) Secure the vehicle.
    - Make sure the emergency or parking brake is engaged and the gear shift is set to Neutral or Park.
    - Make sure all lights have been turned off.
    - Remove the ignition key.
    - Close all windows, vents, and doors.
- d. Complete any necessary forms or reports and deliver them to your Dispatch Office or to your assigned Field Operations Specialist, as required.

## 8.18 ENERGY CONSERVATION

The cost of fuel for our school buses is a major part of the budget of the Department of Transportation. The amount of money available to operate our transportation system is not unlimited. It's therefore extremely important that school bus drivers make a reasonable effort to get the most miles-per-gallon out of their buses. They do this by the way they drive the bus. Saving fuel saves money, and that can save jobs!

- a. **Reduce the time you are stopped with the engine idling.** If you are going to be stopped for more than a few minutes you should not leave the engine running. This especially includes stops at schools while waiting to load students or after students have been unloaded and stops made at a transportation center while waiting in line to fuel or to go into the office. Remember: when you are stopped with the engine idling you are getting **zero** (0) miles-per-gallon!
- b. **Air conditioning for school buses. Buses must not be idled for extended periods of time simply to maintain air conditioning function.** This not only wastes fuel, but bus exhaust fumes can also be harmful to students and staff at schools.
  - (1) The specifications for all school buses require that the air conditioning system must be able to completely cool down the interior of a "heat soaked" in no more than twenty (20) minutes. (Note: "heat soaked" is defined as the interior of the bus having a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or greater.) This means the air conditioning system will completely cool the interior of even the hottest school bus in no more than twenty (20) minutes. If the bus is not completely "heat soaked" it will take even less time to cool the interior of the bus. Therefore, no school bus driver should ever have a need to run an air-conditioned bus at idle for more than twenty (20) minutes, maximum, under any circumstances.
  - (2) If your bus is not completely "heat soaked" (again, meaning that the interior is at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit) do not run it at idle for more time than is strictly necessary.
- c. **Maintain correct tire pressure.** Low air pressure in tires causes higher rolling resistance and leads to increased fuel consumption. If a tire appears to be low, or if the bus keeps pulling to the left or to the right, have the tires checked.
- d. **Stop and start smoothly and gradually.** Plan. Maintain the correct following distance. Do not accelerate to an unnecessary speed when you can see ahead that soon you are going to have to stop again.
- e. **Maintain smooth, steady driving at constant speeds whenever possible.** It takes much less fuel to maintain a given speed than it does to accelerate.

## SECTION 9

### USE OF 2-WAY RADIOS

#### **9.01** GENERAL PROCEDURES

- a. All radio transmissions must be always made in a professional and business-like manner.
- b. No personal messages will be transmitted and no personal conversations between buses will be allowed, except in case of emergency.
- c. All radio transmissions must be made in a normal, clear speaking voice without shouting or whispering, using good diction and proper pronunciation.
- d. Absolutely no citizen band type slang or any other code systems will be used at any time. All drivers must abide by these procedures and use only the "PLAIN LANGUAGE SYSTEM" described herein.
- e. School bus drivers must make every effort to safeguard radio equipment from misuse or tampering by students or unauthorized persons.

#### **9.02** CALL SIGNS

- a. On the two-way radio, buses will be called by BUS ROUTE NUMBER. Avoid the use of the names of drivers, aides, or other personnel on the air as the system is not a "secure" system and can be monitored by most commercially available scanners. When calling a bus, use the bus route number only.
- b. The Transportation Dispatch Office is called "DISPATCH" on the two-way radio.
- c. When answering a call from a dispatcher on the two-way radio, drivers must always answer with their BUS ROUTE NUMBER, not with "go ahead" or a similar phrase.
- d. The base station will identify itself with time and call signs approximately every half-hour during the time the frequency is in use.

**Dispatch...This is route XXXX**

**I have a 10-18 (followed  
with one of the letters:**

**D** Drugs

**E** Explosive device

**G** Guns

**K** Knife

### 9.03 PLAIN LANGUAGE SYSTEM

To ensure all radio transmissions are clearly understood and all messages are transmitted uniformly, the following "PLAIN LANGUAGE SYSTEM" shall be used when transmitting messages over the two-way radio:

- a. To answer a question with a YES: say "affirmative."
- b. To answer a question with a NO: say "negative."
- c. To acknowledge a transmission: "check"
- d. Student injury or illness requiring emergency medical assistance is referred to as: "medical emergency" or "medical assistance requested."
- e. Any type of accident or collision only as: "traffic accident"
- f. Specify details of a traffic accident by: "this unit involved" or "this unit not involved."
- g. If a message is not clear and needs to be repeated, say: "unable to receive your transmission; please repeat" and specify the problem (background noise, heavy static, transmission breaking up, etc.).
- h. Where you are: "location."
- i. Information for you to write down: "Can you copy?"
- j. Estimated time of arrival: "ETA"
- k. Other common phrases:
  - "Call the office by phone."
  - "Standby"
  - "Disregard"
  - "In contact with \_\_\_\_\_"
  - "Advise correct time."
  - "Correction"

### 9.04 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC) RULES

All radio operators (including school bus drivers) are required to abide by the rules of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Rules pertaining to the use of mobile two-way radios are summarized below:

- a. Profane language. The use of profane or obscene language on the air is strictly prohibited (Section 47 USC §303(m)(1)D, Communications Act 1934 as amended).
- b. Unnecessary chatter. Excessively lengthy conversation or chatter not related to business is prohibited. Keep your messages brief and to the point. (FCC 90.403(3))
- c. Unlicensed messages. Transmitting messages for unlicensed parties (except in emergencies) is prohibited. Transmitting any message of a commercial or advertising nature is strictly prohibited. (FCC 90.403(d))
- d. Emergency messages. If the driver receives any emergency or public service message broadcast on the radio or otherwise learns the frequency is being used to transmit emergency messages, **the driver is required to stay off the air**. In these cases, the driver may use the radio only to assist with the emergency activities (FCC 90.403(d)).
- e. Illegal messages. In addition to the unlicensed messages described above, drivers shall not transmit music over the radio or otherwise use the radio for any non-business message (FCC 90.415, 90.405(b)).
- f. Penalties for violations of the rules and regulations of the FCC. Any person who willfully and knowingly violates any rule, regulation, restriction, or condition made or imposed by the Commission under the Act, or any rule, regulation, restriction, or condition made or imposed by an international radio or wire communications treaty or convention or party shall, in addition to any other penalties provided by law, be punished upon conviction thereof **by a fine of not more than \$500 for each and every day during which such offense occurs**. (Section 47 USC, §502 Communications Act 1934 as amended). Additionally, M-DCPS employees who willfully and knowingly violate these rules, regulations, restrictions, and conditions may be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension without pay and/or dismissal from their position.

## SECTION 10

### STUDENT PASSENGER MANAGEMENT

Having a bus load of unruly children/students probably causes school bus drivers and school bus aides more grief than any other situation they encounter. Most student passengers are well behaved! However, on any given day, situations may come up which will challenge the skills and patience of drivers and aides. How drivers and aides respond to these situations is of critical importance.

The potential for unruly student behavior is dependent in many ways upon the kind of relationship the driver and aide establish with the students he or she is transporting, and the kind of professionalism displayed by the driver and aide. Establishing this relationship is done through communications – both verbal and non-verbal; in what drivers and aides say and how they say it, in their display of a genuine respect for and understanding of students, and in all their actions as the authority figures on the school bus.

School bus drivers and school bus aides should always keep in mind that they are working for an educational institution whose job is training the minds of students. The school bus is an extension of the classroom. As such, drivers and aides are just as much teachers as those who work on our classrooms. Drivers and aides cannot expect their student passengers to be finished products with adult skills and attitudes.

**If a child does not know how to read, we teach.**

**If a child does not know how to swim, we teach.**

**If a child does not know how to do math, we teach.**

**If a child does not know how to drive, we teach.**

**But, if a child does not know how to behave, we often punish, rather than teach!**

- Tom Horner

#### **10.01 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOR AND CHILD PSYCHOLOGY**

- a. Understanding some basic principles of behavior and child psychology will help school bus drivers and school bus aides to avoid trouble before it begins. Drivers and aides should keep the following basic principles in mind when working with students.
  - All people are special. Everyone has their own unique talents, abilities, and experiences – and can make positive contributions based upon them. Most students respond well to **positive** reinforcement.
  - All behavior is caused. Whether good or bad, behavior is **learned** from a person's unique experience. When a problem occurs with a student, drivers and aides should look for the cause of the behavior and not just react to it. Do not take it personally – it is not about you.
  - Students have rights. These rights should be respected. Students experience the same feelings of sorrow, joy, pain, anger, and frustration as we all do. It is important that behavior is governed by these feelings and show the understanding that circumstances warrant.
  - Students can reason. Some behavior must be limited or prohibited on a school bus. If students are given valid explanations of why certain things cannot be permitted, they will be more likely to comply. If the driver or aide simply tells them, "Don't do it because I said not to," then students will be more likely to test the limits. Let students know the rules are for their safety and for everyone's safety – do not assume students should just understand the reasons. Sometimes, they need to hear it from an adult.
  - Problems can be opportunities. If a confrontation is handled properly, it will give the driver and the aide an opportunity to have a positive relationship with all the students on the bus. This will lead to mutual

respect. Always remember the impact peer pressure can have on how a student reacts. Peers can be the number one influence in a child's life (particularly during the middle school years). If you are experiencing a problem, try to talk with the student in the presence of another adult but **without** the presence of other students who can negatively influence the outcome of the discussion or cause embarrassment.

- The world sometimes seems unfair. Not everyone is born with the same social, economic, or physical endowments. To offset this, everyone does have unique talents, abilities, and experiences. In dealing with students, drivers and aides should emphasize the positive and not the negative. Drivers and aides should try to help students to understand what they have going for them, not against them.
  - Recognition is important. All people expect fair and courteous treatment without having to demand it. We all want to be treated with respect. The same respect that drivers and aides expect to receive from the students entrusted to their care is what we should also give to our students. Let your students know when they have a good bus ride (give praise for positive behavior). Display the same behaviors to your students that you expect them to give to you. Be a good role model!
- b. To develop a better understanding of children's problems, moods, and individual differences school bus drivers and school bus aides should keep in mind:
- The average student wants to be older and free of adult control.
  - The average student likes to be treated as an equal by an adult (especially in front of his/her peers)
  - Most students want adults to recognize their good traits and abilities.
  - Young people, like everyone else, have desires and fears which affect their behavior and their responses to situations.
  - Peer pressure can cause a negative reaction. If you have a concern or are experiencing a problem talk with the student one-on-one, in the presence of another adult, but without the presence of other students who can negatively influence the outcome of the discussion.

## **10.02 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS**

Communicating with students effectively is a very important part of the school bus driver's and school bus aide's job. It can also be a very difficult part of the job. One of the keys to communicating effectively is to try to understand more about the person you are interacting with. The more you know about your students' background, attitudes, and special needs the better chance you will have of getting your message across effectively. To become an effective communicator, you must put yourself, "in the other person's shoes," as the old saying goes.

- a. Get to know your students.
- This is something that will take a little extra effort and time. However, in the long run the effort will be paid back in many ways. By getting to know your students you will understand them better. This understanding will allow you to communicate more effectively with them. When you communicate your needs in an effective manner you will have fewer problems getting your students to do what you want. Your students will also recognize and appreciate your efforts and will be more likely to respond to you in a positive manner.
  - There are many things school bus drivers and school bus aides can do to get to know their students better. Start by learning the name of every student who rides your bus – including any nicknames as well as the full proper name of each student. Ask the student what name they prefer to be called by. When appropriate, talk to students and ask them how their school day went. Let your students know you are interested and are willing to listen to what they have to say.
  - In addition to talking with your students, teachers and other staff at the school can be a good resource for drivers and aides. They can give you extra insight into a student's background, special needs, and

unique requirements. Furthermore, when you make the effort to let teachers and other school staff know you are interested in your students you will be more likely to get support from those teachers and staff members when it is needed.

b. It's not only what you say, but also how you say it!

- Body language (the expression on our face, our posture, etc.) and the tone of our voice can send as strong a message as the actual words we use when we talk to somebody. With children, the way we speak is even more important. Children are very sensitive to body language and tone of voice. In some cases, children may focus more on those things and react more strongly to them than you might expect!
- Try to be aware not only of **what** you are saying, but **how** you are saying it. The way you speak to a student can have as much impact, if not more, than the actual words being used. Using appropriate body language and tone of voice will greatly increase the effectiveness of the message you are trying to get across and will also increase the likelihood of getting a positive response from your students. It is also to your benefit to be observant of the body language of students for advance warning of potential problems. If you can diffuse a situation that has the potential for disruptive behavior early on, you will not only be saving yourself a lot of grief but you will be helping your students, too.
  - ❖ A helping person. Students need adults they can rely on and look for adults to set limits in a helpful and caring manner. School bus drivers and school bus aides should try to show they are willing to be helpful to their students in a warm, friendly, and always professional manner.
  - ❖ Smiling and friendly. No one likes a grump, and no one likes to be snubbed. A smile and a pleasant "Hello" to each student as they enter the bus is contagious and helps get the trip off to a good start. Remember – the school day starts with you – make it a positive start! We suggest that you also wish your students a good day at school as they leave your bus, and a good evening when they leave your bus to go home.

### 10.03 MAINTAINING STUDENT DISCIPLINE

School bus drivers and school bus aides should get to know their student passengers well enough to be able to recognize when a child is out-of-sorts, not feeling well, depressed, or upset/angry about something. Try to be on the alert for clues which might signal problem behavior. For example, during any major test time (FCAT, mid-term and final exams, etc.) behavioral issues may increase due to student anxiety. By identifying these situations early, you can act to relieve the problem before it erupts into a misconduct situation.

- a. School bus drivers and school bus aides must establish clearly understandable rules for acceptable behavior and work to create an environment which will encourage students to comply with the rules. Drivers and aides should set the tone right from the beginning of the school year for what will be acceptable conduct. It is important for drivers and aides to not only let their students know they oversee the bus, but to also clearly explain the rules to students in a positive and firm manner so that all students can understand the rules.
- b. Basic rules for student conduct are posted on every bus. You should review these rules with your students as often as necessary. Children need to know and understand the boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Generally, they will push to the established limit, but they need to know where the limit is. If students really understand the limits, they will more readily accept the results of exceeding those limits.
  - (1) When reviewing the rules for conduct with students, state them in a **positive** manner. Tell children, "I want you to **do** this ..." or, "These are the rules on the bus..." rather than telling them, "I **do not** want to catch any of you doing this ..."
  - (2) Make sure the rules you establish are **easy to understand** and **realistic**. Relate them to the rules that are posted in the front of the bus. Children cannot be expected to follow rules which they do not understand.

It is very important to make sure rules are realistic. For example, it is not realistic to expect children to remain silent for more than a short period of time. However, the driver and aide can establish a point at which the level of noise from talking becomes unacceptable.

- (3) Establish a positive environment. A friendly, non-threatening atmosphere will encourage good behavior.
- Pay attention to how you talk to students as well as what you say. Are you projecting a positive attitude?
  - Offer help, if appropriate, but wait for an okay and do not be offended if the student declines your offer of assistance.
  - Show interest in projects and papers the students are taking home. Talk to them about the school day. Listen to what they have to say.
  - Reward good behavior with attention and praise. Use students who are behaving in the manner you expect as models.
  - BE CONSISTENT. DO NOT SHOW FAVORITISM!
  - Try to maintain a sense of humor. Try not to take things to heart. You are the adult. Your students need you to always remain in control. Maintain your professionalism – remain cool, calm, and collected!

**TWENTY-FIVE (25) WAYS TO MAINTAIN STUDENT DISCIPLINE  
(Reprinted from School Bus Fleet Magazine)**

- (1) Never give an order you do not mean to enforce.
- (2) Give one direction or instruction to stimulate action, not to check it. Say "Do this," rather than "Don't do that."
- (3) Give a child time to react.
- (4) Have a reason for what you ask a child to do, and when possible, take time to give the reason.
- (5) Be honest in what you say and do. A child's faith in you can be a great help.
- (6) Be fair. It is not punishment, but perceived injustice that can make a child rebel against you.
- (7) Be friendly and show an interest in what your students are doing.
- (8) Commend good qualities and actions.
- (9) Try to be constructive, not repressive, in all dealings with children.
- (10) Remember that a sense of humor is extremely valuable.
- (11) Never strike a child.
- (12) Do not judge misconduct on how it annoys you.
- (13) Do not take your personal feelings out on the children.
- (14) Always maintain poise. Do not lose your temper.
- (15) Remember, the tongue is the only keen-edged tool that grows sharper with constant use. Do not nag, bluff, or be officious. Remember to watch not only what you say but how you say it.
- (16) Look for good qualities – all children have them.
- (17) Do not pick on every little thing a child does. Sometimes it is wiser to overlook some of the smaller things.
- (18) Bear in mind that misbehavior is seldom willful. There is usually a cause – and it may sometimes be you!
- (19) Listen for suggestions and complaints from children. Be aware of their body language, as well as what they say.
- (20) Follow-up on all cases which have been disciplined. Be certain you still have the respect and confidence of the child.
- (21) Be sincere in your work.
- (22) Set a good example yourself. Model the behavior you want from your students.
- (23) Intelligence in handling youth consists of thinking faster than they do. If they can out-think you, you are not using your maturity and the advantage of your larger education. You should see possibilities before they become results. This is one of the secrets of leadership.
- (24) Defiance to established procedure comes from failure to keep the situation in hand. If there is a danger of a direct break, the child should not be forced. It is far wiser to give some simple directions that will be mechanically obeyed and pick up the reins of control in a quiet way.
- (25) Never hold a child up to public ridicule. It is the surest way of creating a discipline problem.

## 10.04 RULES FOR STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

### a. Student conduct while at bus stops.

- (1) **Parents are responsible for their child(ren)'s behavior at the bus stop prior to the arrival of the bus in the morning, and after the departure of the bus at the end of the school day.** However, school bus drivers and school bus aides still have an obligation to report misconduct they observe at a bus stop to the school principal (or the principal's designee) for follow-up action. Student behaviors that are not tolerated at school are also unacceptable at a school bus stop.
  - Parents and guardians shall ensure that students ride only on their assigned school buses and get off only at the assigned bus stop.
  - While waiting at a designated school bus stop, parents and guardians shall ensure that their students observe social distancing (at least 6 feet apart from others) and that their students are wearing a mask.
  - Parents and guardians shall ensure that their students are aware of and follow the district's adopted code of student conduct while students are at bus stops and provide the necessary supervision when the bus is not present.
  - Parents and guardians are responsible to make sure their students are waiting at the assigned bus stop in accordance with the scheduled pick-up time. Drivers will not wait for tardy students.
- (2) Students must stand off the roadway while awaiting the bus.
- (3) Students must cross the road **only in front of the bus** when traffic has been completely stopped by means of the flashing red lights and stop arms on the bus. Students must **NEVER** cross the road behind the bus.

### b. Rules for students while on the bus.

Students riding on school buses are required to observe the Miami-Dade County School Board *Code of Student Conduct* policy, school bus safety rules, and the following policies of the Transportation Department.

