



**SCHOOL BUS SAFETY
RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCEDURE
GUIDELINES**

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Grande Prairie, Alberta
T8V 4C5

TRANSPORTATION DEPT.
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

532-7734
532-8133

Spirit River
Rycroft

SUB OFFICE
TRANSPORTATION DEPT.

864-3741
765-3635

Bus Driver's Name:

Phone No.:

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION IN PEACE WAPITI SCHOOL DIVISION #76

PREFACE

This manual was developed to assist in understanding the school bussing system throughout our division. It provides an overview of specific responsibilities within that system.

Within broad guidelines established by the Board, the responsibility for the school bus transportation system is delegated to the Director of Transportation and members of his staff. The Board has also adopted several specific policies relating to school bus discipline, emergency procedures, and the like, but it is stressed that a safe and successful transportation operation requires the cooperation and understanding of students, parents, bus drivers, school administration and School Board Administration.

This manual is published in order that students, parents and all other concerned with the safe operation of the bussing system have the opportunity to become aware of the major factors and interlocking responsibilities which combine to provide a safe and adequate school bus service.

GENERAL AND LEGAL

1. The School Act authorizes school boards to provide transportation. Peace Wapiti School Division #76 has chosen to operate a school bus system for the convenience of students and parents in the Regional District. Therefore, the authority to establish rules and procedures governing that school bus system rests with the Board.
2. Students who choose to jeopardize the safety of the bus or fellow passengers may lose their right to access the transportation system.

**SECTION I
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION & OPERATION
OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

Day-to-day administration of all school bus services is the responsibility of the Transportation Department of the School Board Office. School buses in your division are managed by the Director of Transportation.

Questions or problems relating to specific bus routes should be referred to the Director of Transportation.

SECTION II RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN

1. General

Parents will obviously play the key role in influencing their children in all aspects of safety, at home, at play, and going to and from school. This is particularly true of younger children.

2. Parents can promote school bus safety in the following ways:

- (a) Go over with and discuss with your children the contents of this booklet, particularly the responsibilities of the students.
- (b) Provide extra help and guidance during the first several weeks of school, especially for kindergarten, grade one and grade two students. The children must have a good understanding of the location of bus stops; behaviour while waiting for buses, as well as on board; what to do when buses are late, etc. Safety is of utmost importance and should be emphasized by the parents.
- (c) Report any obvious and significant safety problems to the Director of Transportation giving specific details as to bus number, date, time, place, etc.
- (d) Remind children that even though all vehicles are required by law to stop when flashers are in operation on a school bus, vehicle drivers are sometimes negligent or careless and do not stop when they should, therefore, children should always proceed across the road with utmost caution.
- (e) Promote an awareness in other drivers that it is a traffic offence to pass **IN EITHER DIRECTION** a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing.

3. What parents should be aware of regarding school bus service:

- (a) **Students should be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the normal pickup times.**
- (b) Parents having problems concerning bus routes or pickup points should be referred to the Director of Transportation of the School Board.
- (c) Parents are responsible for students until they board the school bus and following unloading at their designated stop in the afternoon.
- (d) Parents will be responsible for willful damages to school buses caused by their children.
- (e) When the bus transportation privileges of a student are suspended, under the provisions of School Board policy, school attendance is still mandatory and the parents must make their own alternative arrangements. Transportation Assistance Allowance will not be paid in those circumstances.
- (f) Be aware of Board Policy relating to general suspension of transportation services through emergencies, such as inclement weather.
- (g) **Provide written note or phone call to the driver, or contact dispatch to relay a message, if your child is to return home by any other route than normal, or is not to ride the bus home at all.**

Please be aware of the following school bus policies:

GUIDELINES REGARDING ITEMS HAULED ON THE SCHOOL BUS

**** ONLY ITEMS REQUIRED FOR CURRICULUM ARE TO BE TRANSPORTED ****

Lunch containers & books	- children take care of their own
Skates	- blades must be properly covered & placed on the floor at the student's feet
Hockey sticks	- under the seat
Curling brooms	- under the seat
Musical Instruments	- small instruments may be held by the student, large instruments to be left in an empty seat-not on the floor by the driver

**** NOTHING IS ALLOWED IN THE AISLES ****

**** NO FIREARMS OR LIVE ANIMALS ****

**** NO SKATEBOARDS, GOLF CLUBS, WATER GUNS, CRAZY CARPETS, SNOWBOARDS, ETC.****

Permission to transport anything not mentioned above must be obtained from the Director of Transportation.

BOARD POLICY REGARDING STUDENT APPAREL DURING WINTER SEASON:

Due to our insurance policy requirements, students riding on Board buses must comply with the following policy regarding winter dress:

"All students riding on school buses during the winter months shall be required to wear winter footwear and outerwear, and to carry with them winter headwear and gloves or mitts, effective November 1 to March 31. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their children comply with this requirement."

