

SUMMARY SHEET

RECOMMENDATION TO SUPERINTENDENT FOR SCHOOL BOARD AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM NO. _____

DATE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEETING: December 18, 2018

TITLE OF AGENDA ITEM: Bus Drivers Handbook

DIVISION:

_____ This is a CONTINUATION of a current project, grant, etc.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF ITEM:

Approval is requested for the Bus Drivers Handbook.

FUND SOURCE: N/A

AMOUNT: N/A

PREPARED BY: Andy Gay

POSITION: Administrator on Assignment

INTERNAL INSTRUCTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY PREPARER

_____ Number of ORIGINAL SIGNATURES NEEDED by preparer.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SIGNATURE: page(s) numbered _____

CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE: page(s) numbered _____

REVIEWED BY: _____

GADSDEN COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER HANDBOOK



THE MISSION OF THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT:

**“TO PROVIDE SAFE TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS IN A
TIMELY AND EFFICIENT MANNER.”**

Board Approved December 18, 2018

SCHOOL BOARD OF GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Steve Scott, Chair, District 2

Audrey Lewis, District 1

Leroy McMillan, District 3

Charlie Frost, District 4

Tyrone Smith, District 5

Roger P. Milton

Superintendent of Schools

Gadsden County Schools
 Transportation Department
 Bus Driver’s Handbook

Table of Contents

SECTION 1 6
MISSION & ORGANIZATION OF GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOLS
 TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT..... 6
 1.01 **TRANSPORTATION MISSION STATEMENT 6**
 1.02 **TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION..... 6**
 1.03 **TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS..... 6**
 1.04 **DRIVER TRAINING..... 7**
 1.05 **SAFETY TEAM 7**

SECTION 2 8
DRIVER DUTIES..... 8
 2.01 **DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS..... 8**
 2.02 **DUTIES OF THE DRIVER 8**
 2.03 **DRIVER ANNUAL RE-CERTIFICATION..... 11**
 2.04 **USE OF BUSES OWNED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD..... 12**
 2.05 **EQUIPMENT NOT AUTHORIZED TO BE INSTALLED ON SCHOOL BUSES . 12**
 2.06 **AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS 12**
 2.07 **DRESS CODE FOR DRIVERS 12**

SECTION 3 13
RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, STAFF & PARENTS 13
 3.01 **TEMPORARY CHANGE OF BUS STOP PROCEDURES 13**
 3.02 **DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT 13**
 3.03 **DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS ATTENDANTS..... 13**
 3.04 **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL
 TRANSPORTATION NEEDS..... 13**

SECTION 4 15
SCHOOL BUS CAPACITY/SCHEDULING..... 15
 4.01 **SCHOOL BUS CAPACITIES 15**
 4.02 **DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES..... 15**
 4.03 **PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING DRIVERS TO BUS ROUTES, SHUTTLES,
 AND ACTIVITY RUNS 16**

SECTION 5 17
“LEAD DRIVER” CRITERIA AND FIELD TRIP PROCEDURES..... 17
 5.01 **LEAD DRIVERS..... 17**
 5.02 **FIELD TRIPS PROCEDURES 17**
 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR FIELD TRIPS..... 17