- (1) Students may ride only in their assigned bus and get off only at their assigned bus stop.
- (2) Students must stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- (3) Students must cross the road **only in front of the bus** and only when all traffic has been completely stopped. Students must NEVER cross the road behind the bus.
- (4) Seating charts for students assigned to school buses (in K-8) will be produced using the *Bus Planner* school bus routing system. School bus drivers and aides shall inform students of their seat assignment using these seating charts.
- (5) Students must enter and leave the bus at schools and at student stops in an orderly fashion. This requires students to always proceed:
  - Without haste and without loitering
  - Without crowding, pushing, or shoving
- (6) Students, upon boarding the bus, must go directly to their assigned seat and sit down as quickly as possible.

Students shall not change or trade seats. Students must remain seated in their assigned seat for the entire duration of the trip.

- (7) School buses operated by Miami-Dade County Public Schools are equipped with lapbelts. While school bus drivers can not compel a student to use the lap belt, all students should fasten their lap belts and keep them fastened for the entire trip to and from school. Students who do not comply with this safety rule shall be referred to the school principal.
- (8) Students must pay attention to the school bus driver (and school bus aide, if assigned) and follow their instructions. The driver and aide are responsible for the safety of the students entrusted to their care.
- (9) Students must remain quiet enough so as not to distract the driver's attention from the road. Students must, always:
  - Refrain from shouting, yelling, and other boisterous activities.
  - Refrain from unnecessary conversation with the driver
  - Refrain from any activity that worries or distracts the driver, and which may put the student's own safety and the safety of others at risk.
- (10) When crossing railroad tracks – students must remain **quiet**.
- (11) Students may play music devices when riding on buses only when wearing ear buds or headphones.
- (12) Students may not eat, drink, or smoke when on the school bus.
- (13) Students must NEVER extend hands, arms, heads, or any other parts of the body out of the windows of the bus.
- (14) No littering. Students must not throw or scatter wastepaper, wrappers, bottles, or other items on the bus floor or out the windows of the bus.
- (15) Students must not purposely mark, deface, damage, or destroy any part of the bus, the equipment on it, or the area surrounding the bus stop location.
- (16) Students may not serve as bus monitors.

## **10.05 GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING OF STUDENT MISCONDUCT**

School bus drivers (and school bus aides) are required by Florida Statute and Rules of the State Board of Education to maintain good order and good behavior by students on school buses.

- a. School bus drivers and school bus aides will make every reasonable effort to deal with infractions of the rules of student conduct. If a driver or aide overlooks the misbehavior of the students in his/her care, there can be serious consequences. They risk losing the respect of the well-behaved students and risk losing control of all the students. Students may begin to believe the driver and/or aide do not care what they do, and that they can "get away with anything." At the same time, drivers and aides must be careful to strike a happy medium by not being too lenient or too harsh. Both extremes make it far more difficult to establish the kind of environment which encourages proper behavior of students. Be firm, fair, consistent, and congenial.
- b. In case of minor infractions, the driver should warn the student(s) involved without stopping the bus, if possible.
- c. In the event of an altercation or incident occurs on the bus, as soon as it is safe to do so, the school bus driver

will stop the bus. If the behavior problem is a serious one. Drivers will immediately contact their Dispatch Office by two-way radio and provide them with details of the situation. Dispatch will immediately assist the bus driver (and aide) as circumstances warrant, which may include sending a Field Operations Specialist to the scene, contacting School police (call 911 & 305-995-COPS), and/or sending other buses to assist. In the event a weapon or object that could be used as a weapon is involved, drivers and aides need to act to preserve the safety of the other students on board. While awaiting assistance use verbal commands to control the situation. If there is a physical confrontation between two or more students, drivers and aides shall take all reasonable measures necessary to de-escalate separate the students involved in the confrontation the situation to preserve safety and prevent injury. \*

\*If the incident happens when the Dispatch Office is closed, then the driver should contact police (call 911 & 305-995-COPS) and call for emergency assistance, as circumstances warrant.

- d. Do not warn or threaten students with a written referral to the school for misbehavior – it may only escalate the situation. If you have given students clear rules and expectations for behavior, there should be no question as to the outcome when a student misbehaves. Do not threaten – follow through. Write your referrals if your students do not listen.
- e. Except in situations of an extremely unusual or serious nature, drivers will not park buses on the side of the road for an extended period. Such action should be limited to no more than five (5) minutes duration. Neither will drivers return a group of students to a school in the afternoon unless the driver has contacted their Dispatch Office and received permission to do so. Students should be returned to school only as a last resort. Generally, the driver will still be required to take the students home even after returning them to the school, so it is usually the better policy to let your students know that their misbehavior is not acceptable and will be reported to the school principal (or the principal’s designee).
- f. At school bus stops, students are expected to load the bus promptly and in an orderly manner without pushing or shoving. When students intentionally lag to cause undue delay to the bus schedule or to create a nuisance, drivers will follow these steps:
  - First and second occurrence – wait for the student and tell him/her that this behavior is not acceptable.
  - Third occurrence – wait for the student, tell him/her that this behavior is not acceptable and will be reported to the school principal (or principal’s designee). Contact your Dispatch Office via two-way radio to have the incident recorded as a “problem stop.” Then, fill out a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to your assigned Field Operations Specialist. Tell the student that he/she will be left behind if another case of tardiness occurs.
  - Fourth and subsequent occurrences – Do not wait for the tardy student. Contact your Dispatch Office via two-way radio to have the incident recorded as a “problem stop.” Then, fill out a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981) and submit it to your assigned Field Operations Specialist.
  - NOTE: Drivers **WILL NOT** leave any student who is visibly trying to get to the bus, even when that student is tardy, unless waiting for the student would expose him/her to hazards from other traffic.

## **10.06 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT - DRIVER PROCEDURES**

- a. School bus drivers and school bus aides will make every reasonable effort to deal with minor infractions of the rules for student conduct before the driver turns in a misconduct referral to the school principal or his/her designee. Drivers and aides must recognize that referring all cases of minor infractions in behavior to the school can deteriorate school/driver relations and cause the school administration to eventually discredit reports of student misconduct. Choose your “battles” wisely, or you may lose the “war!”

- b. In cases of **repeated** minor misconduct incidents, or when a serious misconduct incident occurs on a school bus, the offending pupil will be reported to the school principal or his/her designee. School bus drivers will complete a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2891) and give it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist. When completing a *Student Case Management Referral* form:
- Be clear and specific in what you write.
  - Include only the specific behaviors that violate the bus safety rules and/or the rules for student conduct.
  - DO NOT write down your opinions or judgments about students and their behavior.
- c. When students have caused damage to the bus seats or any other part of the bus, school bus drivers shall also complete a *School Bus Vandalism Report* form in addition to the *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2891) and submit it to their assigned Field Operations Specialist.
- d. School bus drivers will not physically discipline nor suspend the transportation of any student. Nor will a driver allow a student to depart the bus except at the student's assigned bus stop or at the student's school under proper supervision. *Note: Transportation is responsible to provide bus service for students until such time as the parents of a student have been properly notified that their child's bus riding privileges have been suspended.*
- e. The school principal (or the principal's designee) will determine appropriate disciplinary measures to address the student's misconduct based on the driver's report and any other input deemed necessary. Disciplinary measures will be enacted in accordance with the requirements of the Miami-Dade County School Board *Code of Student Conduct* policy (see Section 4.04 of this Handbook for specifics).
- f. In the event a school bus driver or school bus aide does not feel the school principal (or the principal's designee) is adequately supporting them in matters pertaining to student misconduct, the driver or aide will seek assistance from their assigned Field Operations Specialist. If the matter cannot be resolved by the Field Operations Specialist, it will be referred to the administrators at the transportation center.

## 10.07 SPECIAL NEEDS/EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION (ESE) STUDENTS

- a. As a school bus driver and school bus aide, you may be assigned to a route which transports students who require special transportation. Many of these students will be enrolled in the District's Exceptional Education (ESE) programs. Other students may be regular education students who have a physical disability that requires special transportation services. In either case, Federal Law, specifically the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, requires that Special Needs students be transported along with regular education students whenever possible. Therefore, all school bus drivers and school bus aides must be prepared to transport and work with Special Needs students.
- b. The disabilities listed on the next page are recognized in the State of Florida. Students who have one or more of these disabilities may be entitled to special transportation services.

<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Autistic</li> <li>•Speech/Language Impaired</li> </ul> <p><b>Processing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Specific Learning Disabilities</li> <li>•Developmentally Delayed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sensory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Deaf/Hearing Impaired</li> <li>•Visually Impaired</li> <li>•Dual Sensory Impaired</li> </ul>	<p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Physically Impaired</li> <li>•Other Health Impairments</li> <li>•Orthopedically Impaired</li> </ul>	<p><b>Behavior</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Emotionally Handicapped (EH)</li> <li>•Severely Emotionally Disturbed (SED)</li> </ul> <p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH)</li> <li>•Trainable Mentally Handicapped (TMH)</li> <li>•Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH)</li> <li>•Traumatic Brain Injured (TBI)</li> </ul>
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c. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

(1) Challenges. Students with ASD may exhibit:

- Difficulty in using and understanding language.
- Poorly developed social skills
- Heightened or depressed sensitivity to sound, sight, taste, touch, or smell
- Repetitive behaviors may stimulate senses.
- Difficulty with changes to surroundings/routine
- Uneven skill development; superior strengths in some areas with significant delays in others
- May display aggression, self-injury, or withdrawal.

Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- ✓ Give clear, simple directions; use verbal and visual cues.
- ✓ Try to maintain structure and routine.
- ✓ Seat student next to a positive role model
- ✓ Encourage and praise positive behavior.
- ✓ Because characteristics vary, talk with the teacher and parent to understand the student's strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ Remember that the student may be hypersensitive to touch, smell, noise level, etc.
- ✓ Close supervision is necessary for these students because they often do not recognize danger in their environment.

d. Speech and Language Impaired.

(1) Challenges. Students with speech and/or language impairments may exhibit:

- Difficulty with either understanding language or expressing themselves.
- Lack of social skills; may not understand facial expressions, idiomatic expressions (slang), or sarcasm.
- Problems with speech articulation (problems with pronunciation of sounds and words) and stuttering
- Students with a severe language impairment may also have learning impairments.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- ✓ Keep the bus rules and instructions simple.
- ✓ Recognize that it is difficult for language impaired students to handle a series of instructions
- ✓ Allow the student time to process your instructions before responding.

e. Hearing Impaired and Deaf.

(1) Challenges. These students will have varying levels of hearing loss.

- Deaf students may communicate through sign language.
- Hearing impaired students may use speech, sign language, or both.
- Students receive information by listening, lip reading, gestures, and/or facial expressions

- May have difficulty learning vocabulary, grammar, and idiomatic expressions.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Make sure the student sees your face when speaking.
- Don't raise your voice when speaking; you may have to use different words to convey the message.
- Knowing a few basic "signs" is very helpful.
- Written notes are helpful with older students.
- The student's speech should become more understandable with time.

f. Visually Impaired.

(1) Challenges. These students will have varying levels of sight.

- May rely on visual, auditory, and/or tactile senses for learning.
- May have underdeveloped social skills.
- May not understand non-verbal cues.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Use your voice clearly to guide the student.
- The student may need to sit near the service door.
- If the student is sensitive to light, avoid seating next to a window.
- Allow the student to be as independent as possible.
- Notify the student of any changes to the bus stop area or the bus, including a substitute bus that may have different height of steps to climb.
- **NEVER** leave the student alone.

g. Dual Sensory Impaired.

(1) Challenges. These students will have varying levels of both visual and hearing loss and may not necessarily be completely blind or deaf.

- Combination of sensory loss creates serious impairment of the student's ability to acquire information, communicate, and function within the environment.
- Communication and mobility are often affected.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- These students are generally compliant; misbehavior may come from frustration and the inability to communicate their wants and needs.
- Routine and consistency in their daily lives are very beneficial.
- Assign a seat for the student.
- Seek advice from teachers and parents on the best way to communicate with the student.
- Check with the teacher regarding unusual behaviors and whether to allow them to continue or to intervene.
- These students must always be closely supervised because they are at increased risk due to their impairments.

h. Mental Handicaps.

(1) Challenges. These students will have varying functional levels.

- Short attention span.
- Poor ability to generalize.
- May have poor communication skills – speech, understanding and expressing language.
- Usually have poor self-care skills
- May have inappropriate social skills (overly friendly or aggressive)
- May have physical impairments.
- May have uncontrolled motor movements (striking out of arms and legs)

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- ✓ Interact with a sincere, caring approach.
- ✓ Keep directions simple and clear; repeat often.
- ✓ Match expectations with functional levels
- ✓ Praise the student for good behavior.
- ✓ Communicate with teachers and parents to better understand the students.
- ✓ Some students may need restraints (vests or wheelchairs)
- ✓ Supervise students closely; they may have medical conditions that need monitoring.

i. Physically and Orthopedically Impaired.

(1) Challenges. These students may have severe skeletal, muscular, or neuromuscular impairment such as cerebral palsy, amputations, etc.

- May have limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems.
- They may need physical assistance, specialized seating, and/or adaptive equipment.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Communicate regularly with the parents and teachers, and the student's Occupational Therapist and/or Physical Therapist
- Establish good relations with the students, treat them with respect.
- Allow students to do as much as possible for themselves.

j. Traumatic Brain Injury.

(1) Challenges. Open or closed head injuries may result in impairments to almost any brain function.

- Students with a traumatic brain injury may display mood swings, impulsivity, and poor judgment.
- Students with a traumatic brain injury may display disruptive behaviors including non-compliance, aggression, and poor social skills.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Be patient and sensitive to the needs of these students.
- Since each student will be different depending on the nature of their injury and the way it has impacted their mental functions, it is important to seek assistance from teachers and parents about how to handle the student's specific needs and behaviors.

k. Other Health Impairments.

- “Other health impairments” means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems that adversely affect a child’s educational performance.
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are included in the definition of “Other Health Impairments.”
- School bus drivers and school bus aides must be sensitive and patient to the needs of these students. Seek assistance from teachers and parents about how to handle these student’s needs. Also, the school nurse should be able to share information and provide training on an “as-needed” basis.

l. ADD & ADHD

(1) Challenges. Students with ADD or ADHD will exhibit:

- **Short attention span.** Does not listen when spoken to. Does not follow instructions. Easily distracted; loses things. Forgetful.
- **Hyperactivity.** Fidgets; squirms in seat. Gets out of seat. Talks excessively, loudly.
- **Impulsivity.** Difficulty waiting for turn. Interrupts/intrudes on others.
- **Other concerns.** Medication issues. Do not handle changes well. Easily frustrated; stress/fatigue increase poor behavior.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Give clear rules and maintain routines.
- Praise immediately any positive behavior
- Find ways to encourage the student.
- Give step-by-step directions; make sure the student is following the directions.
- Allow the student to have an activity on the bus to channel his/her energy.
- Remain calm; be patient; avoid debating with the student.
- Avoid ridicule and criticism (ADD/ADHD students have difficulty maintain control)
- Separate challenging students; assign seats.
- Talk with the teacher and parents to learn effective strategies.

m. Emotional Handicaps.

(1) Challenges. Students with emotional handicaps will exhibit:

- Restlessness, hyperactive, fidgety
- Inability to stay seated.
- Short attention span
- Inappropriate language (name calling, profanity)
- Aggression – hitting, fighting, self-injurious behavior.
- Trouble following directions.
- Resistant to discipline, defiant, destructive, hard to manage.
- Inappropriate conduct – lying, stealing, cruelty.
- Temperamental – extreme emotions and feelings
- These students are usually seeking attention, acceptance, and love – but often alienate people because of their behavior.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Establish rapport with the student; learn his/her interests.
- Catch the student being good! Praise them for it.
- Assign seating if needed.
- Display a positive, professional attitude.
- Learn the student's non-verbal cues.
- Diffuse situations early on; react calmly when the student misbehaves.
- Communicate with the teacher to bridge the gap from the classroom to the bus. Develop a consistent behavioral plan.

n. Specific Learning Disabilities.

(1) Challenges. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities will exhibit:

- Difficulty following directions.
- May have communication difficulties – understanding others or expressing self.
- Look “normal”; disability is hidden.
- May display hyperactivity, inattention, and perceptual coordination skills.
- May display impulsiveness, low tolerance for frustration.
- May have poor social skills.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Establish trusting and respectful relationships.
- Use simple and clear directions; may need to use one-step-at-a-time directions due to the student's processing difficulties.
- Allow the student time to respond to your directions.
- Capitalize on the student's strengths.
- Intervene early when “situations” begin.
- Keep calm when dealing with the student's behavior.
- Use praise and encouragement.

o. Developmentally Delayed.

(1) Challenges. This category of disabilities applies to children between the ages of 3 and 5 years (e.g., Pre-K students). Children with developmental delays will exhibit **slower than normal development** on one or more of the following areas:

- Adaptive skills/self help
- Cognitive development
- Communication
- Social/emotional skills
- Physical development including fine, gross, or perceptual motor skills.

(2) Strategies for school bus drivers and school bus aides.

- Keep your language and rules simple.
- Assign the student to a seat in the front of the bus, if possible
- Make sure you have the appropriate safety equipment for the child's age, weight, and height.
- Be sensitive to the child's age – he or she is very young and will act like a very young child.

- Be sensitive to the child's special needs, whether they reflect a physical, communication, emotional/social, or mental developmental delay.

TO SUM UP, WHEN WORKING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS:

- Remember that each child is an *individual*.
- While they may have similar characteristics, respect their *uniqueness*.
- **Collaborate with teachers, parents, and other staff to provide the best and safest transportation services possible.**

## SECTION 11

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

#### **11.01 EMERGENCY STOPS**

- a. When a driver must make an emergency stop because of a mechanical breakdown of a school bus, the driver shall immediately notify their Dispatch Office of the situation.
- b. Once the driver has brought the school bus safely to a stop, the following steps must be taken:
  - (1) Turn on hazard (4-way flasher) lights.
  - (2) Shift gear to Neutral or Park and set the emergency or parking brake.
  - (3) Decide whether to evacuate the bus. A school bus shall always be evacuated when:
    - There is a fire.
    - There is a potential for a fire to occur.
    - The bus has come to a stop in a dangerous position.
  - (4) Set out triangular reflectors.
- c. Students must NEVER be left unattended on board a school bus. If the situation is such that the driver must temporarily leave the bus, arrangements must be made for another driver, a Field Operations Specialist or other Transportation staff, or school staff member to meet the bus at the emergency stop location.

#### **11.02 PLACEMENT OF TRIANGULAR REFLECTORS**

When a school bus becomes disabled upon the traveled portion of any road, highway, or shoulder thereof, emergency warning devices must be placed on display immediately. Reflectors shall be placed out as detailed below:

- a. Placement of triangular reflectors on a two-lane roadway.
  - (1) Place the first reflector on the traffic side of the bus approximately ten (10) feet from the rear of the bus.
  - (2) Place the second reflector approximately one hundred (100) feet behind the bus.
  - (3) Place the third reflector approximately one hundred (100) feet in front of the bus.
- b. Placement of triangular reflectors on a divided, multi-lane highway.
  - (1) Place the first reflector on the traffic side of the bus approximately ten (10) feet from the rear of the bus.
  - (2) Place the second reflector approximately one hundred (100) feet behind the bus.
  - (3) Place the third reflector approximately two hundred (200) feet behind the bus.
- c. Estimating required distances. How is a driver to accurately estimate distances from the bus to place the triangular reflectors in their required positions? Drivers should pace off the distances, using the following guideline: generally, 10 feet is about 4 steps; 100 feet would be approximately 40 steps.