Cell phones, Gameboys, Discmans, Laptops, iPods:

- a) Cell phones can be used by students of the bus providing they are on the 'vibrate' mode to ensure the ringing is not a distraction to the driver or other students. The voice volume must be such that it does not distract or disturb others.
- b) Gameboys, discmans, laptops, iPods, etc., can be used by students providing they are quiet and are not a distraction to the driver or other students.

BOARD POLICY REGARDING VIDEO CAMERAS

Video cameras may be used in school buses.
Buses with video cameras in them will have signage indicating that the bus may be monitored by a video camera.

Peace Wapiti Public Schools has installed video cameras on school buses as a means to deter vandalism and identify student activity that may pose a threat to passenger and driver safety. This information is collected under the authority of School Board Policy and in accordance with Section 32(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If you have any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of this information, please contact Peace Wapiti Transportation Department.

SECTION III RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

Students riding on the bus must remember they are responsible for their conduct to the bus driver and through him to the principal.

1. The driver is in full charge of the bus and his/her directions must be obeyed.
2. The driver will report any misconduct to the principal of the school concerned.
3. The driver may assign specific seats to students at any time.
4. While the bus is in motion, students must not extend parts of their bodies out of the windows, try to get on or off the bus, or move about within it. All students must be seated when the bus is moving.
5. Students must not throw paper or other material on the floor or out of the bus windows.
6. While on the bus, students must conduct themselves in a quiet and courteous manner, showing consideration for the comfort and safety of others.
7. Scuffling, fighting, smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, using drugs, and using obscene language on the bus are strictly prohibited.
8. Lurching on the bus is at the driver's discretion.
9. Students causing willful damage to the bus will be held fully accountable.
10. When leaving the bus, students must observe the bus driver's instructions. They should not cross the road without having a clear view in all directions.
11. In extreme cold or inclement weather, or under hazardous road conditions, students must be properly dressed. Parents must also arrange for alternate shelter and care if necessary.
12. Safety of students required to ride on school buses shall not be placed at risk by requiring operation of school buses, or other transportation, during extreme inclement weather or under hazardous road conditions. The responsibility for safety of children who are required to travel on school buses or other school-provided transportation is of necessity shared by the board, its staff, bus drivers and parents. School system staff and bus operators shall exercise their responsibilities in accordance with the guidelines approved by the Board.

SECTION IV STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Bus drivers are an important part of Peace Wapiti School Division's staff. They are responsible for the safety and conduct of the students while they are on the bus. Students riding on a bus are expected to give the bus driver respect, consideration and cooperation, and always and immediately carry out his/her reasonable instructions.

Purpose:

To establish behavioural expectations with appropriate and consistent consequences that promote self-respect, respect for other and property.

Guidelines & Procedures:

- 1) a) If a student chooses to break a rule, the following processes may be applied:
 - i) Student warned by driver
 - ii) Student assigned designated seat, parents called
 - iii) Principal, parent, student, driver conference
 - iv) Suspension of bus privileges for designated period of time; parents notified and made responsible for transportation
- b) If, in the opinion of the driver, the student's behaviour is sufficiently negative to warrant, the driver may step outside of this process and refer the student to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action as outlined in *Policy IFC - Student Conduct*.
- c) For minor incidents of a continuing nature, bus drivers are encouraged to contact the parents prior to referring to the principal.

The following procedures shall be carried out when it becomes desirable or necessary to suspend a student from riding a school bus.

- 2) Decisions to expel a student from riding a school bus shall be made by the Board in accordance with *Policy IGD - Student Suspension/Expulsion*.
- 3) Prior to the next pickup time the parents of the student must be personally informed by the Principal (or designate) of the suspension and the reasons for the suspension.
- 4) Under extreme circumstances, the Director of Transportation (or designate) may inform the parent that the student will be denied transportation prior to the Principal having been informed.
- 5) Re-instatement on the school bus may take place through -
 - a) a meeting and/or communication with the parent(s), student, Principal and bus driver to resolve the situation, provided the suspension is for five days or less; or
 - b) a meeting with the Superintendent for problem resolution.
- 6) In the interests of safety, students are prohibited from taking large and cumbersome objects on the school bus.

SECTION V
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

POLICY

The Board believes that the bus should be operated in a safe and courteous manner.

GUIDELINE

The bus driver shall:

1.
 - a) Be properly licensed for operating a school bus.
 - b) Be familiar with and adhere to the requirement of the **Highway Traffic Act** and related sections of other **Acts**.
 - c) Prior to being employed, provide the Director of Transportation with a driver's abstract from the Motor Vehicles Branch.
 - d) Have a medical examination prior to employment and as required by law thereafter - a copy of which must be supplied to the Transportation Department.
 - e) Be thoroughly familiar with and adhere to transportation policies.
 - f) Attend seminars and in-service activities as required.

