

# Transporting Students to and from School

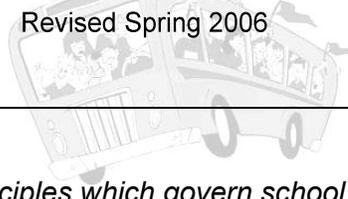
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HAMILTON-WENTWORTH  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## *Procedures for Vehicle Drivers*

Revised Spring 2006



*"The three basic principles which govern school bus safety are:*

- 1. safety**
- 2. order**
- 3. respect**



*Any problem that occurs on the school bus will be the result of something interfering with one or more of these basic principles.*

*Drivers are responsible for the physical and emotional safety of the children who ride on their bus, as well as for their own safety. The child must be confident that the bus is a safe place.*

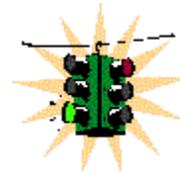
*The school bus driver has an obligation to maintain order and control. This control is compromised if passengers interfere with the service of the bus, or are doing things that will require resources to repair or deal with."*

(Source: School Bus Safety Resource Guide)

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## **General**

1. Where applicable, engage the GPS system.
2. Follow safe driving rules and practices at all times.
3. Keep to your assigned route and scheduled times. For unforeseen situations (e.g. an accident, road closure), contact your dispatcher for instructions.
4. Pick up and drop off students only at designated stops.
5. If a student gets off at a stop other than his/her assigned stop, call your dispatcher immediately and fill in a **Transportation Report Form**.
6. If you fill in a **Transportation Report Form**, give a copy to the principal promptly, preferably the same day.
7. Allow only students who have been authorized to ride on the vehicle.



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8. If students need to cross the road:



Count the students as they cross the road to get on the vehicle and then count the students as they board;



Count the students as they get off your vehicle and then count the students as they cross the road.

9. Follow your company's policies and all provincial government codes, regulations and procedures regarding vehicle use, inspection methods, record keeping, emergency and evacuation procedures, etc.



10. Do not touch students unless required in specific safety situations. If you are unsure how to handle a situation (e.g. students are fighting), contact your dispatcher for instructions.

11. Report any unsafe or suspicious situations to the school principal and your carrier. In an emergency, contact your dispatcher for instructions immediately.

12. In the spirit of Sabrina's Law- an Act to protect Anathylactic Pupils, do not allow students to eat or drink while on the vehicle; do not give food or drinks to the students. This 'no food or drink' rule applies to you and to your child, if accompanying you on your route. Food and drink pose serious safety concerns for students and driver.



13. Verbally ask the school principal to request a video camera for your school bus if there are significant problems while transporting the students.

14. Turn the engine off and remove the key if you must leave your seat. The only exception is for wheelchair vehicles.

15. As per the carrier contract, and in the spirit of cleaner air, vehicle engines may not idle for more than 5 minutes.

16. Contact your dispatcher if you cannot park in a school bus loading zone because another vehicle is in the zone.

17. Contact your dispatcher for instructions if:



A responsible person is supposed to be home to receive the student after school, and the responsible person is not at the home when you arrive to drop off the student.

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18. For large buses and minivans, at the end of your run:



Do a careful physical check to make sure that all students have left the vehicle.

19. If you transport a student who uses a wheelchair, ensure that you:



Have received specialized training;



Follow the procedures from specialized training and your carrier's written materials at all times.

20. You are a valued part of the school team. Develop positive working relationships. Avoid confrontations.

21. Your most valuable tools are good judgment, common sense and patience.

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## Interacting with Students

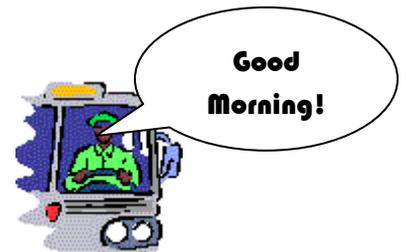


### A. General:

1. Be consistent and fair in enforcing the **Student Code of Conduct on School-Related Vehicles**. Do not tolerate bullying. Fill in a **Transportation Report Form** to report **any bullying** to the school principal.
2. The uniqueness of each student must be respected.
3. Student behaviours may not be the same everyday. Therefore, some of the following ideas may be more successful on some days than on others.
4. Also, different students have different kinds of behaviour problems. Therefore, some of the following ideas may be more successful with some students than with others.

### B. Demonstrate a caring attitude:

1. Greet students and say good-bye.
2. Treat the student with respect.
3. If you know student's name, say it before speaking directly to student.
4. Be sure your expectations are reasonable for the student's age. Some students would rather act silly than appear not to know what to do.



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5. Verbally praise the student for good behaviours; be specific about what you are praising. (e.g. “I noticed that you got on the bus quietly” rather than “You did a good job today.”) NOTE: Some students become embarrassed with praise in front of other students; if you think this is the case with a student, give the praise quietly.
6. Be sincere in your praise. Students will likely know if you praise them when they have not done anything that deserves praise.
7. If you sense that a situation is becoming a problem, intervene early before it becomes more serious.
8. Remember that “Every day is a new start.”

## C. Make your messages clear:

1. Be sure you have student’s attention before giving explanations and instructions (e.g. say the student’s name first.)
2. Make explanations and instructions specific and short. Stress key words. (e.g. “Please sit **quietly** in your seat.”)
3. First, explain what the student is doing wrong and then explain what the student should be doing.
4. If the student appears to not understand you, repeat yourself using different words.
5. Speak loudly enough to be heard – but don’t yell.
6. Do not speak too quickly.
7. Ask the student to do one thing at a time.
8. Have consistent rules and expectations.



## D. Model good language and behaviours:

1. Speak in a non-threatening, non-judgmental way (e.g. say “Please sit down and talk in a soft voice” rather than “You better sit down and be quiet or else.”)
2. Do not be sarcastic or make fun of the student.
3. Avoid embarrassing or frustrating the student; for most students, this will upset them even more than they already are.
4. Avoid arguing with the student. Instead, repeat your expectations calmly without reacting to any negative comments. (Sometimes, we actually reinforce negative behaviour by overreacting.)
5. Remain calm. Do not lose your temper.



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## Dealing with Behaviour Issues



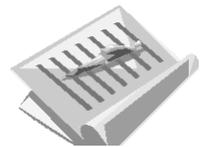
For a minor behaviour incident:

1. Speak in a calm, respectful voice.
2. Explain to the student the specific rule that he/she has broken (or the behaviour that is unacceptable, if there is no specific rule.)
3. Decide if you should give a verbal warning to the student that the behaviour is unacceptable or if you should fill in a **Transportation Report Form**.
4. If you have filled in a **Transportation Report Form**.
  - Give the yellow copy to the school principal – preferably the same day,
  - Give the white and pink copies to your carrier.
5. Contact your company supervisor if you have ongoing difficulty with the student's behaviour.



For a potentially major or a major behaviour incident:

1. Remain calm.
2. Pull the vehicle safely to the side of the road.
3. Speak in a calm, respectful voice to try to quickly stop the immediate behaviours.
4. Call your dispatcher to explain the incident even if you were able to stop the immediate behaviours.
5. Follow instructions from the dispatcher.
6. Fill in a **Transportation Report Form** to inform the school principal of the incident.



### Reminder:

**Confidentiality of student information must be protected at all times. This includes all copies of the Transportation Report Form.**