

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to assist school bus drivers and school officials involved with pupil transportation in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

Of paramount importance is the safety of the children we transport. Under no circumstances should economy, efficiency, or time schedules be emphasized to the extent that safety is compromised. **SAFETY FIRST SHALL BE THE GOLDEN RULE.**

The rules, regulations and policies contained herein are in accordance with Pupil Transportation and Minimum Standards for School Buses, Commonwealth of Virginia; Virginia School Laws; and School Board Policies and Administrative Regulations of the Bedford County School Board.

THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

The school bus driver is an important, integral and contributing person to the educational processes of the Bedford County Public School System. No other person employed by the School Board of Bedford County occupies a position requiring the close daily contact with the children, parents, school administrators and the community, as do the school bus drivers. The first and last person a child sees during the day is the school bus driver. The attitude, appearance and conduct of the driver toward the child, motorist, school and community influence attitudes and opinions of the children. To the community the "yellow school bus" is a visual representation of the school. The attitude and conduct of the driver as well as the conduct of the children on the bus influence the way the public views the school system.

SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

The driver of a school bus shall be under the general direction and supervision of the Transportation Coordinator and shall also be accountable to the principals of the schools to which transportation is provided. Final authority on personnel matters rests with the Superintendent of Schools and the Bedford County School Board.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER CONTRACTS

The contract is a legally binding agreement between the driver and the School Board and must be signed by both parties. The bus driver should read all the articles very carefully to make sure that they agree with and are willing to abide by all the requirements in the contract before they sign it. All clauses are included for specific reasons. Any person, who after signing the contract knowingly and willfully violates any clause, forfeits the agreement and may be terminated.

COMPENSATION FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

1. The Bedford County School Board annually reviews all employee compensation programs. With the approval of the school budget, the School Board lists all salary schedules in the Regulations for Bedford County Schools; copies can be found in each school.
2. Employee compensation programs list school classified employees, hourly custodians, bus drivers, teacher aides, school nutrition workers and substitute teacher scales.
3. The annual salary of bus drivers, school nutrition workers, hourly custodians and per diem employees is divided into monthly payments and is paid as specified in the agreement with the School Board.
4. Employees are required to use the electronic direct deposit of payroll. Any bank or credit union in the Federal Reserve System may automatically receive your pay. Employees may view and print their payroll voucher by using the Employee Access Center under the Human Resources tab at our web site. Direct deposit cards are available at each school or by calling the payroll office.
5. Payday is the first working day of the month or as soon thereafter as possible. Exceptions -
 - a) Special payroll dates are set by the School Board in December and June.
6. When a mistake is made and the payroll has been finalized, a correction cannot be made other than by the official action of the School Board. A mistake should be brought to the attention of the payroll clerk immediately and will be corrected as follows -
 - a) If it is an overpayment and the employee continues employment, the amount overpaid will be deducted on the next pay period.
 - b) If it is the final check, the employee will refund the money.
 - c) If it is an underpayment, the amount underpaid will be paid on the next pay period.
7. Contact the payroll clerk at the school board office with any questions about payroll or if further information is needed.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER EVALUATIONS

In accordance with state and local policy, all Bedford County School Board employees, including bus drivers, must be evaluated on performance of duty.

The Transportation Coordinator and the administration of each school served at least once each year will evaluate school bus drivers. The school bus driver will be present at the time the evaluation is conducted.

DISCIPLINARY & DISMISSAL ACTIONS

1. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee may suspend an employee for up to sixty (60) days for good and just cause when the safety or welfare of the school division or students therein is threatened.
2. The superintendent may recommend to the School Board the placing on probation or dismissal of a classified employee for reasons of incompetence, immorality, etc. The employee shall be given such notices and hearings as prescribed by law before being placed on probation or dismissed by the School Board.
3. A driver may be given a verbal warning for a violation of the rules and regulations governing pupil transportation. A record of this warning will be kept in the driver's personnel file. Repeated violations will result in official written reprimand and/or dismissal.
4. Specific grounds for dismissal are -
 - a) Causing a preventable accident with injury to students.
 - b) Not completing a portion of the annual requirements.
 - c) Leaving the scene of an accident before being told to do so by a transportation official and/or police officer.
 - d) Accumulation of bad driving complaints from school authorities and law enforcement agencies.
 - e) Convicted of a motor vehicle violation while operating a school bus.
 - f) Operating an unsafe bus.
 - g) Tampering with the governor.
 - h) Having their CDL suspended more than once for insurance monitoring.
5. Failure to attend meetings called by school authorities, to submit written reports accurately and on time, and to have scheduled maintenance performed on the date assigned are grounds for dismissal.
6. Absence for other than childbirth, illness, or a serious family problem will result in a warning. Repeated absences for vacation purposes will mean dismissal. If you must take an extended leave, complete a Request For Personal Leave form.
7. If a school bus driver is charged with reckless driving, the driver shall be suspended until an investigation has been completed by the School Board. The results of the investigation shall determine what further action will be taken.

