



Resolution #C-09/10-283

Revised date: October 16, 2012

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

1. TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

The Western Quebec School Board and their transportation contractors take all possible safety measures in order to assure that each student is transported safely.

However, it is the parents' responsibility to take the necessary time to clearly explain all safety rules regarding school bus transportation. This is particularly important when dealing with kindergarten and elementary school students. All students must be familiar with the security rules and guidelines while getting on or off the school bus.

In addition, each student must be vigilant when crossing a public road. All students must cross in front of the bus; they must come to a full stop in front of the bumper extension arm, be well in view of the bus driver and wait the drivers signal before crossing. Even though the red flashing lights are activated, they must make sure that oncoming traffic has come to a complete stop in both directions before crossing.

Technical operation of the vehicle

Prior for stopping to pick-up or drop-off students, the driver will activate the amber alternating yellow flashers (if bus is equipped with it) or will activate the four way hazard flashers. When loading or unloading students at bus stops, the red alternating flashers and the bumper extension arm must be turned on and left on until students are safely on board or away from the vehicle.

On Provincial highways drivers will not make unnecessary stops if students are not in clear view of the driver. Students must be at their bus stop at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time and be visible to the driver approaching.

After loading students, drivers must wait until all students are seated before departing. When dropping-off students at bus stops, drivers will not depart until all children are safely away from the bus.

Students are not to be standing until the bus comes to a complete stop.

The doors must not be opened while the vehicle is in motion and only the driver shall operate the doors.

Drivers must not leave their vehicle while there are students aboard, except in the case of an emergency.

Before leaving the bus, the driver must shut off the motor, remove the keys, place transmission in first gear or on park and apply the emergency brake.

Safety equipment

All school buses have the standard safety equipment required by law. In addition each bus is equipped with a 2 way communication system and a front bumper extension arm.

Video monitoring

The use of video monitoring equipment may be used, when deemed necessary to ensure the safe transportation of students.

Luggage

The Québec Highway Codes stipulates that students traveling on a school bus may only carry hand luggage that will fit on their lap such as a school bag and lunch box. Other oversized objects such as: sport equipment, instruments, skateboards, large projects, animals or any other items that would contravene the policies and/or constitute a safety hazard on a school bus are forbidden. No luggage or objects obstructing normal access, emergency exits are accepted.

Accidents

All accidents are to be reported immediately to their respective bus companies, who in turn will contact the Transportation Department. The bus company must within 24 hours, provide the School Board with a written report should there be students on board the bus when the accident took place.

In the event of an accident with students on board, the bus driver will immediately contact the bus company dispatcher who will contact the police and ambulance as well as the School Board Transport Department. The Transportation Department will inform the School Principal and will keep him/her updated on the situation. Once the police or ambulance have arrived on site and assessed that no one has been injured the driver will continue on his route or transfer students onto a different bus upon receiving the approval from bus company dispatcher.

After the police and/or ambulance have verified students on board, if a student has been injured the driver will convey immediately to the bus company with the student name and to which hospital he or she is being transported. The bus company will then contact the Transport Department who will inform the School Principal.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

All general inquiries such as questions, complaints or information regarding transportation should be addressed to the School Administration. Schools or parents will communicate with the Transportation Department in cases where the specific information requested cannot be provided or the answer is not satisfactory. Drivers have been instructed not to accept notes from parents concerning transportation changes. All requests must be addressed to the school.

Return to school

At mid-august each student will receive by the school, a transportation notification outlining the school bus information applicable. Should the information be inadequate or incorrect the parents/guardians must contact their child's school.

School bus assignment

All requests for school bus transportation will be settled within the shortest time period. However, it is the responsibility of each parent to advise their child school at least one week in advance of any changes of address. This will allow the Transportation Department to assign each eligible student an adequate transportation service on time.

Students attending school daycare

If a child is registered in a school daycare 5 days a week am/pm, the child will not be assigned to a school bus and it will be the parent's responsibility to transport the child. **The child will not have occasional access to school transportation; i.e. when parents are on holidays or sick at home.**

If a child is registered in a school daycare 5 days a week in the afternoon only, school transportation will be assigned for the mornings only.

If a child is registered 5 days a week in the morning only, school transportation will be assigned for the afternoons only.

If a child is registered in a school daycare on a part time schedule **i.e.** 1, 2, 3, or 4 days a week, the child will be assigned to a school bus both morning and afternoon.

Inclement Weather – Cancellation of transportation

If transportation must be cancelled due to inclement weather conditions, the decision will normally be taken prior to 6:30 a.m. Information will be displayed on the School Board website and the following radio stations will broadcast the appropriate cancellation message.