## 11.03 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

School buses are among the most well-constructed, safest vehicles on the road. Hopefully, a situation will never arise which requires the emergency evacuation of a school bus.

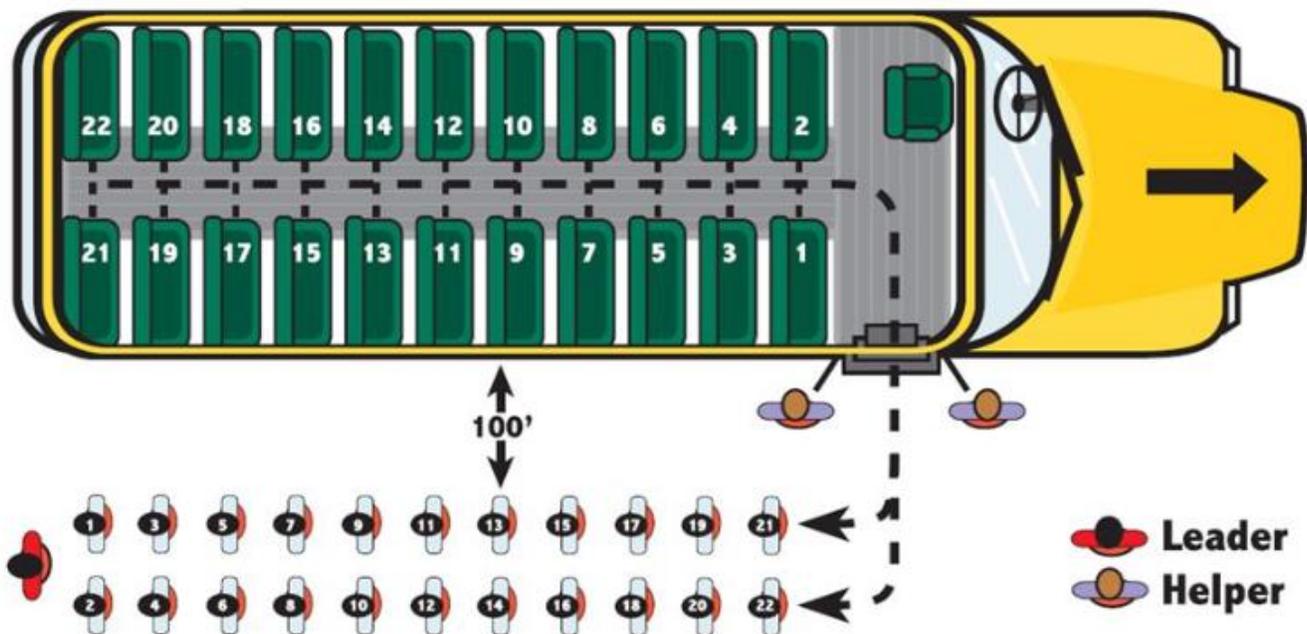
- a. Students will be evacuated from the school bus whenever one or more of the following situations arise:
  - (1) Fire, or danger of fire. A school bus will be stopped and immediately evacuated if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire. Passengers will be instructed to move a distance of at least one hundred (100) feet away from the bus and to remain there until the driver has determined that no danger remains. Additionally, if the bus is stopped near an existing fire or near the presence of gasoline or other combustibles and the driver is not able to move the bus away from the area it should be considered as “danger of fire” and students should be evacuated.
  - (2) Unsafe position. The driver should evacuate the school bus if:
    - The final stopping position of the bus is in the path of any train or adjacent to any railroad tracks.
    - The stopping position of the bus may change and increase the danger. For example, if a bus is stopped near a body of water and it could still move and go into the water, it should be evacuated.
    - The stopping place of the bus is such that there is a danger of collision. In normal traffic conditions, the bus should be visible for at least three hundred (300) feet in both directions of traffic.
- b. If one of the above situations occurs, the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) must act **as quickly as possible** to evacuate the school bus. Speed is of the essence, especially in the case of fire or danger of fire. The driver and aide must make sure the evacuation is carried out in a manner which affords maximum safety for the students. **Primary consideration must always be given, at all times, to the safety of the passengers.**
- c. Depending on the circumstances of the situation, school buses may be evacuated using:
  - Front door only
  - Rear door only
  - Both front and rear door (split)

Detailed procedures for front door, rear door, and front/rear door emergency evacuations are included in the following pages of this Handbook.

- d. FRONT DOOR EVACUATION PROCEDURE FOR A SCHOOL BUS
  - (1) The driver will start the evacuation by commanding: **“This is an emergency. We are going to evacuate the bus through the front door.”**
  - (2) The driver will designate a helper and direct him/her to take position outside the bus by the front door.
  - (3) The driver will instruct the first passenger seated in the right-side seat closest to the front door to exit the bus and lead the other passengers to a designated point at least one hundred (100) feet away from the vehicle.
  - (4) The driver will instruct passengers in the left side seat closest to the front door to follow right side seat passengers. Passengers will be specifically commanded to: **“Walk, don’t run!”**

- (5) The driver will continue the procedure for each row, moving toward the rear of the bus and alternating from right seat to left seats until the bus is empty.
- (6) If passengers are physically disabled, the driver and aide will have to assist them to leave the bus. For example, students in wheelchairs may have to be carried out the door. Wheelchair lifts should not be used when evacuating the bus and will not be used when a danger of fire exists.
- (7) If passengers are visually impaired the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) must make sure to give clear, precise instructions on what to do and where to go. Such students may also need a helping hand when exiting the bus.
- (8) The driver will check to make sure each seat on the bus is empty before he/she exits the vehicle.
- (9) When the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) exit the vehicle they will immediately proceed, along with the helper, to join the other passengers.
- (10) **SPEED is of the essence in an emergency evacuation. However, at no time will the SAFETY of the passengers be compromised.**

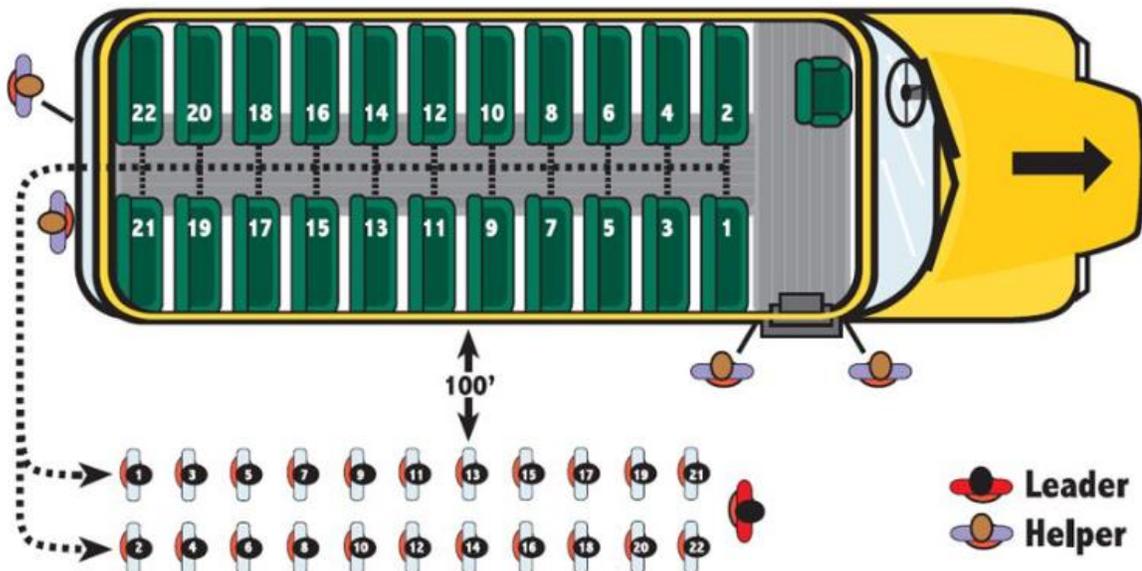
## Front Door Evacuation



e. REAR DOOR EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR A SCHOOL BUS

- (1) The driver will start the evacuation by commanding: **“This is an emergency. We are going to evacuate the bus through the rear door.”**
- (2) The driver will designate a helper and direct him/her to take position outside the bus by the rear emergency exit door.
- (3) The driver will instruct passengers **to NOT jump down to the ground** when exiting the bus. The safest way to exit by the rear emergency exit door is to sit on the bus floor with legs extended out the rear exit door, and then slide out and down from the bus until both feet touch the ground.
- (4) The driver will instruct the first passenger seated in the right-side seat closest to the rear emergency door to exit the bus and lead the other passengers to a designated point at least one hundred (100) feet away from the vehicle.
- (5) The driver will instruct passengers in the left side seat closest to the rear exit emergency door to follow right side seat passengers. Passengers will be specifically commanded to: **“Walk, don’t run!”**
- (6) The driver will continue the procedure for each row, moving toward the front of the bus and alternating from right seat to left seats until the bus is empty.
- (7) If passengers are physically disabled, the driver and aide will have to assist them to leave the bus. For example, students in wheelchairs may have to be carried out the door. Wheelchair lifts should not be used when evacuating the bus and will not be used when a danger of fire exists.
- (8) If passengers are visually impaired the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) must make sure to give clear, precise instructions on what to do and where to go. Such students may also need a helping hand when exiting the bus.
- (9) The driver will check to make sure each seat on the bus is empty before he/she exits the vehicle.
- (10) When the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) exit the vehicle they will immediately proceed, along with the helper, to join the other passengers.
- (11) **SPEED is of the essence in an emergency evacuation. However, at no time will the SAFETY of the passengers be compromised.**

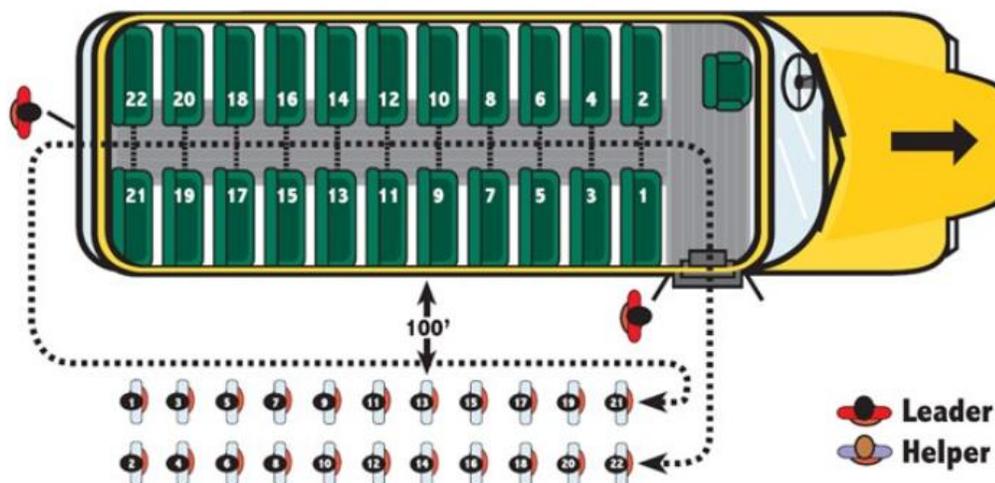
## Rear Door Evacuation



f. FRONT AND REAR DOOR EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR A SCHOOL BUS

- (1) The driver will start the evacuation by commanding: **“This is an emergency. We are going to evacuate the bus through both the front door and the rear door. Passengers in the front half of the bus will go out the front door. Passengers in the back half of the bus will go out the rear emergency exit door.”**
- (2) The driver will designate two (2) helpers and direct them to take position outside the bus – one by the front door and the other by the rear emergency exit door.
- (3) The driver will instruct passengers to **NOT jump down to the ground** when exiting the bus. The safest way to exit by the rear emergency exit door is to sit on the bus floor with legs extended out the rear exit door, and then slide out and down from the bus until both feet touch the ground.
- (4) The driver will designate two (2) passengers to be leaders, to lead the other passengers on the bus to a designated point at least one hundred (100) feet away from the vehicle. Passengers sitting in the right-side seats closest to each door shall be instructed to follow the designated leaders. Passengers will be specifically commanded to, **“Walk, don’t run!”**
- (5) The driver will instruct passengers in the left side seats closest to each door to follow right side seat passengers. The driver will continue the procedure for each row, alternating from right seat to left seats until the bus is empty.
- (6) If passengers are physically disabled, the driver and aide will have to assist them to leave the bus. For example, students in wheelchairs may have to be carried out the door. Wheelchair lifts should not be used when evacuating the bus and will not be used when a danger of fire exists.
- (7) If passengers are visually impaired the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) must make sure to give clear, precise instructions on what to do and where to go. Such students may also need a helping hand when exiting the bus.
- (8) The driver will check to make sure each seat on the bus is empty before he/she exits the vehicle.
- (9) When the driver and aide (if one is assigned to the route) exit the vehicle they will immediately proceed, along with the helper, to join the other passengers.
- (10) **SPEED is of the essence in an emergency evacuation. However, at no time will the SAFETY of the passengers be compromised.**

## Front and Rear Door Evacuation



(11)

## 11.04 BUS ACCIDENTS/CRASHES

- a. In all instances where a school bus is involved in an accident/crash, the driver will remain at the scene of the accident/crash until the driver has been released by the law enforcement officials and the Field Operations Specialist or other Transportation staff that responds to the scene.
- b. School bus drivers and school bus aides will render first aid, if necessary, to the limits of their training and abilities. The assistance shall be limited to what would normally be expected of a reasonable and prudent person.
- c. School bus drivers will, without fail, report every accident/crash regardless of how minor and regardless of damage. An accident/crash is defined as any time the vehicle (school bus) encounters another vehicle or object.
- d. Drivers must **immediately** notify their Dispatch Office by two-way radio of every accident/crash. Should a driver be unable to contact their Dispatch Office by the two-way radio (because it is at night or on a weekend when the Dispatch Office is closed, or because the driver is on a field trip which has taken them outside of the local area), drivers may use a cell phone provided:
  - (1) The bus has been brought to a complete stop in the safest location possible.
  - (2) Cell phones may be used only for the following purposes in an emergency:
    - To contact an emergency response operator, "911" public safety communications dispatcher, a hospital or emergency room, an ambulance or fire department rescue service, a fire department, or police department.
    - To notify Transportation Department administrators and/or Field Operations Specialists of an emergency.
    - To call for assistance in the event of a mechanical breakdown or other mechanical problem that impairs the safe operation of the vehicle.

In the event the driver is not able to contact their Dispatch Office by two-way radio, and should the driver not have access to a cell phone, the driver shall obtain assistance from bystanders or other motorists to promptly notify police, emergency service agencies, and the Transportation Department.

- e. When reporting an accident/crash, school bus drivers must be specific as to the location and time, the extent of injuries, and damage to the bus and other vehicles or property.
- f. School bus drivers and school bus aides will immediately ask students if they are injured or feel any discomfort which could be associated with the accident/crash. If a student complains of pain or is visibly injured, even slightly, the accident/crash will be reported as an "accident with injuries." Students will be advised that, if they feel any pain or discomfort after leaving the bus, to report it to their school.
- g. Students on board school buses involved in an accident/crash.
  - (1) If students are on the school bus at the time of the accident/crash they should not be allowed to leave the scene unless they need to be transported for medical treatment. Information about the students will be required to complete the investigation. The driver shall make sure the following information is obtained for each student:
    - Name (full name; no nicknames)
    - Home address and telephone number
    - Student ID number (if known)
    - Age
    - Sex

- Extent of injuries
  - Location seated in the bus.
  - If students from more than one school were on the bus, the school each child attends must also be noted.
- (2) Drivers and aides cannot forcibly restrain any student from leaving the scene of the accident/crash at any time; however, drivers and aides are not to instruct students to do anything other than to remain at the scene. If the parent of a student refuses to allow their child to remain at the scene, the driver shall ask to see the parent's driver's license or other photo identification before allowing the student to depart, unless the parent is personally known to the driver or aide. Drivers and aides will also make sure to note the apparent condition of the student at the time the student leaves the scene.
- (3) If the accident/crash happens at a school, students may be permitted to be escorted off the bus by school staff after the driver has obtained the required information on each student and after the students have been checked for injuries.
- h. Any person who is injured in a school bus accident/crash or who complains of pain or discomfort should not be released from the scene without being checked by emergency medical personnel or other certified medical persons.
- i. School bus drivers shouldn't make statements regarding fault to other parties involved in the accident/crash. Drivers are to be courteous, to offer to give their name, license number, and insurance information, but will not argue with other parties or police officers. If requested to sign any statement other ones requested by a law enforcement officer, the driver is to refer to the request to the Field Operations Specialist or other Transportation Department staff at the scene.
- j. If a school bus driver is issued a traffic citation (ticket) in connection with the accident/crash the driver shall not argue with the police officer nor refuse to sign the traffic citation (either can result in arrest!).
- k. If the school bus is cleared to be driven (not towed) from the scene of the accident/crash, and the driver is not required to take an OTETA drug and alcohol test, the driver will immediately return the bus to his/her assigned transportation center where it will be inspected and a damage/repair estimate prepared, unless the driver is instructed otherwise by the Field Operations Specialist or other Transportation staff at the scene.
- l. If infant or toddler safety seats were in use at the time of the accident/crash, they **MUST** be replaced. Drivers should check with the Transportation Operations Helper at their transportation center after an accident/crash, before transporting infants or toddlers, to make sure this has been done.
- m. Accident/Crash Reports.
- (1) School bus drivers must always complete the *School Bus Accident Information: Driver Statement* form when they have been involved in an accident/crash with a school bus.
- (2) School bus drivers must also complete the *Student Information & Seating Chart* form when they have been involved in an accident/crash with a school bus and students were on board the bus at the time of the accident/crash.
- (3) Completed report forms must be submitted to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist **by the end of the next working day** after the accident/crash.
- n. Drug and Alcohol Testing Requirements. Under certain circumstances, Federal and State Laws require drivers to be tested for drugs and alcohol after having an accident/crash. If any of the following conditions apply, the driver **MUST** be tested **immediately** for the presence of drugs and alcohol:
- The accident/crash results in a fatality
  - The driver was cited for a moving violation and any person had to be transported from the

scene of the accident/crash for immediate medical treatment.

- The driver was cited for a moving violation and any of the vehicles involved in the accident/crash had to be towed from the scene.

**Any school bus driver who refuses to submit to an immediate drug/alcohol test required because of an accident/crash meeting the criteria outlined above will be subject to dismissal from their position.**

## **11.05 INCIDENTS**

- a. The list of things which can occur as our school buses travel throughout the community is virtually endless. When a situation occurs that affects the safety of student passengers, the driver and/or aide, or the safe operation of the bus the driver will immediately report the situation by two-way radio to the Dispatch Office. If the incident happens when the Dispatch Office is closed, then the driver should contact M-DCPS School Police (305-995- COPS) and call "911" for emergency assistance, as circumstances warrant.
- b. The list of incidents which should be reported includes (but is by no means limited to):
  - Bus damaged by object thrown at it by someone outside the vehicle.
  - Shots fired at bus by a weapon (regardless of whether damage results)
  - Fight between students on board
  - Student on board with a weapon
  - Any serious misconduct incident
  - Trouble at bus stop (includes student confrontations, driver-parent confrontations, student approached by a suspicious person, etc.)
  - Bus approached by a suspicious person (for example, upset motorist)
  - Anything which just does not seem right!
- c. If emergency assistance is requested and dispatched to the incident location drivers will not leave the scene until they have been released by the law enforcement officer(s) and Transportation Department staff. If students are on board the bus at the time of the incident, they should not be allowed to leave the scene unless they need to be transported for medical treatment.