RELEASE FROM SERVICE

Classified employees terminating their employment shall submit notice of their intentions two (2) weeks prior to their final workday.

Employees giving advance notice of resigning, with the Superintendent's approval, shall have their resignation accepted without prejudice and shall be eligible for reemployment.

ABSENCES

Sick leave days are earned at the rate of ½ a day per month of employment. Sick leave may be used without prior authorization.

1. There are five approved accumulative paid sick leave days per contracted school year. Unused sick leave is carried from one contract year to the next.
2. **Contracted school bus driver who must be absent will secure a substitute bus driver from the approved list of substitutes provided by the Transportation Department.**
3. If a driver is unable to make their run, morning or afternoon, due to illness, **they must** contact the Assistant Transportation Coordinator at home or at the School Administration Building, stating the reason for the absence, length of absence and name of the substitute driver. A message may be left with the Transportation Department twenty-four (24) hours a day by dialing (540) 586-1045, ext. 259, leave a detailed message including, length of absence and name of substitute driver.
4. In the case of an emergency, contact the Assistant Transportation Coordinator or the Transportation Department immediately.
5. All leave requests for other than medical leave must be submitted to the Transportation Coordinator on the Request For Personal Leave form five working days prior to the requested leave, with the name of the substitute driver.
6. The driver must submit a Bus Driver Absentee Report, for all absence types, to the Transportation Department within forty-eight (48) hours after returning to work.
7. If a driver repeatedly fails to report their absence(s) disciplinary action may be taken. Remember...We must know who is driving your bus at all times.

SCHOOL BUS ROUTE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Reasonable effort will be made to assign drivers to bus routes located near their place of residency.
2. Regular drivers have priority on any available route. It is the driver's responsibility to inform the Transportation Coordinator in writing that they wish to be considered for a regular route change or supplemental bus run (i.e. vocational, activity, or special education).
3. Substitute bus drivers will be considered for available routes based on their experience and work record and who have expressed a desire for a regular route in writing.
4. The Transportation Coordinator may suspend the above procedures when reassignment would cause a disruption to the transportation system.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

1. The school bus driver shall perform their duties and responsibilities in accordance with Virginia State laws, Virginia State Board of Education Regulations and the policies and administrative regulations of the Bedford County School Board.
2. Perform your duties as a school bus driver in a business like manner. Report immediately to the appropriate school authority any unsafe conditions related to the school bus, the students, the roads or other users of the highway.
3. School bus drivers will dress professionally and are expected to present a neat and clean appearance when driving a school bus. The following are prohibited-
 - a) "Flip Flops" or other loose fitting shoes/sandals.
 - b) Floor length dresses, or any other attire that could interfere with the operation of the clutch, brake or accelerator.
 - c) Driving without shoes.
4. The school bus driver will attend all meetings, and complete all reports and schedules accurately and on time as required by the Transportation Coordinator and the principals of the schools. Bus driver reports and schedules vary in the information requested, so please go over the reports and schedules to make sure that they have been completed correctly.
5. The school bus driver shall maintain discipline on the school bus and report misconduct of students, when necessary, to the principal.
6. The driver of a school bus shall see that no one other than authorized passengers ride the bus.
7. The prescribed school bus route and time schedule will be followed. Students shall not be picked-up before the first designated stop of the bus route. All changes in school bus routes and time schedules must be pre-approved by the Transportation Coordinator.
8. The driver shall keep the school bus clean, neat, orderly, and properly heated and ventilated at all times.
9. The use of posters, stickers, or advertising material of any kind is prohibited in or on the school bus.
10. One or more emergency exit drills shall be held during the first thirty (30) days of school and again within the first thirty (30) days of the second semester. Students shall only be shown how to safely exit the school bus via the rear emergency exit.
11. The contracted school bus driver is **PERSONALLY** responsible for bringing their school bus to the Bus Shop for regular service, every forty-five (45) days or five thousand miles, and/or when requested by the Bus Shop.
12. The driver is encouraged to suggest improvements in various phases of the school transportation system.