2.
 - a) The bus driver shall not drive bus for 12 hours after consuming alcohol. Failure to comply with guidelines on the consumption of alcoholic beverages will result in termination of employment.
 - b) In situations where schools may be closed due to weather or road conditions, plant break down, or epidemic, the Board shall pay a driver basic salary for that day.
 - c) Suspension of license for any driving infraction will be reviewed by the Transportation Committee.

SCHEDULE REQUIREMENTS

The bus driver shall:

1.
 - a) Conduct a bus evacuation drill with the students during the first week of school and one other time during the school year, and advise the Director of Transportation of the dates on which drills were conducted.
 - b) Arrange their schedules to ensure that the bus arrives at the school at the times specified by the Director of Transportation.
 - c) Be at school five minutes before dismissal time.
 - d) Before leaving the school, take a roll call to ensure that the load is complete.
 - e) Leave the school when the load is complete, or if the load is incomplete, at the direction of the principal or designate.
 - f) Provide the Director of Transportation with a phone number at which the driver can be reached in the case of emergency.
 - g) Bus drivers shall not smoke in the bus.
 - h) Shall not take drugs while driving the bus that will affect his/her driving capabilities.

2.
 - a) Bus drivers shall ensure that students will reach their school and home safely. Students will not be allowed off at other stops without written consent of the parents.
 - b) Under extreme conditions where this cannot be assured, the students will remain on the bus until released to a parent or alternate as designated by parent/guardian, and confirmed by the Director of Transportation.
3. The bus driver shall seek the assistance or advice of the Principal whenever a student engages in conduct injurious to the safety of other students.
4. The bus driver shall submit a medical certificate as outlined according to the National Safety Code.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The bus driver shall:

1.
 - a) Ensure the bus and equipment are in safe mechanical condition.
 - b) Ensure that the bus interior is clean and that the exterior lights are free of any obstacles.
 - c) Use alternating flashing lights as per Highway Traffic Act, Section 105.

Procedures regarding mobile radios in buses:

2.
 - a) Identify yourself by using your name and bus number.
 - b) Answer by giving your name or bus number.
 - c) Leave your radio on channel 2 unless you are talking to the shop, or if someone has trouble hearing you, switch to channel 1. When you are done, switch back to channel 2.
 - d) While you are on channel 1, or if you are talking to the shop, wait until the yellow light goes out (2 second delay) before answering.
 - e) **Board business ONLY to be conducted on radios.**
 - f) **No unnecessary chatter on radios at any time.**

SECTION VI SCHOOL BUS COLLISION

POLICY

The Board believes that a format shall be established, and followed, for the reporting of school bus collisions.

PROCEDURES

The driver of the school bus must first contact the Transportation Bus Shop, via radio, and relay the following information:

- 1) Location
- 2) Number of students on the bus
- 3) Are there any injuries?
- 4) Number of vehicles involved.

The bus shop must immediately:

- 1) Call 9•1•1 for R.C.M.P. and ambulance services.
- 2) Send a relief bus to the scene of the accident. The Director of Transportation, or designate, will attend if possible and protect the scene until the R.C.M.P. give permission to move vehicles.
- 3) All parents will be notified by telephone or by a note sent home with their child.

SECTION VII
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

1. General

School Administration is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the bus system at the school level. This involves primarily the supervision of arrivals and departures, and dealing with disciplinary problems. From time to time safety aspects should be brought to the attention of the students.

2. Arrival and Departure of Buses

The School Administration shall:

- a) Arrange for alternate shelter and care if necessary.
- b) Arrange for appropriate supervision of students during loading and unloading.
- c) Restrict students not riding buses from using the loading area.
- d) Bring any bus timetabling problems to the attention of the Director of Transportation.
- e) Have a clearly understood procedure for students to follow when a bus is missed.

3. Disciplinary Action

Based upon reports submitted by drivers, or by supervisors of the loading and unloading activities, school administration will deal with each case as provided by Board policy.

4. Dissemination of Information

The School Administration shall:

- a) Ensure that the regulations, responsibilities and disciplinary channels are made known to staff and students at the beginning of each school year and throughout the year as required.
- b) Make available a copy of this handbook for the use of the student and parents or guardians.
- c) Institute a year-round follow-up program to encourage a continuing safety consciousness on the part of all students and teachers.
- d) Make every effort to inform parents of younger children of their responsibility for their children, in respect to bus safety, expected behaviour and disciplinary measures which will be taken for breach of regulations.
- e) Where it deems necessary, coordinate meetings with drivers, students, teachers, parents and the Director of Transportation.
- f) Consider the bus driver as an extension of school staff and ensure that any problems are discussed with the driver immediately.