SECTION 6	19
ATTENDANCE POLICY, PAYROLL PROCEDURES	19
6.01 ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES	19
6.02 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE	19
6.03 PROCEDURES TO APPLY FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE	19
6.04 ABSENCES, UNAUTHORIZED	20
6.05 PAYROLL PROCEDURES	20
SECTION 7	21
SCHOOL BUS OPERATING PROCEDURES	21
7.01 SCHOOL BUS OPERATION	21
7.02 SCHOOL BUS STOP LAW (Florida Statute 316.172)	21
7.03 LOADING AND UNLOADING OF STUDENT PASSENGERS	21
7.04 PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL BUSES EQUIPPED WITH LAP BELTS	23
7.05 ITEMS NOT PERMITTED ON A SCHOOL BUS	24
7.06 SAFE DRIVING PRINCIPLES – EMERGENCY VEHICLES	24
7.07 SAFE DRIVING PRINCIPLES – RAILROAD CROSSINGS	25
7.08 SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES – RESTRICTED CLEARANCES	27
7.09 USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES	27
7.10 COMPOUND TRAFFIC RULES AND STORAGE OF BUSES	27
7.11 NO IDLING POLICY, ENERGY CONSERVATION	28
AND EMISSIONS REDUCTION	28
7.12 USE OF AM/FM RADIOS ON SCHOOL BUSES	29
SECTION 8	30
USE OF TWO-WAY RADIOS	30
8.01 GENERAL PROCEDURES	30
8.02 RADIO CODES	30
SECTION 9	32
SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER MANAGEMENT	32
9.01 GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BUS SAFETY RULES	33
9.02 DRIVER GUIDELINES AND HANDLING STUDENTS	33
9.03 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT	34
9.04 EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	35
SECTION 10	36
FIRE PREVENTION, EMERGENCY STOPS, INCIDENTS/CRASHES	36
10.01 FIRE PREVENTION	36
10.02 EMERGENCY STOPS	36
10.03 PLACEMENT OF TRIANGULAR REFLECTORS	37
10.04 BUS INCIDENTS/CRASHES	37
10.05 INCIDENTS	39
10.06 STUDENT INJURIES AND ILLNESS	39

SECTION 11	40
PRE-TRIP INSPECTION/MAINTENANCE	40
GAUGES & WARNING LIGHTS & THEIR FUNCTION	41
THE PRE-TRIP INSPECTION	42
SAFE DRIVER PLAN.....	44

SECTION 1

MISSION & ORGANIZATION OF GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOLS

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

The Transportation Department is organized by three main functions: transportation operations, transportation services, and vehicle maintenance. The information included in this section is intended to give the driver a basic overview of the roles each of the three main functions play in transportation, and how they work together to meet the department's mission.

1.01 TRANSPORTATION MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Gadsden County Schools Transportation Department is to provide safe transportation for Gadsden County Schools' students in a timely and efficient manner. Listed below are the major goals which guide the administration of transportation.

- To provide safe transportation
- To deliver students on time
- To operate the transportation program efficiently and economically
- To foster a high performing work force by
 - ◆ Providing employees with opportunities to enhance their professional and personal development through in-service training programs
 - ◆ Striving to improve employee safety, recognition, and job satisfaction

1.02 TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

The administrators of the Gadsden County Schools Transportation Department provide overall supervision, direction, and management of the activities of the Department. The department's administrative offices are located at the Robert H. Bryant Transportation Facility.

- The Director of Transportation is the administrator in charge of the department.
- The Routing Coordinator is in charge of ESE services, field trips, schedules drivers for routes and coordinates through dispatch any adjustments to daily drivers and routes.

1.03 TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS

Included under the transportation operations "umbrella" are Lead Drivers, Safety Team, Drivers, Shop Foremans/ Mechanics, Dispatchers, Training Coordinator and Clerical Staff.

Lead Drivers work under the direction of, and provide assistance to the Transportation Director and the direct supervision of bus drivers.

- 1) Coordinators of Routing are located at Robert H. Bryant Transportation Facility. Route Coordinators are responsible for developing, coordinating, and updating the department's bus routes as required. All changes to a bus route must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Route Coordinator and/or Director or designee.

- 2) Transportation Dispatchers are responsible to ensure drivers have been assigned to cover all the school bus routes. They monitor the operation of the routes to ensure they run in a timely manner and make sure all students who require transportation are given a ride. Dispatchers ensure emergency assistance is provided to drivers when required.

1.04 DRIVER TRAINING

Driver training is organized into two units. One unit focuses on school bus driving skills, safety, and driver certification. The second unit focuses on student behavior management and special needs students.

1.05 SAFETY TEAM

- A. The Safety Team is comprised of Lead Drivers and trainers.
- B. The Safety Team audits the routes, checks school bus stops and processes parent requests for stop changes due to safety issues.