13. The school bus driver is required to use chains when snow or ice makes the road hazardous. Each school bus driver shall be responsible for putting-on and taking-off the chains on their school bus. Chains are mandatory if school is closed early for ice or snow.
14. The school bus driver is required to notify the Transportation Department if they receive a ticket or citation of any type. This includes anytime the driver is on the school bus or in their private vehicle.
15. The school bus driver is prohibited from talking on a cell phone while operating a school bus. The only exception is in the event of an emergency situation; a cell phone may be used to contact help once the driver has safely parked the bus.

SCHOOL BUS ROUTES AND BUS STOPS

1. The Transportation Coordinator will establish school bus routes and stops in cooperation with the bus drivers and the school principals.
2. Bus routes shall be established on state maintained roads. Extensions of bus routes require the establishment of a bus turnaround that is state maintained.
3. Bus stops shall be placed along state maintained roads and in places that are within the one-mile walking distance along the state maintained road. The distance from the student's home to the state maintained road should not be a consideration.
4. No bus route will be changed without the prior approval of the Transportation Coordinator and the principal of the school served except where safety is involved. If, in the opinion of the driver, an unsafe condition exists, corrective steps shall be taken immediately and the proper office notified.
5. School buses are prohibited from stopping and/or parking at business establishments, except in the event of an emergency or unless prior approval has been obtained.
6. Every effort should be made to maintain a regular time schedule, safety permitting. However, school bus drivers are NOT to attempt to make-up time by employing any unsafe driving practice. Should a bus be running early, the driver is to slow down or stop in order to get back on the regular schedule.
7. School bus drivers are to pick-up and let-off only those students who are assigned to their bus route, and only at designated bus stops.
8. Students are required to have written permission from their parent or guardian and approval of the school principal before they are allowed to ride another bus and/or get on or off the bus at a location other than their designated bus stop.
9. A guardian or designee must be at the bus stop each afternoon to receive pre-school through third grade students. Exceptions to this policy must be made in writing to the building administrator by the legal guardian; a copy will be given to the bus driver, with the original placed in the student's file at the school. A designee may be an older sibling or

older student getting off at the same bus stop who is responsible enough to ensure that the younger students are supervised while on the way from the bus stop to their home.

10. Bus Run Instructions -

- a) Perform Pre-Trip Inspection both morning and afternoon in accordance with procedures outlined elsewhere in this handbook.
- b) a.m. - Depart from parking location in time to maintain the normal time schedule. Arrive at the school at the designated time.
- c) a.m. /p.m. - Upon approaching the bus stop, activate school bus warning lights in accordance with county/state regulations.
- d) a.m. /p.m. - After stopping, shift bus to neutral and keep foot on brake while students are loading.
- e) Passengers are to load/unload in an orderly manner both morning and afternoon. The school bus should normally be loaded from the rear of the bus forward. Exceptions may be made to this rule at the driver's discretion.
- f) a.m. - **School bus drivers are not to use the horn to signal students that the bus is at their stop.**
- g) Children who must cross the road to get to/from the bus are to be instructed not to cross until the driver has signaled to them, and cross in front of the crossing control arm.
- h) Under NO circumstances will a child be permitted or required to cross a three lane, four lane or divided highway to get on/off the school bus. This is a serious traffic violation and the bus driver may be cited.
- i) Passengers are not permitted to run alongside the bus while it is in motion, but must wait until the bus is stopped before approaching it.
- j) No passengers will be permitted to stand, and under no circumstances will a driver permit any person to stand or sit in front of the metal stanchion, or in the stepwell, nor permit any person or object to block their lateral view. Violations of this regulation may result in a citation for reckless driving.
- k) a.m. - All passengers must be seated before the bus pulls off from the bus stop.
p.m. - All passengers are to remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. No shoving, pushing or running is to be permitted when leaving the school bus.
- l) a.m. - After completing the bus route proceed to school. Violations of e, g, h, i, j, k are to be reported to the school principal on the Bedford County School Bus Conduct Report.
- m) p.m. - Upon completion of the days run secure the school bus for the night. Violations of e, g, h, i, j and k are to be reported to the school principal on the Bedford County School Bus Conduct Report.
- n) Check the bus after each run for vandalism. Report all cases to the principal of the school and the Supervisor of Transportation with the names of the students responsible, if known. Use the Report of Stolen Fuel And/Or Vandalism To A Bedford County School Bus form to report all damage or vandalism.
- o) Check the bus after each run for students that may still be on the bus.