Drivers and aides cannot forcibly restrain any student from leaving the scene of an incident at any time; however, drivers and aides are not to instruct students to do anything other than to remain at the scene. If the parent of a student refuses to allow their child to remain at the scene, the driver shall ask to see the parent's driver's license or other photo identification before allowing the student to depart, unless the parent is personally known to the driver or aide. Drivers and aides will also make sure to note the apparent condition of the student at the time the student leaves the scene.

- d. If the nature of the incident is such that injuries could have resulted, school bus drivers and school bus aides will immediately ask if any student is injured or feels any discomfort which could be associated with the incident. If a student complains of pain or is visibly injured, even slightly, the incident will be reported as an "incident with injuries." Students will be advised that, if they feel any pain or discomfort after leaving the bus, to report it to their school. Drivers and aides will assist injured persons to the limits of their training and ability. The assistance shall be limited to what would normally be expected of a reasonable and prudent person, or as specified in the student's *Individualized Education Plan* (IEP).
- e. Any person who is injured in a school bus incident or who complains of pain or discomfort shall not be released from the scene without being checked by emergency medical personnel or other certified medical persons.
- f. Incident reports.

(1) School bus drivers must always complete a *Driver's Report of Incident* form when there has been an

incident. The completed report form must be submitted to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist by the end of the next working day following the incident.

- (2) If the incident involved a fight between students or other student misconduct, drivers must also complete a *Student Case Management Referral* form (FM-2981). The completed referral form, if required, must be submitted to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist by the end of the next working day after the incident.

## **11.06**            **STUDENT INJURIES AND ILLNESS**

- a. In the event a student becomes seriously ill while enroute to or from the school the driver shall immediately park the bus in a safe area and render first aid to the limits of their training and experience. Drivers will **immediately** notify their Dispatch Office of the situation and shall seek prompt aid by the best possible means available. Drivers will not attempt to drive the school bus with a seriously ill student aboard except in an emergency to get to the nearest place where help may be obtained (e.g., hospital or fire rescue station).
- b. A school bus driver may refuse to transport a student who is obviously ill or under the influence of strong medication which could affect the ability of the student to safely ride the bus. The student's parent or the school principal (or the principal's designee) **MUST** be present when this decision is made. Drivers will **immediately** contact their Dispatch office to report the situation, any it should occur.
- c. Student Injury/Illness Report
  - (1) School bus drivers must submit a completed *Student Injury/Illness Report* form anytime a student is injured while a passenger on the bus, or when boarding or exiting the bus.
  - (2) School bus drivers must also submit a completed *Student Injury/Illness Report* form any time:
    - A student is injured in an accident/crash while riding on the bus.
    - A student has a seizure or becomes seriously ill while on the bus.
    - A student is injured at the bus stop prior to the arrival of the bus, if brought to the attention of the driver. The driver should indicate in the report whether he/she personally witnessed the occurrence of the injury.
  - (3) Completed *Student Injury/Illness Report* forms must be submitted to the driver's assigned Field Operations Specialist by the end of the next working day after the occurrence of the injury or illness.

## SECTION 12

### VEHICLE MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

#### **12.01 GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

The school bus driver is the most important factor in achieving safety, economy, and efficiency in school transportation. Even the best program depends on drivers to carry out their part of the responsibility for an effective vehicle maintenance program. Primarily, this means drivers must:

- a. Carry out a complete pre-trip inspection of the bus before departing on the morning and afternoon runs and document all problems regarding the condition of the bus noted during the pre-trip inspection.
- b. Promptly report all problems and concerns regarding the condition of the bus.

#### **12.02 PRE-TRIP INSPECTION**

School bus drivers are required to complete a **pre-trip inspection** of the bus before leaving the transportation center. The pre-trip inspection may **NOT** be delegated to anyone else. The pre-trip inspection must be carried out in a manner which will allow the driver to detect possible electrical, mechanical, or other conditions which could prevent the bus from making trips safely and on schedule. The driver need not be a mechanic to observe and report problems such as:

- Air brakes leaking
- Engine not idling properly.
- Engine over-heating
- Unusual noise under the hood of the bus

A thorough pre-trip inspection consists of the following:

- The inside check
  - The walk-around outside check
  - The on-the-road check
- a. The inside check. Drivers shall check the operation of all gauges, controls, interior lights, and emergency exits. Drivers shall inspect emergency equipment, the condition of seats and seat belts, windows, and the general interior of the school bus.
  - b. The outside check. Drivers shall check the operation of all exterior lights, check inflation and condition of tires, look for evidence of leaks, inspect the exhaust system for loose tail pipes and leaks, check the operation of emergency exits, and check the overall condition of the bus exterior.
  - c. The on-the-road check. Drivers shall check brakes and steering for proper functioning and mirrors for proper adjustment.
  - d. School bus drivers shall complete the **Pre-trip Inspection Checklist** form twice daily, once before departing the compound on the morning runs and again before departing the compound for the afternoon runs.
    - (1) Drivers must indicate the status of each item listed on the form. After the driver has recorded the results of the inspection, the driver must write the mileage from the bus odometer in the appropriate space on

the form and sign next to it.

- (2) All drivers will be issued the form at the beginning of each month. Drivers assigned to bus routes shall make sure the form is always kept in their assigned bus. Substitute drivers will fill out the ***Pre-Trip Inspection Checklist*** form on the bus they are driving.
  - (3) Drivers will turn in the completed ***Pre-trip Inspection Checklist*** form to their Dispatch Office within three (3) working days after the end of each month.
- e. For buses equipped with a wheelchair lift, school bus aides may assist the driver with checking the operation of the lift and the condition of tie-down equipment used to secure wheelchairs. However, if the aide assists the driver with checking the lift and/or tie-down equipment it is still the responsibility of the driver to confirm there are no problems or concerns with the lift or any equipment before leaving the bus compound.

### **12.03 REPORTING PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS REGARDING THE CONDITION OF A SCHOOL BUS**

School bus drivers are required to immediately report any defect that can impact the safety or economy of operation to authorized service personnel. Drivers shall cooperate with mechanics and other authorized service personnel in the mechanical maintenance and repair of school buses.

School bus drivers shall use the ***Driver Request for Repair (DRR)*** form to report a problem with their bus and request repairs.

- a. The ***Driver Request for Repair (DRR)*** form is a 3-part form. The driver will keep the yellow copy of the form when they submit it.
- b. Drivers should try to include as much information as possible about the problem in the spaces provided on the ***DRR*** form.
- c. Completed ***DRR*** forms shall be given to the Transportation Operations Helpers (TOH) at the transportation center. The driver shall also give the keys to the bus to the TOH, along with the ***DRR*** form. The TOH will coordinate the repair with the vehicle maintenance shop and advise the driver when the bus shall be ready to return to service. If the driver will need a spare bus to complete their route the TOH will assign one.
- d. When a defect is discovered during the driver's pre-trip inspection of their school bus a ***DRR*** form **MUST** be completed and turned in to a Transportation Operations Helper **BEFORE** the driver departs the compound. When a problem requiring repair occurs while the driver is operating the bus, a ***DRR*** form must be completed and turned in to a Transportation Operations Helper (or Dispatch Office, if the TOH is not available) as soon as the driver returns to the transportation center.

### **12.04 MONTHLY SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

Rules of the Florida State Board of Education require school buses to undergo a ***mandatory*** safety inspection at least every 30 calendar days.

The Transportation Operations Helpers at the transportation center will coordinate with vehicle maintenance and will notify drivers when their bus will be sent to the vehicle maintenance shop for the monthly safety inspection. Drivers need to remember that this is a ***mandatory*** inspection and shall work cooperatively with the TOH to make sure their bus is made available when needed for the inspection. The TOH will assign a spare bus to drivers when their regularly assigned bus is not available due to the monthly safety inspection. Drivers may not refuse to

use the spare bus assigned to them unless their pre-trip inspection of the bus reveals a mechanical problem with the vehicle which would preclude it being driven on a route.

## **12.05 ROAD CALLS**

- a. When the bus experiences a breakdown or serious condition that stops the bus from continuing the route in a safe condition the driver shall contact their dispatcher and report the problem/compliant.
- b. The driver shall **provide an accurate location of the bus (and any relevant details to the location)**, the nature of the problem, and if there are students on board the bus. In the event there is a **change in location** of the bus the driver shall report the new location and any changes to the buses condition.
- c. The dispatcher shall contact the vehicle maintenance shop and provide details of the breakdown and location of the bus.
- d. If students are on board the bus the dispatcher shall send a spare bus and driver to the bus location to pick up the students and continue the route.
- e. Under no circumstances shall the bus be left unattended until the tow truck arrives.
- f. The Transportation Operations Helpers will review the Daily Deadline Report from vehicle maintenance. The Transportation Operations Helpers shall coordinate repairs to buses with the vehicle maintenance shop and advise drivers when their buses will be ready to return to service. If a driver needs a spare bus while repairs are being completed the Transportation Operations Helpers will assign one.

## **12.06 CLEANING OF BUSES**

- a. School buses must be always kept clean. The floor of the bus must be kept free of all trash and debris. Trash from the bus must not be swept out of the bus onto parking areas.
  - place all trash into the proper receptacle! The windshield, side windows, and rear windows of the bus will be kept clean to ensure that visibility is not reduced.
- b. School bus drivers and aides shall wipe down the “high touch” areas of the bus after they return from the morning and afternoon runs. Disposable disinfectant wipes shall be provided to drivers and aides for this purpose. Should disposable disinfectant wipes not be available, then disinfectant spray and disposable rags and/or paper towels shall be provided and utilized. The specific areas to be wiped down include:
  - Hand railings at the front steps of the bus
  - Hand sanitizer dispenser
  - Bus seats and the backs of the seats
  - Steering wheel, two-way radio mike, and control levers at the driver’s station
- c. School bus drivers shall not use any chemicals/cleaning products on buses except those authorized and provided to drivers by M-DCPS Transportation.
- d. School bus drivers shall not use insect repellent, insecticides (bug spray), or air fresheners on the bus except those authorized and provided to drivers by M-DCPS Transportation.

## APPENDIX I

### DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FORMS

- Pre-trip Inspection Checklist
- Driver Request for Repair (DRR)
- School Bus Seating Chart (FM-5135)
- Student Case Management Referral (FM-2981)
- Plant Security Report (FM-0366)
- School Bus Accident Information – Driver Statement
- School Bus Accident Information – Student Information and Seating Chart
- Student Injury/Illness Report
- Driver Scheduled Hours' Time Sheet
- Extra Services Time Report (FM-4673)
- Application For Short Term Leave (FM-5949)
- Request For Leave of Absence Without Pay (FM-2673)
- Transportation Employee Information (Locator) Sheet
- School Bus Evacuation Drill (FM-1125)
- Space Available Request for Success Management Academy Students (FM-5619)
- Activity Schedule (FM-2534)
- Route Report – Special Education Program (FM-3036)
- Route Report (FM-3037)





Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Department of Transportation

**DRIVER'S REQUEST FOR REPAIRS**

Vehicle No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Driver \_\_\_\_\_

Mileage \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECK ITEMS NEEDING ATTENTION:**

**ENGINE**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Noise
- \_\_\_\_\_ All Gauges
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leaks

**BATTERY**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Clean
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brackets
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cables

**TRANSMISSION**

- Automatic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shift Properly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Noise
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leaks

**FUEL**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Leaks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lines
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pump

**STEERING**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Wanders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shimmy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hard Steering
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tracking Property

**EXHAUST SYSTEM**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Noise
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leaks

**BRAKES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Air Pressure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grab/Pull
- \_\_\_\_\_ Insufficient
- \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Release
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pedal Travel
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hyd. Brakes Level
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fluid Leaks

**TIRES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Worn
- \_\_\_\_\_ Damaged
- \_\_\_\_\_ Balanced
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lug Nuts/Wheel Stud

**COOLING SYSTEM**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Leaks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clogged
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hoses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Heater/Defroster
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fans & Belts

**ELECTRICAL**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Wigwag
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lights
- \_\_\_\_\_ Horn
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wipers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stop Sign

**BODY**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Glass
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seats
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dents/Scratches
- \_\_\_\_\_ Damage
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mirror

**RADIO**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REAR AXLE**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Oil Leaks

**HYDRAULIC LIFT** \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPLAIN ITEMS NEEDING ATTENTION:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**DRIVER'S SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

White - Garage Manager  
Canary - Driver

rev. 03/10

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
SEATING CHART FOR 77 PASSENGER BUS**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ F.O.S. \_\_\_\_\_

BUS# \_\_\_\_\_ TRIP \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

**DRIVER FRONT DOOR**

1	2	3
7	8	9
13	14	15
19	20	21
25	26	27
31	32	33
37	38	39
43	44	45
49	50	51
55	56	57
61	62	63
67	68	

4	5	6
10	11	12
16	17	18
22	23	24
28	29	30
34	35	36
40	41	42
46	47	48
52	53	54
58	59	60
64	65	66
69	70	71

**REAR**

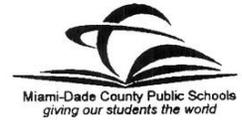
NOTE: CAN ALSO BE USED FOR SMALLER BUSES



P.C.	
P.E.	
D.E.	
OTHER	

## PLANT SECURITY REPORT

MIAMI-DADE SCHOOLS  
POLICE DEPARTMENT  
MAIL CODE 9913  
TELEPHONE: (305) 757-SPAR (7727)



### GENERAL INFORMATION

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL POLICE UNIT CASE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AREA: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

WAS BUILDING ENTERED? \_\_\_\_\_ WAS MAINTENANCE CALLED? \_\_\_\_\_ IF YES, WORK ORDER NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF DAMAGE:  
VANDALISM: \_\_\_\_\_ THEFT: \_\_\_\_\_ ARSON: \_\_\_\_\_ FIRE: \_\_\_\_\_ WINDSTORM/FLOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

DETAILS OF LOSS OR DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

### LIST MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT STOLEN, DESTROYED, OR DAMAGED

No. of Items	Name of Item	P.C. No., Model, Serial	Stolen	Destroyed	Damaged	Cost

### ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

BUS NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TERMINAL: \_\_\_\_\_

RUN NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ TRIP NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ REGULAR RUN: \_\_\_\_\_ FIELD TRIP: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER DETAILS: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: ALL PLANT SECURITY REPORTS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF DATE OF DISCOVERY**

PREPARED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ (Name and Title) PRINCIPAL/ADMINISTR.: \_\_\_\_\_ (Manual Signature)

SCHOOL POLICE

FM-0366 Rev. (01-03)

P.L.	
P.R.	
O.R.	
OTHER	

**PLANT SECURITY REPORT**  
 MANALAC COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
 SCHOOL POLICE  
 MAIL CODE 9913  
 TELEPHONE (888) 35-1708



**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**NOTE: ALL PLANT SECURITY REPORT MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF DATE OF DISCOVERY**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL POLICE CASE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 AREA: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
 WAS BUILDING ENTERED?  WAS MAINTENANCE CALLED?  IF YES, WORK ORDER NO.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TYPE OF DAMAGE:  THEFT:  ARSON:  FIRE:  WINDSTORM/FLOOD:   
 DETAILS OF LOSS OR DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

**LIST MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT STOLEN, DESTROYED, OR DAMAGED**

No. of Items	Name of Item	P.C. No. Model Serial	Stolen	Destroyed	Damaged	Cost

**ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION**

BUS NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TERMINAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 RUN NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ TRIP NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ REGULAR RUN: \_\_\_\_\_ FIELD TRIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 OTHER DETAILS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PREPARED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ (Name and Title) PRINCIPAL/ADMINISTRATOR: \_\_\_\_\_ (Manual Signature)

SCHOOL POLICE      SEND COPY OF THIS REPORT TO:      ORIGINAL FILE  
 REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT      TRANSPORTATION /      MAINTENANCE DEPT.

FL-0368 Rev. (08-19)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- The School Police must be notified by telephone immediately in each instance of illegal entry, vandalism, theft, fire, and property damage due to vehicle accident.
- The School Police are to be notified by telephone in each instance of serious damage to a building that would render impossible the physical security of the property.
- A Plant Security Report is to be completed and filed with the School Police within 24 hours of the telephoned report.
- The Maintenance Department must be given the School Police Case number if they are contacted to make repairs as a result of damage due to illegal entry, vandalism, theft or fire. Requests for emergency repairs will be accepted by telephone.
- Additional related losses must be reported to the School Police by memorandum within two weeks following the initial report.
- Requisitions for replacement of stolen or destroyed property must be received by the School Police within six weeks of the initial loss report.
- Plant Security Reports must **not** be used:
 

A	To report inventory short pages of un-located property.
B	To report losses of personal property.
C	To report minor accidental damage.
D	To report requested maintenance caused by normal use.
- Parents or guardians of offenders identified as responsible for theft or damage of property are liable for such losses under Florida Law or this reason it is imperative that each Plant Security Report reflect fully the loss suffered by the specific event being reported.
- Billing and collection of all restitution is the responsibility of the School Police only.
- Continuation pages are to be attached for any section of this report requiring more space than has been provided. Identify each such page with location name and School Police Case number.

WIC/Oct/Bus \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_ School Attending \_\_\_\_\_  
 WIC/Oct/Bus \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_ School Attending \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was admission of guilt received? \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/No) Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_  
 By Whom? \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

Work Order Number					
Time					
Balance/Amount of Labor					
Balance/Amount of Material					
Cost of Replacement					
Insurance Cost					
Other					
TOTAL COST					

FL-0368 Rev. (08-19)



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 ACCIDENT INFORMATION

**STUDENTS INFORMATION AND SEATING CHART**

➤ Each **DRIVER** is to complete this form at the scene of the accident.

**CENTER # 923**

Bus # _____	Date: _____
Route # _____	Time: _____
Driver's Name _____	Location: _____
Driver's License # _____	Number of Pupils: _____

**Is Driver's Exchange of Information Sheet Attached?**  Yes  No

If there is not an exchange of information sheet attached, give the following information:

Information	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3
Tag #			
Make			
Model			
Year			
Any other information on the other vehicle(s) or person(s) involved?			