CJRC 1150 AM

CKTF 104.1

CKOY – KISS FM 105.3 FM

CHEZ 106.1 FM

Y 101.1 FM

CBC (Français) 90.7 FM

CBC (English) 91.5 FM

CIMF FM (94.9 FM)

CKQB FM – The Bear 106.9 FM

CFRA 580 AM

MAJIC 100 FM

BOB FM 93.9 FM

STAR 96 FM Pembroke

CHIP FM (101.7 FM)

COULEUR FM 97.1

Transportation delays

Mechanical difficulties, traffic jams, unploughed roads, etc., may cause delays in bus scheduling. In these circumstances, the school transportation contractor will inform the school principal and the transportation department as soon as possible. The parents/guardians may access further information from the school.

3. DISCIPLINE

The discipline guidelines are based on the premise that personal freedom is accompanied by the responsibility to respect the freedom of others. Common courtesy, good manners and mutual respect are encouraged.

The development of a sense of self-discipline in each student is an important aspect of the discipline procedure. Discipline is meaningful when it is self-imposed or self-controlled. In order for any procedure to be effective, parental support and co-operation is necessary.

The School Board endorses the concept of administering student discipline in a judicial and positive manner. By following board procedures, bus drivers are able to handle student discipline more effectively. .

If a bus driver has a positive attitude with the students, he/she should gain their respect. To gain this respect, it is essential that the bus driver treat students as individuals and show respect for their personal rights.

Student Discipline Report

Most discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver by explaining to the student what is required and why. If the problem persists, or if it is of a serious nature, the driver will complete a "Misbehaviour Report" and will give it to the bus company dispatcher who in return will communicate with the school administration.

Disciplinary Action

Transportation is a privilege; these guidelines will be followed if a student is reported for not respecting the safety rules inside or around a school bus. Based on written "Misbehaviour Report" submitted by drivers, the school administration will deal with each case based on the following guidelines:

IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

In the event of a conduct such as: threatening or assaulting the driver, stealing bus equipment, vandalism, throwing objects from the bus, engaging or being involved in a fight etc. shall result in the immediate and indefinite bus suspension. The school administration is responsible for the application of these guidelines. Parents/ guardians will be responsible to transport their child for the duration of the suspension.

The administration will review the reports submitted by the bus company and take appropriate corrective measures when necessary.

Disciplinary measures are the responsibility of the school administration. Schools will be expected to apply the discipline guidelines in order to ensure uniformity throughout the board in the application of sanctions.

Normally the school administration will follow a progressive disciplinary process as outlined below. However, the administration may decide to exercise a different course of action. In the latter instance the Coordinator of Transportation may be consulted.

First Offence

- The driver will complete a "Misbehaviour Report" and will give it to the bus company dispatcher.
- The bus company will forward the report to the school administration.
- The school administration will meet with the student to discuss the misbehaviour issues and depending on the severity of the situation parents/guardians may be informed.

Second Offence

- The driver will complete a “Misbehaviour Report” and will give it to the bus company dispatcher.
- The bus company will forward the report to the school administration.
- The school administration will meet with the student and parents/guardians will be informed by telephone or a letter of reprimand outlining the discipline issues.
- The parents/guardians will be notified that a third discipline report will result in a loss of transportation privileges for minimum of (3) days.

Third Offence

- The driver will complete a “Misbehaviour Report” and will give it to the bus company dispatcher.
- The bus company will forward the report to the school administration.
- The school administration will meet with the student, and inform the parents/guardians of a minimum of three **(3) days suspension**.
- The parents/guardians will be informed that further problems will result in a minimum of five days suspension from transportation.

Fourth offence

- The driver will complete “Misbehaviour Report” and will give it to the bus company dispatcher.
- The bus company will forward the report to the school administration.
- The school administration will meet with the student, and inform the parents/guardian of a minimum of five days suspension.
- The parents/guardian will be informed that further problems might result of an indefinite suspension.

Smoking on school buses

Smoking on school buses is forbidden. Students caught smoking on a school bus will be reported to the School Administration. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary measures.

Alcohol and drugs on school buses

Students found to be in possession of alcoholic beverages, drugs, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be subject to disciplinary measures.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL PARTIES

The School Board considers the safety of each student to be a priority and will take all reasonable precautions to guarantee that transportation service be provided in a safe manner. It is therefore vital to determine the responsibilities of all parties involved.

Students

Students must respect the transportation rules and guidelines. They must understand that the bus driver is the authority on the bus, and that he/she is responsible for their safety and well-being.

Parents / Guardians

Parents/guardians play an essential role in reviewing with their child all safety aspects including proper behavior while aboard or around a school bus. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that children in Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten and Grade one are escorted and supervised by a responsible adult to and from their bus stop.

The parents/guardians are responsible for all damages caused by their child while on a transportation vehicle.

If a child has a serious medical problem that warrants medication, the medication must be in the child's possession during transportation (example: EPIPEN).