11. Alternate School Bus Snow Routes –

- a) The Transportation Coordinator shall establish alternate school bus snow routes.
- b) These routes shall be used when the Superintendent authorizes their use.

- c) When students are picked-up at an alternate “pick-up” point in the morning, they will be returned to the same point in the afternoon.
- d) The driver of a school bus that has an alternate snow route is responsible for informing the students riding their bus of the locations of the alternate school bus “pick-up” points and the time they will be picked-up and returned.

STANDARDS OF OPERATION FOR A SCHOOL BUS

1. The use of school buses is limited to the transportation of school children to and from school and other activities as approved by the Transportation Coordinator. Under no circumstances are school buses to be used as transportation for conducting personal business.
2. Great care shall be exercised at all times in the transportation of school children.
3. The driver of a school bus shall wear the safety lap belt/safety lap belt and harness assembly at all time while the bus is in operation.
4. The following speed limits or the minimum legal speed allowable shall be observed while operating a school bus -
 - a) 45 MPH or the minimum speed allowable, whichever is greater, on any highway were the maximum speed limit is 55 MPH or less.
 - b) 25 MPH - School Zones.
 - c) **5 MPH – When within 100 feet of a school building.**
 - d) 60 MPH – While on interstate highways and on other highways were the maximum speed limit is more than 55 MPH ONLY.
5. No school bus shall pass another school bus on regular routes.
6. The following will be followed when it is necessary for a school bus to cross railroad tracks -
 - a) The driver will turn on 4-way flashing hazard lights and come to a complete stop before crossing the railroad tracks. The school bus will stop at a point where the driver has clear visibility of the railroad tracks in both directs but not closer than fifteen (15) feet from the tracks.
 - b) The school bus driver shall open the entrance door of the school bus and determine when it is safe for the school bus to cross the railroad tracks. The entrance door shall be closed before the school bus is put in motion, along with 4-way flashing hazard lights.
 - c) After stopping as required, the school bus driver shall proceed in such a gear that there will be no necessity for changing gears while crossing the railroad tracks.
7. All traffic-warning devices shall be used when school children are getting on or off a school bus. **THIS INCLUDES ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.** The warning devices shall be used as follows –
 - a) 8 Lamp Systems - amber traffic lights are to be in operation for a distance of not less than one hundred (100) feet before the school bus stop if the speed limit is less than

thirty-five (35) mph, and for a distance of at least two hundred (200) feet if the speed limit is greater than thirty-five (35) mph. Red lights are to be activated only when the bus has come to a complete stop.

- b) Warning stop sign and crossing control are extended only after the school bus has come to a complete stop to load/unload students. The warning stop sign and crossing control arm must be completely disengaged before the school bus starts to move.

8. When loading or unloading students from the school bus –

- d) The school bus driver shall use all warning devices as described by law. The school bus must stop in the right-hand traffic lane of the highway, street or roadway.
- e) The school bus shall make stops only at designated points where the school bus can be clearly seen for a safe distance from both directions.
- f) The school bus driver shall open and close the entrance door to the school bus and keep it securely closed while the school bus is in motion. **This responsibility shall not be delegated to any other person.**
- g) A student who must cross the road shall be required to cross in front of the school bus. The student shall be required to walk to the end of the extended crossing control arm, stop, and wait for a signal from the bus driver to start across the highway.
- h) On three lane, four lane and divided highways, students shall be picked-up and let-off on the side of the highway on which they live.
- e) The driver of the school bus shall make sure all students are in their seats before the school bus pulls off from a stop. Students are to remain in their seats until the school bus has come to a complete stop before getting off the school bus.