**Student Information**

<i>Students seated on the left side: Behind Driver</i>		<i>Students seated on the right side</i>	
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Driver's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CENTER: 923**

<b>Student Information and seating chart: page</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3			
<i>Students seated on the left side: Behind Driver</i>		<i>Students seated on the right side</i>	
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:
Name:	ID#	Name:	ID#
Address:		Address:	
Phone:	D.O.B:	Phone:	D.O.B:

Add more pages, if necessary.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
ACCIDENT INFORMATION

**STUDENT INJURY /ILLNESS**  
(SCHOOL BUS RELATED)

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
AGE OR GRADE \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER \_\_\_\_\_ BUS No. \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF ACCIDENT \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_  
LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT GETTING ON \_\_\_\_\_ OFF \_\_\_\_\_ OR WHILE ON \_\_\_\_\_ BUS. (PLEASE CHECK)  
ENROUTE TO \_\_\_\_\_ OR FROM \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL. AT BUS STOP \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE CHECK)  
NATURE OF INJURY (BE SPECIFIC) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DID STUDENT REQUIRE MEDICAL ATTENTION? \_\_\_\_\_  
IF SO, NAME OF DOCTOR OR HOSPITAL \_\_\_\_\_  
DRIVER DID \_\_\_\_\_, DID NOT \_\_\_\_\_ WITNESS ACCIDENT. (PLEASE CHECK)

DATE OF REPORT \_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_  
FIELD OPERATIONS SPECIALIST \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE AND DATE \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
DATA SENT TO RISK MANAGEMENT \_\_\_\_\_

Copy 1 – Risk Management  
Copy 2 - Transportation



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
**DRIVER Scheduled Hours Time Sheet**

Drivers Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee#: \_\_\_\_\_

**AideReq** Route#: \_\_\_\_\_ Bus#: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

**AM**

	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs
Report Time:					
Depart Time:					
First Student Stop:					
Last School Served:					
Compound:					
Total:					

**Mid-Day\***

	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs
SignIn/Leaves Compound:					
First Std Stop/School:					
Last Std Stop/School:					
Compound:					
Total:					

**PM**

	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs
Report Time:					
Depart Time:					
First School Served PM:					
Last Student Stop PM:					
Compound:					
Total:					

**Activity\***

	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs
SignIn/Leaves Compound:					
First Student Stop Act:					
Last Student Stop Act:					
Compound:					
Total:					

(If the Activity Run is part of the PM Run, Include with PM Calculation)

	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Weeks Total
AM Total						
PM Total						
Mid Day Total						
Acty Total						
30 minutes (clerical, breakdown, Fueling) CBG:						:30
<b>Total Route Time With CBG:</b>	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	0:30	2:30
Total Route Time without CBG:						
Decimal Format with CBG:	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	2.50

I certify that the times submitted by me on this document are accurate and made in good faith for the purpose of accurate accounting of work performed. I understand that knowingly making any false statement of facts concerning time worked may be cause for dismissal. I agree to report timely any consistent changes that increase or decrease the above times

\_\_\_\_\_  
Driver Signature Date

INFORMATION TO BE REVIEWED AND INITIALED ONCE COMPLETE:

R.M.S/F.O.S: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADMINSTRATOR: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PAYROLL CLERK: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SCREEN1: \_\_\_\_\_ SCREEN2: \_\_\_\_\_

ADJUSTMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_







**DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT/LEAVE/UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION  
THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FLORIDA  
REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY**

*(For the use of sick days, please notify the Leave Office prior to the commencement of your leave; changes will not be made to leave dates once adjudicated.)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby request a leave of absence without pay  
*(Please Print Name and Employee Number.)*

effective \_\_\_\_\_ through and including \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Work Location Name and Number)*

**TYPE OF LEAVE REQUESTED**

**DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED**

- Personal ..... Reverse side must be completed. Completion of five (5) continuous years of full-time employment with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, with the exception of parental leave extension for which only three (3) years of continuous full-time employment are required.
- Professional (Study) ..... Statement of educational plans, and class schedule.  
DCSAA employees - see back side  
University/Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
MUST complete three (3) years of full-time employment prior to requesting extended professional leave, unless such leave is needed to complete an internship as part of an academic program leading to a Bachelor's degree in education.
- Professional (Other) ..... Letter indicating the professional activity to be engaged in. Full-time employment requires completion of Supplemental Information Form (FM-6445). See back side for important benefits information.
- Extended Professional LOA for Instructional Personnel ..... Must be accompanied by signed copy of Extended Professional LOA for Instructional Personnel Form (FM-7535). See back side for important benefits information.
- Illness of Self or  Relative ..... Leave of Absence Medical Documentation form (FM-6030) indicating diagnosis, length of time required for leave. If relative: Name/relationship on (FM-6030).
- Parental ..... Leave of Absence Medical Documentation form (FM-6030) with anticipated date of child's birth, birth certificate, or letter from attorney or agency verifying adoption.
- Military ..... Copy of military orders.       Voluntary     Involuntary

**TEACHERS:** A teacher must hold a current valid Florida Teacher's Certificate in order to BE ON LEAVE. Any prescription in effect at the commencement of leave will remain in effect upon the employee's return from leave.

**ALL EMPLOYEES:** The pursuit of other employment while on leave is considered a violation of the conditions of leave unless specifically requested and approved. Incomplete applications will not be accepted for processing but will be returned. **IT IS THE EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO INSURE RECEIPT OF THE COMPLETED APPLICATION (WITH REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION) BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT/LEAVE/UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION, TO INFORM THAT OFFICE OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS (POSTAL OR ELECTRONIC) WHILE ON LEAVE, AND TO PROVIDE, PRIOR TO THE LEAVE EXPIRATION DATE, A WRITTEN STATEMENT (WITH REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION) OF THE INTENT TO EXTEND, RETURN, OR RESIGN/RETIRE FROM LEAVE.** Failure to adhere to these terms or to the conditions under which your leave is granted will result in the revocation of your leave and may result in termination. Leave of absence shall not be granted for incarceration. I certify that all information on this application is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any omission and/or false statement on this application may result in dismissal from employment.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ (Number & Street) \_\_\_\_\_ (City, State) \_\_\_\_\_ (Zip Code) Personal Email \_\_\_\_\_

Notification of approval/disapproval of leave request will be sent exclusively to your M-DCPS e-mail address.

**For employees applying for an Illness of Self, Illness of Relative or Parental Leave** - Approval of your Parental, Illness of Self or Illness of Relative Leave of Absence, which meets the criteria of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), constitutes designation of your FMLA entitlement and comprises a part or all of your FMLA entitlement. Any paid or unpaid leave taken prior to the Board-approved leave you are seeking, which was as a result of the same condition(s) which forms the basis for this Board-approved leave/FMLA leave, will be counted as part of your FMLA leave entitlement.

**The work-site administrator's recommendation is not the final disposition of the request, and should not be relied on to absent your self from work. Contact the Leave Office if you have not received authorization, via e-mail to take the leave of absence.**

<b>FOR WORK SITE ADMINISTRATOR ONLY</b>		
I recommend:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Disapproval <i>(Please attach explanation.)</i>
Signature _____	_____	_____
<i>(Work Site Administrator)</i>	<i>(Title)</i>	<i>(Date)</i>
<b>PLEASE DO NOT SIGN UNTIL ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION IS ATTACHED.</b>		

RETURN TO: SBAB, Suite 607  
Phone 305-995-7090; Fax 305-523-0495

*(over)*

FM-2763 Rev. (09-22)

**FOR PERSONAL LEAVE REQUESTS ONLY**

CHECK ONE REASON FOR PERSONAL LEAVE REQUEST (AFSCME, DCSAA, DCSMEC, FOP, MEP, UTD)

**ELIGIBLE BARGAINING UNITS**

- |                         |                          |  |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| All Units               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. To serve in the Peace Corps or other U.S. Government agency sponsored programs  |
| All Units               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. To fill one (1) full-time position on the unit's staff  |
| UTD                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. To participate in an overseas teacher exchange program  |
| UTD, DCSMEC, MEP, DCSAA | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Settlement of family estates  |
| UTD, DCSMEC, MEP, DCSAA | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Severe family hardships   |
| DCSMEC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Professional improvement  |
| UTD                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Voluntary enlistment in the National Guard or in any branch of the military service not requiring more than one (1) year of service |
| UTD, AFSCME             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Recuperation and regeneration *   |
| UTD, AFSCME             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Temporary relocation of residence outside of South Florida, which could result in severe family hardship *                          |
| AFSCME                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Professional study leave with proof of full-time enrollment in an accredited college or university                                 |
|                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Other **   |

\* In numbers 8 and 9 above, eligible UTD and AFSCME unit members may be granted personal leave without pay for each of these reasons only once, in their career with M-DCPS.

\*\*Personal leave for reasons other than those listed above may be approved by the Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent.

EXPLAIN IN DETAIL YOUR REASONS FOR REQUESTING PERSONAL LEAVE. (MUST BE COMPLETED BY ALL EMPLOYEES - Use separate sheet if required.)

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**For Employees Applying for a Leave Category Not Providing Board-paid Benefits:**

- Professional (Other)
- Extended Professional Leave for Instructional Personnel
- Second-Year of Personal Leave

All employees whose initial leave began after January 1, 2018 on a leave category that does not provide Board-paid benefits or changes to a leave category that does, are subject to a 90-day waiting period for benefits to be reinstated.

## LEAVE INFORMATION

*(Please keep for your files.)*

### GENERAL

All leaves (except military) are granted for no more than (1) year at a time and MAY be extended subject to the following limits and documentation requirements:

<u>TYPE OF LEAVE</u>	<u>MAXIMUM TIME ALLOWED</u>	<u>DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO EXTEND</u>
Personal .....	UTD, and Conf.Exempt 2 years (All other units-1 year)	Letter giving reasons
Professional (Study) .....	2 years .....	Official transcript and letter from university verifying continued full-time status and planned coursework
Professional (Other) .....	2 years .....	Letter explaining need to extend
Illness of self .....	3 years .....	Leave of Absence Medical Documentation form (FM-6030) indicating need for extension
Illness of relative .....	3 years .....	Name and relationship of relative, Leave of Absence Medical Documentation form (FM-6030) indicating need for extension
Parental .....	1 year .....	Cannot extend - 2nd year must be personal. Only one parental leave can be continued with personal; you must have completed three (3) years of continuous full-time employment (AFSCME - full-time and part-time) with Miami-Dade County Public Schools to be eligible for personal leave.
Military .....	No limit .....	Copy of military orders

Notwithstanding the above limitations on the maximum length for each type of extended leave of absence without pay, the following overall limitation shall apply to any single leave or combination of leaves, regardless of category:

The number of calendar years granted for any single period of continuous leave of absence without pay, with the exception of extended military leave, shall not exceed the number of creditable salary years earned with MDCPS (entire fiscal/school years worked for AFSCME and DCSMEC) immediately preceding the leave request, up to a maximum of four (4) for UTD, MEP, DCSAA, FOP and DCSMEC, three (3) for Confidential Exempt, two (2) for AFSCME (except for illness leave). A UTD employee who took leave during any part of the preceding fiscal/school year, and returned to work, is not eligible for a new leave during the subsequent fiscal/school year.

Sixty days prior to the expiration of your leave, you will be sent a Letter of Intent to complete and return. Please notify the Department of Retirement/Leave/Unemployment Compensation of any change in your address in order that you will be assured of receiving and returning the Letter of Intent. Failure to do so could jeopardize your employment with Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Failure to adhere to the conditions under which your leave is granted will result in the immediate revocation of your leave and possible termination.

### RETIREMENT CREDIT

Under the Florida Retirement System Pension Plan, up to 24 months (2 years) of retirement credit may be purchased for authorized leaves of absence. A member must return to the employment of a Florida Retirement System covered employer immediately upon termination of the leave and remain for at least one (1) calendar month. Retirement credit for a leave of absence will not be granted until six (6) years of creditable service have been completed. The required contributions may be made at any time prior to retirement. The member must pay the total contribution plus compounded interest. Under the Florida Retirement System Investment Plan, leaves of absence are not able to be purchased.

Under the Teacher's Retirement System there is no limit to the number of years of leave which may be purchased for retirement purposes. (For further information call the Retirement Section, 995-7080.)

### EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

For more information contact the EMPLOYEE BENEFITS office at 995-7129.

Insurance coverage is provided according to bargaining unit and type of leave as indicated in the following chart:

	<u>UTD</u>	<u>AFSCME</u>	<u>DCSMEC</u>	<u>DCSAA</u>	<u>EXEMPT ADMIN</u>	<u>CONF. SEC'Y</u>	<u>FOP</u>
Professional .....	Yes***	No	No	Yes****	Yes***	Yes***	No
Illness/Self .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Illness/Family .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parental .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal .....	yes*	yes*	No	yes	yes	Yes**	No
Military .....	No**	No**	No	No	No	No**	No**

\* Board-Paid HEALTH COVERAGE AND LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS ONLY will be authorized for a maximum of one (1) year for each personal leave without pay granted. UTD and Confidential Exempt employees have the option to purchase HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS at the group rate for the second consecutive year of Board-approved personal leave without pay.

\*\* Employees who are either drafted or are already members of the active or retired reserves of the United States Armed Forces (but not enlistees) who are involuntarily called to active duty, shall have their health and life insurance coverage continued by the Board for the period of their approved leave.

\*\*\*If full-time employment is approved, no Fringe Benefits will be provided.

\*\*\*\*DCSAA employees on professional leave will continue to receive Board-paid health coverage and life insurance benefits for one year.

**IMPORTANT:** Employees on Board approved leave have the option to continue any of their coverages through direct payment while on leave. For those benefits not mentioned above, the department of EMPLOYEE BENEFITS will contact you. All employees whose initial leave began after January 1, 2018 on a leave category that does not provide Board-paid benefits or changes to a leave category that does, are subject to a 90-day waiting period for benefits to be reinstated.

FM-2763 Rev. (09-22)

Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Department of Transportation

TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE INFORMATION SHEET  
(LOCATOR SHEET)

*PLEASE PRINT NEATLY!*

**Employee ID number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee name:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
First M.I. Last

**Home Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street address (**NO** P.O. boxes)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Zip Code

**Telephone numbers:**

home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Information:**

(1) Name of Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Name of Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature Date

**OFFICE USE ONLY:**

DRIVER ROUTE # \_\_\_\_\_  AIDE ROUTE # \_\_\_\_\_



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
RECORD OF SCHOOL BUS EVACUATION DRILLS

Rule 6A-3.0171(2) of the State Board of Education states: "School Principals (or their designees) shall direct school bus emergency evacuation drills during the first six (6) weeks of each semester and maintain documentation for all students." This form shall be used to document the required school bus emergency evacuation drills. Evacuation drill records shall be maintained at the school for the current school year plus the preceding three (3) school years.



SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION #: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF EVACUATION DRILL: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

BUS ROUTE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF DRIVER: \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE DOOR(S) USED: FRONT REAR SIDE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Principal or Principal's designee

DATE OF EVACUATION DRILL: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

BUS ROUTE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF DRIVER: \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE DOOR(S) USED: FRONT REAR SIDE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Principal or Principal's designee

DATE OF EVACUATION DRILL: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

BUS ROUTE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF DRIVER: \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE DOOR(S) USED: FRONT REAR SIDE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Principal or Principal's designee

DATE OF EVACUATION DRILL: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

BUS ROUTE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF DRIVER: \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE DOOR(S) USED: FRONT REAR SIDE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Principal or Principal's designee



**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**  
**Department of Transportation**  
 REQUEST FOR SMA STUDENTS TO RIDE ON  
 A SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

**Parent** – Sign this request & return to the school. Allow up to 10 days for processing.  
**School** – Confirm info & provide SPACE AVAILABLE form to student if approved.  
**Student**- Keep a copy and provide to driver when requested.

**Space Available request for Success Management Academy students (SMA)**

Students riding with a "Space Available Pass" are expected to observe all transportation rules & procedures. Failure to abide by such rules shall be cause for immediate revocation. Students riding with this pass may only use existing bus stops while available.

Student ID verified by \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. This form should be resubmitted every school year (after the 10 <sup>th</sup> day of each school year) | 4. Not every stop is serviced in the morning or afternoon due to ridership |
| 2. No new stops or services will be implemented to accommodate space available students                   | 5. Bus stops offered may not operate year-round or subsequent years        |
| 3. Students may need parental assistance to reach stop locations due to distance/hazards                  | 6. No student should ride bus until notified application is approved       |

**1. Section below is for the school site authorizing the initial request (also completely fill out section 3)**

Do not submit requests for Space Available without confirming (with the driver) that there is space on the bus & stop is in service.

School \_\_\_\_\_ School Loc# \_\_\_\_\_ School Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Direct Number \_\_\_\_\_ Ext \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Seats available: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approved  Denied  Bus is at Capacity  Requested before 10 days of school  
 Not a valid stop location  Stop is at an ESE student's home

**2. Section below is for SMA Program**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7112 at 7111 - Hialeah SHS       | <input type="checkbox"/> 7342 - Miami Jackson Adult Ed         | <input type="checkbox"/> 7512 at 7241-Ronald W. Reagan/Doral SHS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7132 at 7131-HML SHS             | <input type="checkbox"/> 7342 at 7791-Booker T. Washington SHS | <input type="checkbox"/> 7512 at 7191-Hialeah Gardens SHS        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7272 - Miami Coral Park Adult Ed | <input type="checkbox"/> 7432 at 7731-Southridge SHS           | <input type="checkbox"/> 7512 at 7049-Westland Hialeah SHS       |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> 7432 at 7361-Miami Killian SHS        |  |

**3. Section below is filled out by authorized school site personnel & signed by school. Student must keep a copy for the driver**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date of registration: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stop location: \_\_\_\_\_ Pickup time: \_\_\_\_\_ Drop off Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School bus route # AM \_\_\_\_\_ PM \_\_\_\_\_ PM WED \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Authorized School Site Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name of person issuing this pass \_\_\_\_\_ Date of issue \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date of registration: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stop location: \_\_\_\_\_ Pickup time: \_\_\_\_\_ Drop off Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School bus route # AM \_\_\_\_\_ PM \_\_\_\_\_ PM WED \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Authorized School Site Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name of person issuing this pass \_\_\_\_\_ Date of issue \_\_\_\_\_



## M-DCPS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

NAME OF PROGRAM: \_\_\_\_\_ WEEK OF: \_\_\_\_\_ TRANSP. CENTER: 923

The bus driver **MUST** complete ALL of the information required below for each trip made. When more than one trip is made on a given day, another line must be used. Mileage and Time readings below are to be taken as instructed by the office and totaled by the office. These reports **MUST** be given to the field trip clerk weekly.

DATE OF TRIP	ROUTE #	BUS #	SPEEDOMETER READING		TOTAL MILEAGE	TIME		NO. OF PUPILS	PLACE OF PICK UP	DESTINATION
			BEGIN	END		START	FINISH			

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DRIVER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMPLOYEE # \_\_\_\_\_

FIELD TRIP CLERK INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX II

### MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

- Policy 4213, *Student Supervision and Welfare*
- Policy 8462, *Student Abuse and Neglect*
- Policy 5517.01, *Bullying and Harassment*
- Policy 5500, *Student Conduct and Discipline*
- Policy 8670, *Post Trip Inspections of School Buses*
- Policy 5610, *Suspension and Expulsion of Students*
- Policy 5630, *Corporal Punishment and Use of Reasonable Force*
- Policy 4210, *Standards of Ethical Conduct*
- Policy 4210.01, *Code of Ethics*
- Policy 4124, *Drug-Free Workplace*
- Policy 4215, *Use of Tobacco Products and Smoking Devices*
- Policy 4231, *Outside Activities of Support Staff*
- Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*
- Policy 4232, *Political Activities*
- Policy 4362, *Anti-Discrimination/Harassment*
- Policy 4380, *Threatening Behavior Towards Staff Members*
- Policy 4430, *Leaves of Absence*
- Policy 4430.01, *FMLA Leave*
- Policy 8600, *Transportation*

## 4213 - STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE

Protecting the physical and emotional well-being of students is of paramount importance. Each support staff member shall maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in dealing with the supervision, control, and protection of students on or off school property.