Parents/guardians will be expected to instruct their child or children to respect and comply with the following bus safety guidelines:

- 1) When riding a school bus, the driver is in charge. Always listen to the driver's instructions.
- 2) Always be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the bus time arrival.
- 3) Do not stand or play on the street while waiting for the bus.
- 4) Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop; then board the school bus in single file.
- 5) Find a seat quickly without pushing other students and keep the aisles clear.
- 6) Remain seated, talk quietly, and do not eat, drink or smoke on the bus.
- 7) Never put head or arms or other objects out of the window.
- 8) Do not throw anything inside the bus or out of the windows.
- 9) Remember where the emergency exits are located.
- 10) When getting off, wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before leaving your seat and descend in a single file.
- 11) Walk a safe distance away from the bus, so the driver can see you and know you are safe.
- 12) Should you cross in front of the bus, keep the same safe distance and watch for the driver's signal to cross. DO NOT RUN...proceed with caution.

The Transportation Department

The Transportation Department is responsible for the daily operations of the school bus system at all levels, contractual and operational. They must establish and maintain procedures and guidelines to be followed with regard to school transportation safety. The Transportation Department will also ensure that a bus safety education program be made available and that it be implemented each year in conjunction with the school. The responsibilities of the Transportation Department are also to:

- Establish safe bus routes, bus stops and transfer locations.

- Ensure and maintain procedures and guidelines to be followed with regard to transportation safety.
- Ensure space capacity as prescribe by the law on all buses
- Inform the transporters on an annual basis and prior to the beginning of the school year of their obligation to advise all bus drivers in writing to not allow a pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grade one student to get off the bus at their afternoon bus stop without the presence of a responsible adult for the child.
- Provide all parents/guardians through the annual back-to-school mailing the “Bus Safety Rules and Guidelines” pamphlet
- Verify regularly the safety of certain routes including driving procedures, bus stop locations and all other possible hazards.
- Assist the school administration, bus drivers and others in the solution of problems occurring on buses or at bus stops.
- Provide contractors and schools with updated bus routes and student lists.
- Ensure that all contractual obligations are fulfilled.
- Organize safety and evacuation training sessions for students.
- Ensure that transporters give their drivers professional development and safety sessions.

The School Administration

School administrators are responsible for daily operations at the school level. Some responsibilities are undertaken in consultation with the School Board's Transportation Department. School administrators will:

- Supervise arrivals and departures of school buses.
- Take disciplinary actions with students violating bus safety guidelines.
- Contact the Transportation Department with complaints or suggestions in relation to the bus service operations.

The Bus Driver

Bus drivers are trained professionals and hold the principal role in the school transportation system; the driver must have the cooperation and support of all: students, parents, school administration and school board authorities. The driver is responsible for the safety and security of all passengers and must abide to all circulation regulations.

The bus driver will:

- Follow the scheduled route descriptions, time and stop locations determined by the School Board. Any changes must be approved by the transportation department before implementation.
- Maintain discipline on the school bus. If necessary the driver can bring students to order but must not at any time take disciplinary measures against students. This remains the responsibility of the school administration.

- Never refuse access on a school bus to students for reasons of insubordination or discipline. The driver must, instead, complete a discipline report to be sent to the principal who will take the appropriate measures. In an exceptional situation, where a student's behaviour could seriously endanger the safety of all, the driver will contact his supervisor for instructions.
- Not allow a pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grade one student to get off the bus in the afternoon if an adult, who is responsible for that student, is not present. In such cases the driver will contact his supervisor for instructions.
- Never leave the school bus unattended while students are on board.
- Never drive a school bus while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Always respect all laws regulating the driving of a school bus as stipulated in the Highway Code.
- Never put the school bus in motion unless all students are seated.
- Do a thorough inspection of the bus, front to rear, at the end of each run to ensure that no students are left of the bus.
- Abstain from smoking on the bus.
- Drive defensively at all times.

The School Bus Contractor

The contractor is responsible for the execution of the contract awarded by the School Board and must respect the terms and conditions.

The bus contractor will:

- Be assured that each driver hired is duly qualified, able to function in English, and properly licensed before allowing that individual to drive a school bus.
- Verify the criminal background of all drivers and employees susceptible to be in contact with students.
- Notify all bus drivers in writing to not allow a pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grade one student to get off the bus in the afternoon if an adult, who is responsible for that student, is not present.
- If the parent/guardian is not at the stop, the transporter will proceed in the following order:
 - 1) Call the school so they can contact parents/guardians to make pick-up arrangements for the student;
 - 2) If the school is unavailable, contact the Transportation Department, who will provide instructions on measures to be taken;
- Follow through on all complaints received from the Transportation Department.
- Assist and co-operate fully with the Transportation Department in all matters pertaining to driver discipline.
- Maintain bus cleanliness inside and out at all times.
- Maintain and repair all vehicles and equipment as required by regulation.
- Comply with all terms and conditions specified in the transportation contract.