9. Students shall not be allowed to occupy any position that will obscure the vision of the school bus driver.

10. No object shall be placed on the school bus that will block or restrict the passenger from using the aisle, entrance door or the emergency door of the school bus.

11. The driver of the school bus shall remain on the school bus at all times when students are onboard and are loading and/or unloading.

12. School bus drivers shall not leave the school bus without stopping the engine, setting the brake, putting the school bus in gear and removing the keys from the ignition.

13. The school bus driver shall check the inside of the school bus after the completion of each run for vandalism and/or students left on the bus.

14. School buses shall be fueled at the completion of the morning run.

15. School buses shall be parked at the assigned locations. The school bus driver is responsible for making the Pre-Trip Inspection of the school bus as listed in this handbook.

16. Headlights will be on at all times when the school bus is in operation.

OPERATION, MAINTENANCE & CARE OF BUSES

1. Operation –
 - a) Pre-Trip Inspection Procedures - Follow the Bedford County School Bus Driver's Pre-Trip Inspection Report procedures to check your bus and to report any discrepancies.
 - b) Post-Trip Inspection Procedures –
 - i) Turn off engine and lights.
 - ii) Make sure the bus is in gear and the parking brake is set.
 - iii) Close all windows and air vents.
 - iv) Sweep interior of the bus and empty trash containers.
 - v) Check bus for vandalism.
 - vi) Remove ignition key, and place on top of the first aid kit.
 - vii) Close the door.

2. School Bus Fueling Procedures – **There is no excuse for allowing your school bus to run out of fuel.**
 - a) All school buses are to be fueled at their assigned fueling location after the completion of the last morning run.
 - b) School buses are not to be refueled with passengers onboard.
 - c) Bus engines are to be turned off, to check the oil and water levels.
 - d) All Bedford County School Board employees operating any vehicle or piece of machinery requiring fuel will be required to wear protective safety equipment (goggles and rubber gloves) when fueling their vehicle or checking and/or adding oil or water to the engine. This safety equipment will be located at the fueling location.

3. School Bus Parking –
 - a) The school bus driver is responsible for providing safe and legal parking facilities for the bus assigned to them. The Transportation Coordinator must approve all bus parking locations.
 - b) School buses shall be parked on school grounds or at the Bus Shop during the school day. Exceptions to this require prior authorization from the Transportation Coordinator.

4. Driving Practices –
 - a) School bus drivers are required to operate their school buses in a safe manner at all times and in compliance with federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations. Any school bus driver who operates a school bus in an unsafe manner and/or violates any law, rule or regulation applicable to school bus operation is subject to suspension, probation or dismissal. Drivers should be courteous to other drivers even though they may not be courteous to them. School bus drivers should prevent an accident regardless of who has the right of way; it is better to have hurt feelings than injured people.

5. School Bus Maintenance –

- a) Drivers are responsible for checking the odometer reading and bringing their bus to the Bus Shop for normal maintenance after each forty-five days of operation or five thousand miles. Drivers are also responsible for noting defective equipment and bringing the bus to the Bus Shop for repair, if it is safe to operate the bus.
- b) In case of mechanical trouble, the driver shall call the Bus Shop at (540) 586-7705, to explain the problem and give the location of the school bus. After hours, the driver is to contact the Bus Shop Foreman at (540) 875-7289. Should the bus start after you have called for service, call the Bus Shop to cancel the service call or stay at the location until the mechanic arrives.