Staff shall:

- A. report immediately to a building administrator any accident, safety hazard, or other potentially harmful condition or situation s/he detects.
- B. provide proper instruction in safety matters.
- C. immediately report to a building administrator knowledge of threats of violence by students.
- D. not send students on any non-school related errands.
- E. not inappropriately associate with students at any time in a manner which may give the appearance of impropriety, including, but not limited to, the creation or participation in any situation or activity which could be considered abusive or sexually suggestive or involve illegal substances such as drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
- F. not engage in unacceptable relationships and/or communications with students.

Unacceptable relationships and/or communications with students include but are not limited to the following: dating; any form of sexual touching or behavior; making sexual, indecent, or illegal proposals, gestures, or comments; and/or exploiting an employee-student relationships for any reason. Any sexual or other inappropriate conduct with a student by any staff member will subject the offender to potential criminal liability and discipline up to and including termination of employment.

- G. if they have knowledge of or have reasonable cause to suspect that another Board employee is engaging in unacceptable relationships and/or communications with a student, immediately reports such information to a site or region supervisor; Failure to do so shall constitute a violation of this Board policy.
- H. if a student approaches a staff member to seek advice or to ask questions regarding a personal problem related to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health, and/or family relationships, etc., the staff member may attempt to assist the student by facilitating contact with certified or licensed individuals in the District or community who specialize in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the student's stated problem;

However, under no circumstances should a staff member attempt, unless properly certified licensed and authorized to do so, to counsel, assess, diagnose, or treat the student's problem or behavior, nor should such staff member inappropriately disclose personally identifiable information concerning the student to third persons not specifically authorized by law.

- I. not transport students in a private vehicle without the approval of the principal.
- J. not be required to perform work or services that may be detrimental to their health.

Since most information concerning a child in school, other than directory information described in Policy 8330, is confidential under Federal and State laws, any staff member who shares confidential information with another person not authorized to receive the information may be subject to discipline and/or civil liability. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, grades, behavior, family background, and alleged child abuse.

Pursuant to the laws of the State and Policy 8462, each staff member shall report to the proper legal authorities (site administrator, School Police, and Department of Children and Families) immediately any sign of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Effective 7/1/11

## 8462 - STUDENT ABUSE, ABANDONMENT, AND NEGLECT

Any person, including teachers, administrators, support personnel, and other District and school personnel, who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child or a student has been abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, adult, other person responsible for the child's welfare, or that a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Department of Children and Families ("DCF") in a manner prescribed by this policy.

In addition, any person, including teachers, administrators, support personnel, and other District and school personnel who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child or student is the victim of childhood sexual abuse or the victim of a known or suspected juvenile sexual offender, shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families.

Any person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082, 775.083, or 775.084.

Prohibiting or delaying an employee or subordinate from making a report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect may constitute a violation of law even if the supervisor intends to make the report themselves.

Although reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect should always be made by the person first learning of the incident, persons with additional information regarding the incident must provide the information to the appropriate authority as outlined in Florida State statutes and this policy.

### **Immunity from Liability**

Under Florida law, any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by this chapter or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the Department of Children and Families or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. Further, no school district employee may be subjected to detrimental changes in employment status by reason of his or her making such report.

### **General Definition of Child Abuse**

Child abuse includes harm or threatened harm to a child's physical or mental health or welfare by the acts or omissions of a parent, legal guardian, adult household member, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare including an employee of any school, public or private day care center, residential home, institution, facility, or agency or any other person at such institution legally responsible for the child's care. Harm to a child's health or welfare can occur when the parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare inflicts, or allows to be inflicted, upon the child physical, sexual, or mental injury that causes or is likely to cause the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Child abuse includes the neglect and abandonment of a child.

In determining whether harm has occurred, the following factors must be considered in evaluating any physical, mental, or emotional injury to a child:

- A. the age of the child.
- B. any prior history of injuries to the child.
- C. the location of the injury on the body of the child.
- D. the multiplicity of the injury; and

- E. the type of trauma inflicted.

### **Examples of Abuse, Neglect, and Abandonment**

**Physical Injury** - the result of willful acts that produce injuries.

**Mental Injury** - an injury to the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by discernible and substantial impairment in the ability to function within the normal range of performance and behavior.

**Neglect** - depriving a child, or allowing a child to be deprived of, necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment, although financially able to provide such care, or permitting a child to live in an environment when such deprivation or environment causes the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired.

**Sexual Abuse** - allowing the commission of sexual battery or lewd and lascivious acts, against or in the presences of the child or sexually exploiting the child.

**Abandonment** - making no provision for the child's support and failing to establish or maintain a substantial or positive relationship with the child.

**Child in Need of Supervision and Care** - when a child that has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care.

**Additional Categories of Abuse** - Exploiting a child, or allowing a child to be exploited (hiring and employing; infliction of pain or suffering); exposing a child to a controlled substance or alcohol; using mechanical devices, unreasonable restraints, or extended periods of isolation to control children; engaging in violent behavior that demonstrates a wanton disregard for the presence of a child and could reasonably result in serious injury to the child; negligently failing to protect a child from inflicted physical, mental, or sexual injury caused by the acts of another; allowing a child's sibling to die as a result of abuse or neglect.

Additional definitions of child abuse can be found in F.S. 39.01.

### **Child Abuse Reporting Procedures**

Complete the following procedures when reporting suspicion of child abuse, abandonment, neglect, or that a child is in need of supervision and care:

- A. Immediately report suspected abuse to the twenty-four (24) hour, toll-free DCF Central Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96- ABUSE (22873) or online at <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service- programs/abuse-hotline/report-online.shtml>. New allegations of child abuse require the immediate reporting of suspecting child abuse, neglect, and abandonment regardless of a child's current placement under the supervision of DCF.

The report should include the child's name, home address found in the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS) and on the Student Data Card, parent/guardian information, and any other identifiable information that will assist DCF in locating the child.

A determination should be made as to who perpetrated the abuse and where the incident occurred for appropriate law enforcement notification, and then no further questioning of the child by School Board employees shall take place.

Advise the Florida Abuse Hotline operator of whether the student is in school on the day that the report is made.

- B. Immediately notify (305) 995-COPS (2677) and the school site administrator that the abuse has been reported to the DCF Central Abuse Hotline.

- C. If the incident of suspected abuse alleges that a school board employee is the offender, follow the steps outlined above. Additionally, the site administrator must contact the Office of Professional Standards (OPS).
- D. School-site employees shall not contact the child's parent or guardian, including anyone who is in a parental relationship to a student or any person exercising supervisory authority over a child in place of the parent. The representative from DCF or law enforcement agency will contact the parent/guardian.
- E. Board employees shall not contact the alleged perpetrator. A representative from DCF or law enforcement will contact the alleged perpetrator.
- F. Always maintain confidentiality of the report and suspected abuse, notwithstanding providing information to officials for purposes of the investigation.
- G. Simply notifying a school site or work supervisor does not relieve the employee from the mandatory reporting requirements. School or other District personnel who are informed of suspected abuse, abandonment, and neglect are also obligated to report to the central abuse hotline.

No employee of the district shall be subject to reprisal or discharge because of his/her actions in reporting abuse, abandonment, or neglect pursuant to law and this policy.

No Board employee may agree, as a condition of receiving information about child abuse, neglect, or abandonment from a victim, a perpetrator, witness, or other person, that the Board employee will not report this information as required by law and this Board policy.

#### **Post-Reporting Procedures**

- A. The person who reports the alleged abuse shall remain at the school and an appropriate Board employee shall remain with the child until a representative from DCF or law enforcement arrives on campus. At that point questioning of the child may resume, but only at the direction of either the DCF or law enforcement agency.
- B. In the event a report of suspected child abuse is made after regular school hours and a school administrator is unavailable because the report occurred after hours, the Board employee must be sure to inform the school administrator the following morning. Please note that the DCF Central Abuse Hotline must always be called.
- C. Do not maintain records or reports made pursuant to this policy as part of the student's educational record.
- D. Any school teacher or other school official or personnel who reports a case of child abuse may, at the time s/he makes the report, request that the department notify him/her that a child protective investigation occurred as a result of the report and may also request a written summary of the outcome of the investigation. DCF shall mail such a notice to the reporter within ten (10) days after completing the child protective investigation.
- E. After a call has been made to the hotline, all issues and concerns pertaining to the report should be directed to School Operations at 305-805-4600. Any issues and concerns occurring after business hours should be directed to 305-995- COPS (2677).

#### **Students Who Have Not Been Picked Up from School Or After School Care**

- A. If a student has not been picked up from school after dismissal, the principal or after school care manager shall make every effort to contact the parent/guardian or other authorized individuals listed on the Student Data /Emergency Contact Card.
- B. After two hours have passed from the regularly scheduled dismissal time, the principal may contact **1-800-96- ABUSE** (22873) to report the incident. This step should only be taken when all efforts have

been exhausted with regard to contacting the parent/guardian or other authorized individuals on the student data card.

### **DCF/Law Enforcement Investigations of Child Abuse**

#### **A. Arrival On Campus:**

Upon arriving on campus, all personnel from DCF will be required to produce their State issued identification. School personnel shall examine and verify the identity of the DCF representative and may call the Abuse Hotline to confirm but shall not make a photocopy of the ID or request any additional identification document or information. Because immediate investigation of child abuse is critical, every effort must be made to prevent delay in verification.

Upon the initiation of an investigation by DCF and/or law enforcement agency, no additional investigation should be initiated by any school-site personnel. Depending on the nature of the allegations, a representative from one or both of those agencies have the authority to conduct an interview with a student on school premises during the school day and may come to school to do so. Upon arriving on campus, the representative from DCF and/or law enforcement agency shall advise the principal of that agency's presence and purpose. Upon the presentation of proper identification, these individuals must be given access to the student.

#### **B. Interviewing Students:**

A school staff member known to the child may be present during the interview only under the following conditions if:

1. A representative from DCF or law enforcement believes that the school staff member(s) could enhance the success of the interview, and a school-site administrator has informed the alleged abused child that the child may have a staff member present and the child chooses to do so.
2. When a determination has been made to conduct an interview on school grounds, it should be conducted in an area that ensures confidentiality and avoids embarrassment to the student.

#### **C. Removal of Students from Campus:**

If the representative from DCF or law enforcement agency determines that the student is to be removed from school, this shall be done as inconspicuously and expeditiously as possible. Court orders shall not be required to commence an investigation or remove a child. The agency that removes the student from school shall be responsible for contacting that student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

A DCF employee who removes a child from campus must sign the student out of school pursuant to District policies and procedures.

Under no circumstance shall an alleged student witness be removed from the school or a school sponsored activity or event.

#### **D. Records and Information Sharing**

Access to any records or information reasonably necessary to ensure appropriate services for the child or for the safety of the child should be provided to DCF/law enforcement. Such records and information are otherwise confidential and may be shared with DCF/law enforcement only through an interagency agreement and in accordance with Federal and State law.

### **Penalties For Failure to Comply With Mandatory Reporting Requirements**

- #### **A. Any employee who is required to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect and who knowingly**

and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082 or 775.083.

- B. A person who knowingly and willfully makes public or discloses any confidential information contained in the central abuse registry and tracking system or in the records of any child abuse or neglect case, except as provided in F.S. 39.201 and 794.024 is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082 or 775.083.
- C. A person who knowingly and willfully makes a false report of child abuse or neglect, or who advises another to make a false report, is guilty of a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in F.S. 775.082 or 775.083. Anyone making a report who is acting in good faith is immune from any liability under this subsection.

Any employee who fails to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment.

Effective 7/1/11

Revised 4/15/15

Revised 4/29/20

## 5517 - PROHIBITION ON DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT AGAINST STUDENTS BASED ON PROTECTED CATEGORIES

The School Board shall comply with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. The Board will enforce its prohibition against discrimination and harassment based on sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, and any other basis prohibited by law. The Board shall maintain an educational and work environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, which includes Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX prohibits all forms of sex discrimination and unwelcome sexual conduct, including conditioning any aid, benefit, or service of the school on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, stalking, and all forms of sexual harassment that a reasonable person would determine so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a student access to an education program or activity. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome touching, graphic verbal comments, sexual jokes, slurs, gestures, or pictures, whether in-person or through any other method, including sexual cyber-harassment. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment against students by employees, other students and their parents or guardians, or third parties. This policy prohibits discrimination and harassment at locations, events, or circumstances over which the Board exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the prohibited conduct occurs, including but not limited to such events occurring on school property, during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, and on school-sponsored transportation. This policy also prohibits retaliation against a person who has made a report or filed a formal complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a discrimination or harassment investigation.

For additional information about Title IX or any other discrimination or harassment concerns contact:

Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC)  
Executive Director/District Title IX Coordinator  
155 N.E. 15th Street,  
Suite P104E  
Miami, FL 33132  
Phone: (305) 995-1580  
Fax: (305) 995-2047  
crc@dadeschools.net  
<http://crc.dadeschools.net/>

For additional information on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or any other student disability concerns contact:

Division of Special Education  
504 Coordinator  
1501 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 409  
Miami, FL 33132  
Phone: (305) 995-1796  
Fax: (305) 523-0591  
ese@dadeschools.net  
<http://ese.dadeschools.net/>

The Board will take immediate steps to discipline individuals for:

- A. Retaliating against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a discrimination or harassment investigation.
- B. Filing a malicious or knowingly false report or complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- C. Disregarding, failing to investigate adequately, or delaying investigation of allegations of prohibited discrimination or harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating unlawful discrimination or harassment charges comprises part of one's duties.

The district compliance officer will supervise compliance with Federal and State regulations and address complaints in accordance with law and Policy 5517.02. The Board will provide proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II, Title VI, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

## **Reports and Complaints**

Students who believe they have been the victim of discrimination, harassment or retaliation are entitled to use the complaint procedures in Policy 5517.02, or, if the complaint involves sexual harassment prohibited by Title IX, to file a formal complaint in accordance with the District's *Title IX Sexual Harassment Manual* and request an investigation. Reports will be addressed as soon as possible after the alleged conduct occurs while the facts are known, and potential witnesses are available. When a sexual harassment report is made, supportive measures will be offered, and the formal complaint process will be explained to the complainant. During an investigation of prohibited conduct, the complainant and the respondent shall be provided an equal opportunity to present witnesses and evidence relevant to the complaint. The principal shall apply the Code of Student Conduct to allegations of discrimination and harassment by students, except as otherwise specified in law or regulation.

Initiating a report or formal complaint will not adversely affect the complainant's participation in educational or extra-curricular programs unless the complainant makes the complaint maliciously or with knowledge that it is false. Investigation of an allegation shall not proceed solely based on an anonymous complaint without first attempting to ascertain the identity of the complainant. If after such efforts, the complainant remains anonymous, the investigation will proceed to the extent possible.

The Superintendent shall develop guidelines setting forth the conditions and requirements to implement this policy in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and Board policies. The District's Title IX Coordinator is authorized to coordinate the Board's Title IX obligations.

## **Privacy/Confidentiality**

The district respects the privacy of students, including the complainant, the respondent, and the witnesses, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any regulatory, discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and Policy 5517.02 shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law, except as otherwise set forth in law or regulation.

The complaint processes in Policy 5517.02 and/or the *Title IX Sexual Harassment Manual* are not intended to interfere with student rights to pursue complaints with the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, or the Florida Department of Education. The CRC Office processes such complaints according to the procedures and standards set forth by Federal and State agencies.

## **Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials**

All individuals responsible for receiving reports, applying formal complaint procedures, and/or conducting investigations under this policy, Policy 5517.02, Policy 5517.03, and/or the *Title IX Sexual Harassment Manual* shall retain all information, documents, electronically stored information (ESI), and electronic media created and/or received as part of the report, complaint, or investigation. The information shall be retained immediately upon receipt of specific information and/or written notice that could lead to an investigation, formal complaint, or potential litigation.

The information, documents, ESI, and electronic media retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal and/or State law (e.g., student records).

The information, documents, ESI, and electronic media created or received as part of a sexual harassment complaint procedure shall be retained for not less than seven (7) years. All other types of investigations shall be maintained for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by Policies 8320, 8330 or the district's records retention schedule.

## **Education and Training**

The Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of unlawful harassment and discrimination. The Superintendent shall provide appropriate training to members of the School District

community related to the implementation of this policy and Policy 5517.02. The district's sexual harassment training information shall be retained for not less than seven (7) years.

### **Employee Sexual Conduct**

Any teacher, administrator, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual conduct with a student may also be guilty of a crime.

### **Effect of Other Policies**

The definition of harassment that is not based upon protected categories is contained within the *Code of Student Conduct*, referenced in Policy 5500. Florida law also defines *Bullying and Harassment*, as set forth in Policy 5517.01. In accordance with Florida law, Policy 5517.03 defines *Dating Violence or Abuse*. Policy 5136.02 defines *Sexting*.

Effective 7/1/11  
Revised 11/19/13  
Revised 10/21/20

#### **5630 - CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND USE OF REASONABLE FORCE**

Teachers or other designated members of the staff are authorized to control students assigned to them and shall keep order in the classroom.

Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited. Comprehensive programs for alternative discipline include, but are not limited to, counseling, timeout rooms, in-school suspension centers, student mediation and conflict resolution, parental involvement, alternative education programs, and other forms of positive reinforcement.

Suspensions and/or expulsions are also available as administrative disciplinary actions depending upon the severity of the misconduct (Policy 5610).

Instructional and support staff, within the scope of their employment, may use and apply reasonable force to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon or within the control of the student, in self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property.

Effective 7/1/11

## 4210 - STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

All employees are representatives of the district and shall conduct themselves, both in their employment and in the community, in a manner that will reflect credit upon themselves and the school system.

A support staff member shall:

- A. make a reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
- B. not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
- C. not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- D. not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
- E. not harass or discriminate against any student on any basis prohibited by law or the School Board and shall make reasonable efforts to assure that each student is protected from discrimination and harassment, including but not limited to, making a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for reporting discrimination and/or harassment, to the administrator or designee to whom the employee is responsible and/or the District's Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC);
- F. not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage (see Board Policy 4213, *Student Supervision and Welfare*).
- G. keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- H. not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- I. not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage (see also Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*).
- J. accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence judgment (see also Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*).

Pursuant to F.S. 112.313, no support staff member shall solicit or accept anything of value including a gift (see F.S. 112.312), loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service based upon an understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the support staff member would be influenced thereby.

- K. offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages (see also Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*).
- L. maintain honesty in all dealings.
- M. not interfere with another District employee's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
- N. not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable efforts to assure that each individual is protected from such discrimination and harassment, including but not limited to, making a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for reporting discrimination and/or harassment, to the administrator or designee to whom the employee is responsible and/or the District's Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC);

- O. not make malicious or intentionally false statements about another District employee.
- P. not misrepresent one's qualifications.
- Q. not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with employment.
- R. not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for employment.
- S. not use abusive and/or profane language or display unseemly conduct in the workplace.
- T. report any criminal act, and/or disruptive, and/or inappropriate behavior to the administrator or designee to whom the employee is responsible.