**SECTION VIII
RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL BOARD**

POLICY

The Board believes it has a responsibility to make arrangements for the safe conveyance of resident and other students approved by the board to and from school.

GUIDELINE

1. Service is provided for students living in excess of 2.4 km from their designated school.
2. Service is provided to within .4 km from the gate on the property on which the student resides.
3. Winter service shall be provided from November 1 to March 31. Eligible students will be provided gate service during this time.
4. Door service is provided for handicapped and other medical reasons upon application and approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

**SECTION IX
PROCEDURES DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER**

POLICY

The Board, staff, parents and students are responsible for the safety of children who are required to travel on school buses.

PURPOSE

To support safe transportation for the school community.

GUIDELINE

1. It is the responsibility of the parents:
 - a) to access information about bus cancellations and school closures by listening to local radio stations or checking the Peace Wapiti web page www.pwsd76.ab.ca.
 - b) to ensure all students riding on school buses from November 1 to March 31 have appropriate winter clothing. In those cases where children are not appropriately attired for winter conditions, the bus driver shall advise the parent or principal or supervisor of transportation.
2. Bus Cancellations Due to Temperature:
 - a) If the temperature is -40°C or colder at 6:00 am at a Key Weather Station Location (see chart) the Superintendent, or designate, will cancel school buses in that High School Attendance Area. (Wind chill factor is not considered.)

High School Attendance Area	Key Weather Station Location
Savanna (includes schools in Bonanza)	CWB Savanna School Weather BUG
SRRA (includes schools in Rycroft & Woking)	Rycroft Weather Station
Beaverlodge (includes schools in Elmworth, Hythe, Wembley)	AMA near Beaverlodge - Camera 43-02 (Highway 43 - 96 metres east of Junction 723)
Ridgevalley	AMA near Debolt - Camera 43-06 (Highway 43 - 875 metres east of Range Road 723)
Eaglesham	Bayer Eaglesham Weather BUG
PWA and Sexsmith (includes schools in Grande Prairie, Teepee Creek, LaGlace, Bezanson, Clairmont and Grovedale)	Environment Canada at the Grande Prairie Airport

- b) The Superintendent, or designate, shall notify the local radio stations prior to 7:00 am.
- c) Bus drivers shall advise the parents of the students affected.

3. Bus Cancellations Due to Inclement Weather or Road Conditions:
 - a) The Superintendent, or designate, may cancel buses either individually or collectively when weather/road conditions constitute a safety risk to the students being transported.
 - b) The Superintendent, or designate, shall notify the radio stations prior to 7:00 am in the event that buses are cancelled due to inclement weather or road conditions. Bus drivers would advise the parents of the students affected that buses are cancelled.
 - c) The individual bus driver, after making a reasonable attempt that morning, is granted discretionary power to cancel or alter his/her route to ensure the safety of students being transported.
 - d) Where routes are cancelled or altered at the discretion of the bus driver, it is the responsibility of that bus driver to advise the parents of the students, and the Superintendent, or designate.
 - e) In circumstances of inclement weather, schools will remain open whenever possible even if any or all school buses are not operating. Parents need to be aware that under extreme emergency conditions, the Superintendent may close schools.
 - f) Under extreme emergency conditions where students cannot be delivered safely to their destination, the students will remain on the bus until released to responsible adult care.
4. Students absent when buses are cancelled will be marked excusably absent and will not suffer any penalties for school attendance programs.

**SECTION X
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board believes it has a responsibility to make arrangements for the safe conveyance of resident and other students approved by the Board to and from school.

1. The School Board, as the final authority on all local aspects of school busing and as elected officials of the community, must try to meet the needs of the community by -
 - a) Providing adequate policy statements to give clear direction to all parties concerned with bus transportation.
 - b) Delegating to staff members the authority necessary to carry out their responsibilities.
 - c) Acting as a final authority when a problem cannot be solved by the Director of Transportation or Superintendent of Schools.



STUDENT MISCONDUCT REPORT

A. Driver's Name: _____ Bus No. _____
Date: _____ Time: _____ School: _____

B. Student's Name: _____

C. Misconduct Comments: _____

D. Action Taken by Bus Driver: _____

Bus Driver's Signature

E. Action Taken by Principal: _____

Principal's Signature

- Note:
- 1. This form is to be completed by the Bus Driver and given to the Principal.
 - 2. If costs are to be assessed for vandalism, the Principal will make the notation and an invoice will be prepared by the Transportation Dept.
 - 3. A copy of this report is to be faxed to the Transportation Department @ 780-532-4141.
 - 4. **The school is responsible for ensuring the bus driver and the parents each receive a copy.**