USE OF TWO WAY RADIOS ON SCHOOL BUSES

1. **RADIOS ARE TO BE USED ONLY IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY OR A MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN.**
2. Press the microphone button; identify yourself (i.e. bus 50) and the unit you are calling (i.e. to 85(Bus Shop) or 55(Transportation Department). Release the microphone button and wait for an answer to your call, then complete your message. After completing your message sign off the air, (i.e. bus 50 clear).
3. It is a violation of FCC rules to interrupt emergency calls; they have priority over all other messages. Always make sure that no one else is on the air before sending a message.
4. Federal Law prohibits use of profane or obscene language. Our license may be suspended by the FCC if such language is used.
5. It is against the law to send false call letters, or false distress or emergency messages.
6. The FCC requires brief conversations and confines them to business. Use coded messages whenever possible.
7. Using your radio to send personal messages (except in an emergency) is a violation of FCC rules. You may send only those messages that are essential for the operation of the school system.
8. It is against Federal Law to repeat or otherwise make known anything overheard on your radio. Conversations between others sharing your channel must be regarded as confidential.
9. To prevent burns or related physical injury from radio frequency energy, do not operate the transmitter when anyone is within two feet of the antenna.
10. Do not operate the radio transmitter while fueling the school bus.
11. The radio must be turned off before attempting to jump start the bus. A surge in the voltage when you jump-start a vehicle may be sufficient to cause damage to the internal components of the radio.

12. The radio is extremely rugged in construction and will withstand a great deal of abuse. However, the radio system is not water proof; it must be protected from the rain, snow, and other inclement conditions. If you leave your bus window open, the rain could severely damage the internal components of the radio system.
13. The Federal Government licenses this radio system. Only individuals designated by the Superintendent are allowed to use the radio.
14. Dynamite blasting caps may be caused to explode by operating a two-way radio within five hundred (500) feet of the blasting caps. Obey the "Turn Off Two-Way Radios" signs posted where dynamite is being used.
15. Only radios owned by the Bedford County Public Schools will be allowed on school buses.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

1. The Superintendent of Schools makes the decision to close schools. The decision will be announced by 5:45 a.m.
2. Information concerning the closing of the system or delayed opening will be released to radio and television stations serving Bedford County.
3. During inclement weather conditions, check your bus earlier in the morning to determine if it will start and if you can move it from its parking location. Due to the great distance that the Bus Shop personnel must travel in order to assist you, the earlier we are notified the better we can serve you.
4. **It is the bus driver's responsibility to "dig out" their bus after a large snow. Contact the Transportation Department if you encounter any problems in getting your bus out.**
5. If it is necessary to close early, the Transportation Department will try to notify the drivers as quickly as possible. School closing information will be released to the radio and television stations serving Bedford County.
6. If schools are open on a day, which has icy or slushy conditions, and you feel that a road on your route is unsafe, do not attempt to travel on that road. Please be guided by common sense and good judgment in your evaluation of any road condition. If the decision is made not to travel a road, you must contact the Transportation Coordinator and the students living on that road.
7. The need for installing chains on buses will be determined by road and weather conditions. The decision to use chains is the responsibility of the driver unless the Transportation Coordinator issues specific instructions. The individual drivers are responsible for installing chains. Drivers should remember it is better to overuse chains than not to use them when needed. **THE MANDATORY USE OF CHAINS IS REQUIRED WHEN SCHOOL IS CLOSED EARLY DUE TO SNOW OR ICY CONDITIONS.**

SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENTS

1. A school bus accident shall be defined as anytime the school bus comes into contact with another object, this includes property damage. In addition, anytime a student is injured on or in the vicinity of a school bus an accident has taken place.
2. All school bus related accidents and injuries shall be reported to the Transportation Coordinator immediately.
3. No statements, admissions or comments are to be made to any person at the scene of an accident nor any questions answered except those asked by the investigating law officer and/or the Transportation Coordinator.
4. School bus drivers should not argue at the scene of an accident, they should be courteous and cooperative. All inquiries made to the bus driver at a later date should be referred to the Transportation Coordinator. Under no circumstances should accidents be discussed with any person except in the presence of the Transportation Coordinator or a known representative of the insurance company that insures the Bedford County School Board fleet.
5. If the bus can be operated safely, the driver is to bring the bus to the Bus Shop for inspection and an estimate of the cost of repairing the vehicle.
6. **What To Do About Accidents Involving Other Vehicles And/Or Pedestrians –**
 - a) STOP!! Call the Transportation Department or the Transportation Coordinator or have someone call for you.
 - b) Indicate clearly how many vehicles are involved and if there are any injuries. In the case of fire, evacuate the bus and move the children to a safe area. Extinguish the fire if possible.
 - c) Place warning flags and flares to protect the passengers and bus. Keep students on the bus if there is no danger of further injury occurring; otherwise evacuate them to a safe area.
 - d) Administer first aid to the injured, when possible.
 - e) **DO NOT** move an injured person unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent fatal injury.
 - f) Make a list of the names of every student on the bus at the time of the accident, including the school the student attends.
7. **DO NOT MOVE THE BUS UNTIL THE POLICE HAVE ARRIVED AND DIRECTED YOU TO DO SO.**
8. Any injury or complaint of injury reported by a passenger on the school bus that is school related, (i.e. falling, being pushed, or injured at the bus stop) is to be reported to the school principal and the Transportation Coordinator. If there is any doubt as to the seriousness of the injury, the driver is to contact the Transportation Department or the Transportation Coordinator and an ambulance will be sent.