Allegations of child abuse and/or neglect **MUST** also be reported, immediately upon knowledge, to the Florida Department of Children and Families at 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873), or online at <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/abuse-hotline/report-online.shtml> **AND** to the School Police at 305-995-COPS (305-995-2677). Failure to immediately report child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities will lead to disciplinary action.

No support staff member shall have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct, or indirect; engage in any business transaction or professional activity; or incur any obligation of any nature that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his/her duties in the public interest. (see also Policy 4129, *Conflict of Interest*)

All support staff members who have direct access to students shall be required to complete training on these standards upon employment and annually thereafter.

Effective 7/1/11  
Revised 4/13/16  
Technical Change 3/17/17  
Revised 10/21/20

## 4210.01 - CODE OF ETHICS

All members of the School Board, administrators, teachers, and all other employees of the district, regardless of their position, because of their dual roles as public servants and educators are to be bound by the following Code of Ethics. Adherence to the Code of Ethics will create an environment of honesty and integrity and will aid in achieving the common mission of providing a safe and high-quality education to all District students.

As stated in the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida (State Board of Education F.A.C. 6A-10.081):

- A. The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
- B. The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
- C. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, students, parents, and other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

Further, nonacademic, and elected officials are bound to accept these principles since these groups reflect critical policy direction and support services for the essential academic purpose.

### Application

This Code of Ethics applies to all members of the Board, administrators, teachers, and all other employees regardless of full or part-time status. It also applies to all persons who receive any direct economic benefits such as membership in Board funded insurance programs.

Employees are subject to various other laws, rules, and regulations including but not limited to The Code of Ethics for the Education Profession in Florida and the Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida, F.A.C. Chapter 6A-10.081, the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, found in F.S. Chapter 112, Part III, and Policy 4129, which are incorporated herein by reference and this Code of Ethics should be viewed as additive to these laws, rules, and regulations. To the extent not in conflict with any laws, Board policies, or governmental regulations, this Code of Ethics shall control regarding conduct. In the event of any conflict, the law, regulation, or Board policy shall control.

### Fundamental Principles

The fundamental principles upon which this Code of Ethics is predicated are as follows:

- A. Citizenship – Helping to create a society based upon democratic values (e.g., rule of law, equality of opportunity, due process, reasoned argument, representative government, checks and balances, rights and responsibilities, and democratic decision-making).
- B. Cooperation – Working together toward goals as basic as human survival in an increasingly interdependent world.
- C. Fairness – Treating people impartially, not playing favorites, being open-minded, and maintaining an objective attitude toward those whose actions and ideas are different from our own.
- D. Honesty – Dealing truthfully with people, being sincere, not deceiving them nor stealing from them, not cheating nor lying.
- E. Integrity – Standing up for their beliefs about what is right and what is wrong and resisting social pressure to do wrong.
- F. Kindness – Being sympathetic, helpful, compassionate, benevolent, agreeable, and gentle toward people and other living things.
- G. Pursuit of Excellence – Doing their best with their talents, striving toward a goal, and not giving up.

- H. Respect – Showing regard for the worth and dignity of someone or something, being courteous and polite, and judging all people on their merits. It takes three (3) major forms: respect for oneself, respect for other people, and respect for all forms of life and the environment.
- I. Responsibility – Thinking before acting and being accountable for their actions, paying attention to others, and responding to their needs. Responsibility emphasizes our positive obligations to care for each other.

Each employee agrees and pledges:

- A. To abide by this Code of Ethics, making the well-being of the students and the honest performance of professional duties core guiding principles.
- B. To obey local, State, and national laws, codes, and regulations.
- C. To support the principles of due process to protect the civil and human rights of all individuals.
- D. To treat all persons with respect and to strive to be fair in all matters.
- E. To take responsibility and be accountable for his/her actions.
- F. To avoid conflicts of interest or any appearance of impropriety.
- G. To cooperate with others to protect and advance the district and its students; and
- H. To be efficient and effective in the performance of job duties.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Employees shall employ independent objective judgment in performing their duties, deciding all matters on the merits, free of partiality or prejudice, and unimpeded by conflicts of interest or other improper influences. No employee shall engage in conduct which creates a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest shall be defined as a situation in which regard for a private interest tends to lead to disregard of a public duty or interest. A conflict of interest shall exist upon use by an employee of the authority of his/her office or the use of any confidential information received through his/her employment for the private pecuniary benefit of the employee, or the employee's immediate family or a business with which the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family has employment or ownership worth \$5,000 or more, either directly or indirectly, without disclosure to the appropriate District official.

- A. Financial Interest. Except as authorized in any collective bargaining agreement, an employee shall not engage, or have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, in any business, transaction or professional entity, either as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or manager in that entity, which conflicts with or impairs the proper discharge of official duties or which could bring disfavor or disrespect upon the employee or the District. Any provision of this code which requires disclosure to District officials will be satisfied by the filing of a financial disclosure statement in the form required of members of the Board.
- B. Contracting Decisions. An employee shall not recommend, vote, or otherwise participate in the decision to make any contract between the district and any business or entity in which the employee has a personal or financial conflict of interest. This includes contractual relationships with units of government as well as for profit and not for profit organizations such as charter schools.
- C. Financial Conflict. An employee who has a financial conflict of interest because of a relationship with a business, governmental agency or not for profit institution must recuse himself/herself from any decision concerning that entity including any decision to contract or not to contract with the entity and the administration of the contract. The reason for such recusal must be stated in writing and filed with the

- Superintendent and the Board Attorney prior to or at the time of the action requiring the recusal.
- D. Honoraria. An employee will not solicit or accept an honorarium, which is related to the employee's job duties. "Honorarium" shall be defined consistent with F.S. 112.3149, as a payment of money or anything of value paid to the employee or on his/her behalf as consideration for an oral presentation or writing other than a book.
  - E. Personal Advertisements. An employee shall not advertise business or professional activities on school property or use schoolwork hours, property, or services to perform or promote personal, not for profit, or commercial enterprises or to campaign or raise money for any candidates for political office.
  - F. Employee Publications. An employee shall not participate in the review and approval of publications or materials for District purchase by the office in which the employee is employed if the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family is the author/editor of or has any financial interest in the sale of such publications or materials.
  - G. Referrals. In no situation, shall an employee refer a parent or student to a service, service provider, or product in return for anything of value. Officers or employees making referrals as part of their official duties shall make referrals to more than one provider of the service or product, if available. For example, school counselors shall refer parents or students to more than one counselor or provider of medical services, if available. Additionally, an employee shall not refer a parent or student to any service, service provider, or product in which that employee has a financial interest, without first disclosing that interest to the parent or student.
  - H. Outside Income. Employees shall not accept any outside earned income in any situation where a reasonable person in the community could conclude that the receipt of the income would be inconsistent, incompatible or in conflict with the employee's official duties.
  - I. General Limitation on Solicitation. An employee shall not solicit, directly or indirectly any payments or other benefits under circumstances that would create in the mind of a reasonable person in the community the belief that such payments or benefits were provided with the intent to improperly influence the employee's actions. This provision does not apply to lawful campaign contributions.
  - J. Gifts and Gratuities. The acceptance of gifts, payments or other benefits from those with whom the district does business, regardless of profit or not for profit status, can be improper. A gift is defined as anything of value that an employee receives, or that is paid or given to another on an employee's behalf without any payment or consideration received in return. Examples of gifts are tickets to sporting or cultural events, items of food, meals which cannot be immediately consumed such as a holiday party, use of facilities, forgiveness of debts, interests in real property, investments, or merchandise, or a rebate or discount (unless the rebate or discount is normally given to any member of the public). Employees who are in the position to make or influence a decision to spend school funds shall not solicit or accept any personal gifts, favors, or benefits of more than nominal value during a calendar year from any single person or organization that might benefit from the employee's decision. This provision does not apply to: (a) meals provided at an event at which the employee participates in a seminar or similar activity; (b) travel expenses and meals paid by a local, state, federal or foreign government agency; or (c) lawful campaign contributions.

### **Conduct Regarding Students**

Each employee shall:

- A. make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety, including but not limited to, making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with Policy 8462.
- B. not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
- C. not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
- D. not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
- E. not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.

- F. not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
- G. not harass or discriminate against any student on any basis prohibited by the Board and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from discrimination and harassment, including but not limited to, making a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for reporting discrimination and/or harassment, to the administrator or designee to whom the employee is responsible and/or the District's Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC);
- H. not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
- I. keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

**Personnel Matters**

- A. Confidentiality. An educator shall comply with State and Federal laws and regulations, and Board policies relating to the confidentiality of student records. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, personal confidences, health or medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results.
- B. Enforcement. Enforcement will be pursuant to State law and to Board rules, which may include penalties for violations of the Code of Ethics that will be imposed pursuant to the applicable State law or Board policy.
- C. Certification. Each employee will be required to electronically sign a Certificate attached as Exhibit "A", which is incorporated herein by reference, certifying that the employee has read, understands, and agrees to abide by this Code of Ethics as well as the state laws and Board policies and regulations cited in the Code. A failure to sign the Certificate will not excuse a failure to comply with the Code of Ethics. The certification shall be submitted according to a process determined by the Office of Human Resources, Recruiting, and Performance Management. Infractions shall be reported to the Office of Human Resources, Recruiting, and Performance Management and the Office of the Inspector General.

**EXHIBIT A**

**CERTIFICATE**

I, the undersigned,

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(Print your name)

hereby certifies as follows:

I have received copies of Policy 4210.01 which incorporates by reference The Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, F.S. Chapter 112, Part III, The Code of Ethics and the Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida and Policy 4129 (collectively referred to as the "policy"). I have read and understand the policy.

Date:

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Online Signature

Effective 7/1/11  
 Technical Change 3/17/17  
 Revised 10/21/20

## 4124 - DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- A. promote a healthy, safe workplace.
- B. seek the rehabilitation of permanent employees with a self-admitted or detected substance abuse problem.
- C. eliminate substance abuse problems in the workplace.
- D. provide a consistent model of substance-free behavior for students.
- E. provide a clear standard of conduct for District employees.
- F. communicate that persons who violate the standards of conduct cited in this rule and who refuse or cannot be assisted by rehabilitation or who have negatively impacted students and/or staff shall be dismissed.
- G. hire drug-free employees.

### Illegal Drugs

- A. Employees on duty or on-Board property shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use illegal drugs, or be under the influence of such drugs.
- B. Employees on or off duty will not influence students to use illegal drugs or abuse legal drugs.
- C. An employee convicted, adjudicated guilty, or who has entered a plea of guilty for any criminal drug statute violation occurring in the workplace shall notify the district within forty-eight (48) hours after final judgment.

One time only, prior to testing, the district shall give all job applicants and part-time employees going to full-time employment a written statement of its policy on a drug-free workplace.

### Alcohol and Prescription Drugs

- A. Employees on duty or on-Board property shall not be under the influence of alcohol. Employees in safety sensitive positions will be free of measurable alcohol concentrations. Safety-sensitive positions are defined in the Drug-Free Workplace Technical Guide, incorporated by reference. Employees shall not manufacture or use alcoholic beverages while on Board property or on duty.
- B. Employees on duty will not use or take prescription drugs above the level recommended by the prescribing physician and will not use prescribed drugs for purposes other than what the prescribed drugs were intended. In addition, the employee will not distribute or dispense such drugs, except as provided in Policy 5330.

### Pre-Employment Drug Screening

- A. The district shall require pre-employment drug screening of applicants according to the Drug-Free Workplace Technical Guide.
- B. Applicants will be referred to Board approved, independent, certified laboratories utilizing recognized techniques and procedures as described in the Drug-Free Workplace Technical Guide.
- C. Specimens collected shall not be used to conduct any other analysis or test unless otherwise authorized by law.
- D. The validity period for pre-employment drug screening is one (1) year.
- E. Applicants will be informed in advance of the requirement of a negative drug screen as a condition of employment. Applicants testing positive will not be eligible for employment by the district for three (3) years from the date of the test. Applicants for designated positions will be informed of the requirements for a random drug screening test, without prior notification, after employment, under existing labor contracts, statutes, OTETA, and Board policies.

## **Employee Physical Examinations/Screening/Health Services**

- A. Drug screening shall be included in all physical examinations; existing employees and contracted persons in covered positions will be screened under the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 (OTETA), and as required under existing labor contracts, statutes, State Board rules, and Board policies.
- B. Circumstances under which testing may be considered include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 1. observed use of illegal drugs and/or abuse of alcohol during work hours.
  - 2. apparent physical state of impairment of motor functions.
  - 3. marked changes in personal behavior on the job not attributable to other factors.
  - 4. employee involvement in serious or repetitive accidents on the job causing personal injury to self or others and/or significant property damage.
  - 5. employee involvement in an accident requiring the vehicle to be towed or medical treatment away from the scene of the accident; and
  - 6. any vehicular fatality.
- C. Drug and/or alcohol screening shall be conducted by Board approved, independent, certified laboratories utilizing recognized techniques and procedures as described in the District's Drug-Free Workplace Technical Guide which shall be located in the Board Office, Citizen Information Center, and the Office of the Board Clerk.
- D. Medical records and related information shall be maintained in strict confidentiality, with the highest regard for employee privacy consistent with Florida's Public Records Act and the purpose of achieving and maintaining a drug-free workplace. Any laboratory contract shall provide that the contractor's records are to be kept confidential under provisions of Florida laws. The district shall establish a system of maintaining records to include both the district's and the contractor's record of applicant and employee urinalysis and blood alcohol results.
- E. Chemical dependency is an illness that can be successfully treated. It is the policy of the district, where possible, to seek rehabilitation of permanent employees with a self-admitted or detected drug problem.

## **Disciplinary Sanctions**

Employees who violate these standards of conduct and who the Board determines will not be assisted by rehabilitation or who have negatively impacted students and/or staff shall be dismissed. A refusal to submit to a drug test or a second violation of this policy shall constitute an inability to be assisted by rehabilitation. Nothing precludes the Board from seeking criminal prosecution for violation of this policy where the Board deems appropriate.

Effective 7/1/11

#### **4215 - USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND SMOKING DEVICES**

The School Board shall provide a tobacco-free environment for students, staff, and visitors. "Use of tobacco and smoking devices" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, nicotine dispensing devices, and/or electronic cigarettes or smoking devices, any other matter or substances containing tobacco, any product designed or manufactured to imitate any of these products regardless of whether it contains tobacco or nicotine, and the possession of papers used to roll cigarettes.

The use of tobacco and smoking devices is prohibited:

- A. within any indoor facility owned, leased, or contracted for by the Board.
- B. anywhere on the campus of any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, including, but not limited to, practice fields, playgrounds, football fields, baseball fields, softball fields, pool areas, soccer fields, tennis courts, and all open areas.
- C. in all vehicles owned or operated by the Board, including, but not limited to, school buses, vans, trucks, station wagons, and cars.

Effective 7/1/11

Revised 6/18/14

#### **4231 - OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES OF SUPPORT STAFF**

Support staff members should avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities, and associations conflict with the interests of the district. If these situations threaten a staff member's effectiveness within the school system, the Superintendent and/or School Board shall evaluate the impact of the interest, activity, or association upon the support staff member's responsibilities.

Effective 7/1/11

#### **4232 - POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

Employees shall not participate in any political campaign for an elective office while on duty.

Pursuant to State law and Policy 6480, support staff members may not expend public funds, (that is, any funds under the jurisdiction or control of the district) for a political advertisement or electioneering communication concerning an issue, referendum, or amendment, including State questions, that is subject to a vote of the electors.

Support staff who declare themselves candidates for an elective office shall notify the Superintendent immediately upon filing to run. All candidates for public office may be granted personal leave without pay. The support staff member's request for leave shall be submitted according to the established procedure.

Candidates shall adhere strictly to Florida law governing political activity on the part of public officials and public employees.

Effective 7/1/11

## 4129 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees are governed by the Florida Constitution, statutory provisions contained in the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, Part III of F.S. Chapter 112, certain other statutes in the Education Code, and the Florida Commission on Ethics. The following section of this policy provides the principles, in simplified form, in the Constitutional and statutory mandates. They cannot be used as definitive rules to apply to different sets of circumstances or factual situations. In any given situation, the full statutory language must be consulted for applicable definitions, and for any exemptions.

Employees are required to comply with all provisions of the Code of Ethics, including those below. This requirement discourages the appearance of impropriety and the perception of undue influence upon the business functions of the district.

This policy applies specifically to conflicts of interest. Employees are reminded that other School Board policies exist that may also address an employee's particular issue or question. It is an employee's responsibility to refer to and observe all Board policies that may be applicable to his/her individual situation.

### Provisions

#### A. Gifts

1. Employees are prohibited from soliciting or accepting anything of value, such as a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service that is based on an understanding that their official action or judgment would be influenced by such gift. (F.S. 112.313(2))
2. No employee or his/her spouse or minor child shall accept any compensation, payment, or thing of value when s/he knows, or with the exercise of reasonable care should know, that it was given to influence an action in which the employee was expected to participate in his/her official capacity. (F.S. 112.313(4))

#### B. Misuse of Public Position

No employee shall corruptly use or attempt to use his/her official position or perform his/her official duties to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption for himself/herself or others. (F.S. 112.313(6))

#### C. Disproportionate Benefit

Employees are prohibited from abusing their position to obtain a "disproportionate benefit" for themselves, their spouse, children, employer, or entities with which they have certain business interests. A disproportionate benefit means a benefit, privilege, exemption, or result arising from an act or omission by a public employee that is inconsistent with the proper performance of their public duties.

#### D. Doing Business with the School Board

1. No employee acting in his or her official capacity shall directly or indirectly purchase, rent, or lease any goods or services for the Board from any business entity of which the employee or his/her spouse or child is an officer, partner, director, or proprietor, or in which such employee or his/her spouse or child, or any combination of them, has a material interest. (F.S. 112.313(3))
2. Some case-specific exceptions to this provision may apply. Employees should review F.S. 112.313(12) for exemptions that may be applicable to their particular situations.
3. Guidelines for Avoidance of Conflict of Interest  
To avoid conflicts of interests or the appearance of conflicts as it relates to personal purchases or private contracting, Board employees who are required to file an annual statement of financial interests (financial disclosure form) or who have the authority to make purchases on behalf of the district shall adhere to the following guidelines. These guidelines do not apply to purchases made in a private capacity of goods or services at a price and upon terms available to similarly situated members of the general public.
  - a. When entering a transaction or contractual relationship as described above, employees subject to these guidelines will make the following inquiries to the entity with whom they are contracting:

1. Does the business entity have a contractual relationship with the Board for more than \$500?
  2. Is the contracting individual a principal or employee of an entity with a contractual relationship with the Board for more than \$500?
- b. If an affirmative answer is given to either inquiry above, the employee will request from the Board Attorney guidance on whether contracting with the individual or entity would constitute a conflict of interest pursuant to Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, or other statute or Board policy. The Board Attorney will issue a written opinion or will refer the employee to the Florida Commission on Ethics.
4. Clarification and opinions regarding the application of the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees can be obtained at any time from the Florida Commission on Ethics.
- E. No employee shall disclose or use information not available to members of the general public and gained by reason of his/her official position for his/her personal gain or benefit or for the personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity. (F.S. 112.313(8))
- F. Employees may not participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract if they have a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, any member of their immediate family, their partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties described in this section, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The phrase "about to employ," as used herein, shall mean that, at the time of the selection, award, or administration of the contract, the employee is aware of an offer, promise, contract, or commitment of employment.
- G. Employment After Termination

Employees are prohibited from personally representing another person or entity or acting as an agent or attorney for compensation in connection with any matter in which the district is interested for two (2) years after the Board employees' service terminates. (F.S. 112.313(9))

1. This restriction applies to all school senior level employees classified as Managerial Exempt Personnel, Pay Grade 22 and above, Dade County School Administrators Association, Pay Grade 47, and above, and other equivalent positions.
2. Exception to this provision is provided by statute for the purpose of collective bargaining and may be granted to former District employees who are employees or agents of not-for-profit organizations, other governmental agencies or those whose business relationship is determined by the Board to be in the best interest of the district.
3. The district is prohibited from entering into any business relations or continue an existing business relationship with any person or entity determined to have engaged in a violation of the restriction contained in this provision.
4. In addition to penalties outlined below, penalties for violation of this provision include a civil penalty equal to the compensation that the employee received for the prohibited conduct.