The Transportation Coordinator or designee will investigate all school bus accidents.

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE

1. The school bus driver is responsible for the discipline on the school bus. The principal has the authority to suspend the student's privilege of riding a school bus. The school bus driver has the authority to maintain safe and orderly conduct on the school bus, including the authority to assign seats to students. Drivers are encouraged to assign seats. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL THE STUDENT BE PUT OFF THE SCHOOL BUS EN-ROUTE TO OR FROM SCHOOL**
2. School bus drivers are not to get involved in verbal exchanges with the students or parents of the children they are transporting. Hands should not be put on students, unless the driver is breaking-up a fight, etc. Parent conferences with the student, driver, principal and/or the Transportation Coordinator may be arranged.
3. All discipline problems that require action by the school principal are to be reported on the Bedford County School Bus Conduct Report form. One form must be completed for each student involved, with the form being submitted to the principal of the school that the student attends. If the problem is of an extreme or severe nature, the driver should make a special effort to meet with the student and the principal.
4. Drivers should be aware that the punishment for an offense is governed by many circumstances, and should not make unreasonable statements or recommendations to the principal in regard to the student's punishment.
5. We are aware that to write a set of rules that would govern all schools and bus discipline would be impractical as well as impossible. Each infraction of the rules must be considered with respect to different sets of circumstances.
6. Many problems that erupt on the bus stem from fights and disruptions in the local communities. We cannot correct these problems, but must use insight and guidance in working with the students.
7. In order to maintain discipline on the buses and to make each trip safe and enjoyable, we must work together - parents, students, bus drivers and administrators.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON THE BUS AND AT THE SCHOOL BUS STOP

1. Students must be prompt and arrive at their designated school bus stop at least ten (10) minutes before the school bus is scheduled to arrive. Students are required to conduct themselves in the same manner at the school bus stop as they do on the school bus or in the classroom.
2. Passengers shall follow the instructions of the school bus driver.

3. Students are expected to show proper respect to other students and all school personnel. Profanity, indecent gestures, rudeness or other disrespect will not be tolerated.
4. Passengers are to remain seated at all time while on the school bus. The school bus cannot move from a stop until all passengers are seated. Passengers must wait until the school bus has stopped, then walk to the front door of the school bus to get off.
5. Students must not distract the bus driver or cause an undue safety hazards. This includes unnecessary loud talking, laughter, fighting, or throwing things on the bus or out of the bus, and talking to the bus driver while the bus is in motion (except in an emergency).
6. Waving or shouting at pedestrians or passengers in other vehicles and extending arms, legs, head or object from the school bus windows are not permitted. No one is allowed to ride on the bumpers or the outside of the bus.
7. Students are to have nothing in their possession that may cause injury to another. Dangerous weapons, including firearms, knives, and razors; and dangerous instruments such as sticks, breakable containers or pins extending from their clothing are prohibited on the school bus. Students are prohibited from carrying water and explosives including fireworks on the school bus.
8. The possession, distribution, use or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and the use of tobacco in any form are forbidden on the school bus.
9. Food and/or beverages of any type are not to be consumed on the school bus.
10. Willful or careless destruction or damage to a school bus must be paid for by the student(s) performing the act(s).
11. Tampering with the emergency door or other bus equipment is prohibited.

TIPS ON DISCIPLINE

1. Establish fair and reasonable rules consistent with Bedford County School Board regulations then –
 - a) Make sure passengers understand them.
 - b) Be firm, fair, and consistent and reasonable in enforcing them.
2. Maintain discipline from the first day. Do not try to be the “good guy” or their “buddy”. Remember that it is easier to relax discipline than to enforce it after the situation has gotten out of hand. Be pleasant and treat your passengers with respect. In most case they will treat you the same.
3. Do not scream or shout. A normal determined voice can accomplish much more. Do not threaten and warn unless you are authorized and prepared to “back it up”. They may call your bluff and the situation becomes worse.