### **Self-Reporting Requirement**

All employees, upon initial hire and annually thereafter, shall certify that they will comply with this policy, and that they will self-report any relationship that may implicate a potential conflict of interest or other violations of this policy. The certification shall be submitted according to a process determined by the Office of Human Capital Management.

## Penalties

Penalties for violation of this policy and/or violations of the Code of Ethics include dismissal from employment, suspension from employment for not more than ninety (90) days without pay, demotion, reduction in salary level, forfeiture of no more than one-third salary per month for no more than twelve (12) months, civil penalty not to exceed \$10,000, restitution of any pecuniary benefits received because of the violation committed, and/or public censure and reprimand. (F.S. 112.317)

Effective 7/1/11  
Revised 10/21/20.

### 5500 - STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Schools shall promote a positive school climate that supports academic achievement and emphasizes civility, fairness, mutual respect, and acceptance of diversity. The Code of Student Conduct Elementary, Code of Student Conduct Secondary, and the Post-Secondary Code of Student Conduct, incorporated by reference, apply to all students in the district. Copies of these documents are on file in the Office of Board Recording Secretary, and the Citizen Information Center, and shall be available in each school and special center.

The Superintendent, principals, and other administrators shall assign discipline/corrective strategies to students pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct and, where required by law, protect the student's due process rights to notice, hearing, and appeal. Additional guidelines for the maintenance of appropriate student behavior are issued by memorandum from District administration. The Superintendent shall make the Code of Student Conduct available to all students and their parents.

Effective 07.01.2011  
Revised 01.18.2023

### 8670 - POST TRIP INSPECTIONS OF SCHOOL BUSES

All school bus drivers must conduct post-trip inspections as required in the Handbook for School Bus Drivers, Aides and Operations Staff, incorporated by reference in Policy 8600. This duty cannot be delegated. Post-trip inspections must be performed after the completion of each bus run and at the bus storage compound. Post-trip inspections shall include, but are not limited to, walking from one end of the bus to the other, checking behind and under every bus seat for students remaining on the bus. If a driver fails to perform a post-trip inspection, and a child is left on the bus without adult supervision after the completion of a bus run, or at the bus storage compound, the driver will be dismissed.

Effective 07.01.2011

F.S. 1006.22 - Adoption Date: 05.11.2011

## **4362 - PROHIBITION ON DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT AGAINST DISTRICT COMMUNITY (NON-STUDENTS) BASED ON PROTECTED CATEGORIES**

The School Board shall comply with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. The Board shall maintain an educational and work environment which is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all District operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of prohibited harassment. This policy prohibits discrimination and harassment at locations, events, or circumstances over which the Board exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the prohibited conduct occurs.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discrimination and harassment based on sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, citizenship status, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation against an employee or student for engaging in a protected activity under this policy is also prohibited.

An employee who has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based on the protected categories shall communicate in writing to the Board according to the district's anti-discrimination and harassment complaint procedures in Policy 4362.02. No anonymous complaints shall be accepted or processed, except as otherwise provided in law or regulation. The Board will investigate allegations of discrimination or harassment and in those cases where legally prohibited discrimination or harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the discrimination or harassment. Individuals who are found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

"District community" pursuant to this policy and Policy 4362.02 means students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel, including Board members, agents, or other non-students subject to the control and supervision of the Board. The prohibition on discrimination and harassment against students based on protected categories, and corresponding procedures, are contained in Policy 5517, Policy 5517.02, and Policy 5517.03.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with, or seeking to do business with, the Board, and other individuals who come in contact with members of the District community while participating in or attempting to participate in school-related events/activities (whether on or off District property).

### **Other Violations**

The Board will also take immediate steps to discipline individuals for:

- A. Retaliating against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a discrimination or harassment investigation.
- B. Filing a malicious or knowingly false report or complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- C. Disregarding, failing to report, investigate adequately, or delaying investigation of allegations of prohibited discrimination or harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating unlawful discrimination or harassment charges comprises part of one's supervisory duties.

The Superintendent shall appoint a compliance officer whose responsibility will be to require that Federal and State regulations related to employees are complied with and that any complaints are dealt with promptly in accordance with law. The Board will provide proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II, Title VI, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the anti-discrimination provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act to staff members and the general public. The Superintendent shall develop guidelines setting forth the conditions and requirements to implement this policy in

accordance with federal and state laws, regulations, and Board policies. The District's Title IX Coordinator is authorized to coordinate the Board's Title IX obligations. Any sections of the district's collectively-bargained agreements dealing with hiring, promotion, and tenure will contain a statement of nondiscrimination similar to that in the Board's statement above.

In accordance with U.S.C. Section 1324b(6) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and the goal of preventing discrimination on the basis of an individual's national origin or citizenship status, School District personnel are prohibited from (1) requesting employment eligibility verification documents from any applicant for employment prior to making an offer of employment, (2) discriminating on the basis of citizenship status or national origin during the employment eligibility verification and reverification processes, and (3) discriminating against individuals on the basis of citizenship status or national origin during the recruitment, hiring, and firing processes. Applicants and employees who believe that a violation has occurred have a right to contact and/or file a charge with the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices (currently: <http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/osc>) (currently: OSC Worker Hotline: 1-800-255-7688 (voice) or 1-800-237-2515 (TTY))

### **Definitions**

Definitions of the protected categories can be found in the CRC webpage at [https://www.hrdadeschools.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC\\_ID=370901&type=d&termREC\\_ID=&pREC\\_ID=718623](https://www.hrdadeschools.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=370901&type=d&termREC_ID=&pREC_ID=718623).

### **Reports and Complaints of Discrimination or Harassing Conduct**

Individuals with complaints regarding employment discrimination based on citizenship status or unfair documentary practices should contact the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices, 1-800-255-7688 or <http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/osc> within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act.

All other members of the district community and third parties must promptly report incidents of discriminatory or harassing conduct to the administrator or designee to whom the employee is responsible and/or the Office of Civil Rights Compliance (CRC) so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent.

Members of the District community or third parties who believe they have been unlawfully harassed by another member of the district community or a third party are entitled to utilize the Board's complaint process in Policy 4362.02. A complaint must be submitted within 300 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory act(s), except as otherwise specified in law or regulation. Specific procedures related to sexual harassment are to be applied in accordance with the District's *Title IX Sexual Harassment Manual*. Individuals should make every effort to present a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known, and potential witnesses are available and to eliminate of the conduct in question. Initiating a complaint will not adversely affect the complaining individual's employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs unless the complaining individual makes the complaint maliciously or with knowledge that it is false. No anonymous complaints shall be accepted or processed, except as otherwise specified in law or regulation.

The complaint process in Policy 4362.02 is not intended to interfere with the right to pursue a complaint of prohibited discrimination or harassment with the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights; the Florida Civil Rights Commission; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; or the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices.

## **Process for Addressing Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment**

The processes for making a report of discrimination or harassment, a process for investigating claims of discrimination and harassment, and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the claim of prohibited discrimination or harassment was substantiated are contained in Policy 4362.02. Information about this policy and Policy 4362.02 will be readily available to all members of the district community and posted in appropriate places throughout the district.

Information regarding where and how to file complaints of sexual and other forms of discrimination or harassment will be distributed annually through the parent and staff handbooks and published on the district's web site and other locations required by law.

Any teacher, administrator, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual conduct with a student may also be guilty of a crime.

### **Confidentiality**

The district will make reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the parties involved in an investigation of discrimination or harassment during the course of the investigation in accordance with applicable law and regulation. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. All public records created as part of an investigation of a complaint of prohibited discrimination or harassment will be maintained by the Compliance Officer in accordance with State law and the Board's records retention policy. Records of an ongoing investigation shall remain confidential and not subject to disclosure pursuant to F.S. Chapter 119 until a final determination is made on the case, except as otherwise provided in law or regulation.

### **Sanctions and Monitoring**

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against prohibited discrimination and harassment. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee. All disciplinary action will be taken according to applicable Federal and State law and regulations and the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter will be considered. In those cases where prohibited discrimination or harassment is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the collective bargaining agreement(s). Appropriate disciplinary action for sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the District's *Title IX Sexual Harassment Manual*.

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior remedial action has been taken against a member of the district community, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or Superintendent shall be reasonably calculated to eliminate such conduct in the future.

### **Education and Training**

The Superintendent shall provide appropriate training to members of the district community to implement this policy and Policy 4362.02.

Effective 7/1/11

Revised 10/21/20

## **4380 - THREATENING BEHAVIOR TOWARD STAFF MEMBERS**

Employees have a right to work in a safe environment. Violence or the threat of violence by or against students and employees will not be tolerated.

Threatening behavior consisting of any words or deeds that intimidate a staff member or cause anxiety concerning physical well-being is strictly forbidden. Any student, parent, visitor, staff member, volunteer, or agent of the Board who is found to have threatened a member of the staff will be subject to discipline or reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Effective 7/1/11

#### 4430 - LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Support staff shall not be absent from their assigned duties except as authorized by the Superintendent. A support staff member who is willfully absent from duty without leave shall forfeit compensation for the time of such absence. A leave of absence is permission granted or allowed under School Board policies for an employee to be absent from duty for a specific period of time with the right to return to employment upon expiration of the leave.

Leave of absence without pay not to exceed thirty (30) days may be granted to full-time regular employees if approved by the Superintendent. Extended leave in excess of thirty (30) consecutive workdays may be approved, subject to the following conditions:

- A. no wages or salaries shall be paid during the leave except as provided in other Board policies.
- B. all leaves shall be approved by the Board except for those granted under workers' compensation laws; and
- C. reemployment rights to a position of like status shall be protected in accordance with the respective collective bargaining agreement.

Leave shall be used for the purpose stated in the leave application. A support staff member who uses leave for purposes other than that stated in the leave application shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

All leaves shall be governed by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Effective 7/1/11  
Revised 6/17/15.

#### 430.01 - FMLA LEAVE

An employee who is pregnant or ill shall be granted extended leave without pay at the employee's request. A supporting health care provider's statement shall be submitted at the time the leave is requested, as well as prior to returning to work at the conclusion of the leave.

Parental leave shall also be provided, upon request, to male employees and adoptive parents of infants (one year of age or less), when accompanied by supporting documentation establishing the date of birth or date of adoption, as applicable. Parental leaves may begin no later than the end of the first year after the date of the child's birth or adoption. The maximum period for which a parental leave may be granted is one year.

Employees on extended parental or illness of self-leave without pay may request, with their health care provider's concurrence, to be employed in a part-time or substitute capacity on a limited basis during the leave. Approval of a request for employment while on leave is solely within the discretion of the Superintendent.

The full text of provisions governing Extended Parental/Illness of Self/Leave Without Pay are contained in each bargaining unit's labor contract and these provisions shall govern the administration of such leaves.

A sick employee who has exhausted all sick leave to which s/he is entitled shall be considered automatically on leave without pay (not to exceed thirty (30) consecutive workdays), with the Board's approval, until such employee returns to work. Leave without pay for illness is considered only a protection of one's employment rights.

Approval of parental, illness of self, and illness of relative leaves of absence which meet the criteria of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) constitutes designation of FMLA entitlement. Any paid or unpaid leave taken prior to the Board-approved leave, which is a result of a FMLA-qualifying event, will be counted as part of the FMLA leave entitlement.

Effective 7/1/11  
Revised 6/17/15

## 5610 - SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS

Suspension and expulsion are the most severe sanctions and cannot be imposed without due process. Prior to the use of suspension, the administrator should consider less restrictive alternatives such as Alternative Education Settings (AED) which include the School Center for Special Instruction (SCSI) and Student Success Center (SSC). Students assigned to SCSI and SSC must be afforded the opportunity to complete classwork. Students with disabilities must continue to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) while assigned to SCSI.

No student is to be suspended, expelled, or excluded from an activity, program, or a school unless his/her behavior represents misconduct as specified in the Code of Student Conduct (CSC), Policy 5500. The CSC shall also specify the procedures to be followed by school officials. In addition to the procedural safeguards and definitions in this policy and the CSC, the procedures in Policy 2460 shall apply to students identified as disabled under the IDEA and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All disciplinary decisions and appeals related to sexual harassment shall be handled in accordance with Policy 5517, Policy 5517.02 and Policy 5517.03.

### Definitions

A. "Suspension" shall be the temporary exclusion of a student from the district's program for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days.

B. "Expulsion" shall be the exclusion of a student from a traditional school for the number of school days remaining in the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place and one (1) additional school year.

### Suspension from School or From Riding School Bus

A. When a student's actions violate law, School Board policies, or school rules, the student may be suspended by the principal. A student who is suspended shall not be allowed to attend his/her regular classes or school-sponsored activities for a prescribed number of days not to exceed ten (10). The principal may suspend a student from riding the school bus for a prescribed number of days not to exceed ten (10). Parents of students suspended from the school bus have the obligation to provide transportation to and from school. If bus transportation is a related service on a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a bus suspension must be counted towards the ten (10) days of suspension. Outdoor suspension criterion is located in the CSC.

B. A teacher shall not suspend a student from school or class, nor shall a bus driver suspend a student from riding a school bus.

C. The Superintendent may suspend a student from any or all co-curricular or extra-curricular activities for violations of the CSC. The length of suspension shall be determined according to the CSC. Additionally, a manifestation determination meeting may be required for students with disabilities, depending on the number of days of suspension given (Policy 2460).

D. Prompt notice of a suspension shall be given by telephone to the student's parent if possible. Formal written notification to the student's parent shall be initiated within twenty-four (24) hours of the time the student is informed of the suspension.

E. Except in the event of emergencies or disruptive conditions which require immediate suspension or in the case of a serious breach of conduct that is defined as willful disobedience, open defiance of authority of a member of the school staff, violence against persons or property, or any other act which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of the school, all out-of-school suspensions shall not begin prior to the beginning of the next school day following the infraction unless the parents have been notified.

F. Prior to the suspension, the student shall be given an informal and impartial hearing before the principal and shall be informed of the charge(s) against him/her which may result in suspension. If the student denies the charge(s), s/he shall be given an explanation of the evidence, an opportunity to present his/her version of the case, and notification of the action taken by the Principal. In cases of extremely disruptive or dangerous behavior, persons or groups involved may be immediately suspended and ejected from the school campus without a prior hearing. In such instances, each student shall be afforded an informal hearing before the principal prior to the expiration of suspension. Students are not entitled to full procedural rights that the law guarantees to students who are recommended for expulsion or are defendants in criminal cases. At suspension hearings, students are not:

1. entitled to the presence of an attorney.
2. allowed to confront or cross-examine witnesses.
3. allowed to record mechanically or have a court reporter record the proceedings unless the Principal has elected to record or report the hearing verbatim.

If the parent(s) feel that the child has not been afforded a fair hearing at the school, they may request a review by the Region Superintendent. The appeal may consist of a review of the previous hearing, with a ruling on the facts and the validity of the suspension, or the hearing may be reconvened by the Region Superintendent or designee for additional testimony that may be deemed necessary in making a final decision.

G. The Principal shall determine, in consultation with teachers, when appropriate, whether the student should be given the opportunity to make up schoolwork and course requirements missed while absent due to out-of-school suspension. If this privilege is given, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, up to five (5) school days comparable to the days of suspension, following the suspension to complete the schoolwork missed and shall do so on his/her own initiative. Failure to make up all written assignments missed during the approved time frame of suspension will result in the student being given the academic grade of "F" for those written assignments. Under no circumstances are teachers required to make special provisions to comply with this procedure. Upon completion of the make-up work, the student should submit the work to the teacher. The teacher must grade and record the make-up work as it is received. For students in exceptional education classes, refer to the Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P) Policy 2460.

H. The Superintendent may grant to a principal the authority to waive mandatory suspension policies.

### **Expulsion/Administrative Assignment**

A. A Principal may recommend expulsion of a student to the Superintendent. The principal shall provide the Superintendent an adequate history of the student's actions and alternative measures taken relevant to the recommendation. When the Superintendent makes a recommendation for expulsion to the Board, written notice shall be given to the student and his/her parent of the recommendation and charges and advising the student and parent of their right to due process. Offenses requiring the recommendation for expulsion are located in the CSC.

B. Upon receipt of a recommendation for expulsion from the Principal, the Superintendent may make an administrative assignment in lieu of expulsion or a Work Back in Lieu of Expulsion program.

C. For students in exceptional student education, refer to Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P), Policy 2460.

D. All students who are recommended for expulsion shall undergo screening to determine if they qualify for exceptional education programs.

E. A student who has been suspended or expelled by another district temporarily may be assigned to an alternative school for the same length of time as imposed by the other district.

F. The informal hearing at the school level shall be conducted by the principal. If available, the student shall be given an opportunity to be heard at this hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, the principal will reaffirm the suspension and recommendation for expulsion, or, based upon consideration of the facts and circumstances explained at the hearing, will advise the parent of the school's intention to withdraw the request for expulsion and take some alternative action.

G. The parent shall be informed that, prior to any Board action being taken on the expulsion or administrative assignment, they will be given the opportunity to request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer. Prior to a formal hearing, the parent will be offered an appeal conference with a representative from School Operations/Alternative Education.

H. Students with disabilities who are expelled are entitled to a Due Process Hearing with the Florida Division of Administrative Hearings. However, during the course of litigation, the student's placement is at the alternative school. Students with disabilities must continue to receive FAPE while assigned to an alternative school. Refer to the Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P) Policy 2460.

All disciplinary decisions and appeals related to sexual harassment shall be handled in accordance with Policy 5517, Policy 5517.02, and Policy 5517.03.

A copy of this policy is to be made available to students and parents upon request. Key provisions of the policy should also be included in the CSC.

Effective 7/1/11 - Revised 10/21/20.

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**  
***Federal and State Laws***

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of non-discrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act as amended** – prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

**The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended** – prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** – prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** – prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

**The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)** – requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to “eligible” employees for certain family and medical reasons.

**The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978** – prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

**Florida Education Equality Act (FEEA)** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

**Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992** – secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

**Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)** – prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

*Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes) which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.*

In Addition:

School Board Policies 1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517 – Prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited.

Revised: (5-12)