4. Do not resort to mass accusations. Be able to make positive identification of the offenders. Mass accusations will many times create a greater problem because students who were not involved will adopt the attitude, "If I'm accused of it, I may as well do it".
5. Do not argue with the students nor engage in verbal exchanges. This places you on their level and you will undoubtedly come out second best.
6. If you discipline a student, do so after all the other students have left the bus. Do not provide them with an audience which most of them prefer.
7. Try not to "take up" every little remark. Some pupils delight in getting an adult to "lose their cool".
8. Don't take whole bus loads of pupils back to the school for the actions of a few. This only antagonizes those who were not involved and may create a greater discipline problem.
9. Set an example by your attitude, dress and obey the rules. This has a considerable effect on young people.

SPECIAL EDUCATION BUSES AND BUS ROUTES

1. The success of the special education programs depends greatly on the dedicated skills of the bus drivers.
2. The driver of a special education bus shall –
 - a) Be able to operate specially equipped or adapted vehicles.
 - b) Be familiar with the medical and physical background of each child.
 - c) Communicate with the child's parents and school personnel.
 - d) Be able to determine when a child is behaving abnormally for their condition.
3. Transporting a handicapped child is the direct responsibility of the bus driver. The child that must have special equipment such as a wheelchair; braces; crutches, etc., has problems during the loading and unloading process. It is the driver's responsibility to learn how to handle these problems and be familiar with special equipment.
4. Parents play an important role in preparation of the child for school. Parents must know the following if they are to meet the school bus to cooperate with the bus driver :
 - a) The time and exact location where the child will be picked-up and returned. As well as arrangements to be made during inclement weather.
 - b) Where to call if a problem exists.
5. Students on special education buses are expected to follow the same rules and regulations as the students on any other school bus.

BUS AIDES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION BUSES

1. The duties of the bus aide shall be as follows -
 - a) Help students enter and exit the bus for the daily route to and from school.
 - b) Assist students with transportation, particular to special needs students to insure their safety at all times.
 - c) Assist in the security of students on buses and report the special/emergency needs of the individual.
 - d) Operate special equipment necessary for special education students to be able to ride on school buses.
 - e) Stay informed of the general nature of the special education programs serving the students transported on special needs buses.
 - f) Perform other duties as may be assigned.
 - g) Take care of the general needs of the students being transported.

FIELD TRIPS AND ATHLETIC TRIPS

1. The individual schools are responsible for making arrangements for bus drivers to drive field trips from their school.
2. Contracted drivers and buses may be used, provided the field trip does not conflict with regularly scheduled bus routes.
3. Substitute bus drivers will be used for trips that conflict with regularly scheduled bus runs.
4. School bus drivers are not to take a field trip unless they have in their possession a Field Trip Report form.
5. Should a field trip be canceled or postponed, the school is responsible for notifying the bus driver and the Transportation Department.
6. Each bus must have at least one responsible sponsor or chaperon on board. This person is to inform the driver of the destination, time schedule to be followed and the route to be traveled.
7. When more than one bus is used for a field trip to the same destination, all buses will remain together and will not pass one another for the duration of the trip.
8. The bus drivers and the sponsors or chaperons are mutually responsible for cleaning the school bus at the completion of each field trip.
9. Pay for field trips will be in accordance with current pay scales.
10. All passengers are required to comply with the regulations governing pupil conduct on school buses.

11. Before departure on any field trip the bus driver must inform all passengers of the location of the emergency exits; first aid kit; and fire extinguisher.
12. In the event of mechanical problems, contact the Bus Shop, Transportation Coordinator or the school principal for instructions.

BUS ROUTE AND BUS STOP EVALUATIONS

In accordance with state and local policy, all Bedford County bus routes and school bus stops will be evaluated. These evaluations will take place twice a year when the driver completes the TRS-01. The school bus driver, Transportation Coordinator and the administration of the school served, will evaluate each route and bus stop for problem areas. If there is a problem, steps will be taken to correct them. The information upon completion will be kept on file in the office of the Transportation Coordinator.