SECTION 2

DRIVER DUTIES

2.01 DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

- A. The school board shall assure that the driver of a school bus meets the following requirements:
- 1) Hold a valid commercial driver's license with passenger endorsement, not restricted for air brakes, and as of 9/30/05, "S" endorsement.
 - 2) Successfully complete 40 hours of the State mandated New Bus Driver Training Course.
 - 3) Be physically capable of operating the vehicle as determined by a physical examination as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education and given by a physician designated by the school board, and as determined by a dexterity test administered by the school district.
- B. Drug and alcohol test requirements for drivers. Requirements for drug and alcohol testing of drivers are established by Federal Regulation (49 CFR 391.81 through 391.123 "controlled substance testing") and Rules of the State Board of Education (Rule 6A-3.0141). In accordance with these rules and regulations, drivers are required to be tested for drugs and alcohol as follows:
- 1) Prior to initial employment. All prospective drivers must take and pass a drug test.
 - 2) Random testing. Drivers shall be randomly tested for alcohol and/or drugs. If you have scheduled an appointment during your downtime (such as a doctor/personal appointment) you must notify the dispatcher before start of business that day.
 - 3) Post accident. Drivers who have an accident while driving a school bus which results in a fatality (regardless of fault) must be tested for drugs and alcohol. Also, drivers who have an at-fault accident while driving a school bus must be tested for drugs and alcohol when either of the following conditions apply:
 - A person had to be transported from the scene for immediate medical treatment.
 - Any vehicle involved had to be towed from the scene.

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

2.02 DUTIES OF THE DRIVER

Drivers are under the direction of the department's Lead Drivers and Director, and will follow all instructions and complete all work assignments. Drivers will receive direction and instructions from the Transportation Dispatchers.

- A. Drivers will, at all times, operate their buses in accordance with the requirements of the Florida Traffic Laws, the requirements of the State Board of Education, and the procedures detailed in this Handbook. Drivers shall not leave the bus while students are on board.
- B. Drivers will possess the appropriate Commercial Driver's License (CDL) at all times while employed with Gadsden County Schools and will maintain their license in good standing. Drivers must have their CDL with them whenever they are operating a school bus or any other School Board owned/leased vehicle.

- C. Drivers will possess a current, valid Medical Examiner's Certificate at all times while employed by Gadsden County Schools. Drivers must have their Medical Examiner's Certificate with them whenever they are operating a school bus or any other School Board owned/leased vehicle.
- D. Drivers shall not be required to operate a bus under conditions in which one or more
- students pose a clear and present danger to the safety of the driver or other students, or the safety of the bus while in operation. The district school board shall have measures in place designed to protect the bus driver from threats or physical injury from students.
 - Drivers will maintain a professional attitude - be patient, firm, fair, and friendly.
 - Safety comes first! When in doubt, do not take chances!
- E. In the case of a student having engaged in violent or blatantly unsafe actions while riding the school bus, the district school board shall take corrective measures to ensure, to the extent feasible, that such actions are not repeated prior to reassigning the student to the bus.
- F. Drivers will not deviate from assigned route and stops- no unauthorized stops are permitted, nor create any changes to the route or stops without receiving prior permission from a Dispatcher, or Director. Requests for permanent changes to bus stops must be reviewed and approved by the Routing Office.
- G. Drivers will immediately report any hazards on the bus route or at bus stops which might offer an actual or potential threat to the safety of transported students to the Dispatch Office for their assigned compound and to their assigned Lead Driver.
- H. If a driver discovers any defective, broken, missing equipment or a mechanical defect during the AM or PM pre-trip inspection of a bus, the problem is to be documented on the "Pre-Trip Inspection" form and turned into the Shop Foremen. Prior to leaving the bus compound the driver is responsible for taking the bus to the garage and completing a "Driver Request for Repair" form for any needed repairs.
- I. Drivers are required to keep the bus clean at all times. The floor of the bus will be swept twice daily, first in the morning after completing all morning trips and again in the afternoon after completing the last trip of the day. Trash from the bus must not be swept out of the bus onto parking areas – place all trash into the proper receptacle. The windshield and rear windows will be kept clean to ensure that visibility is not reduced.
- J. Loading and unloading of students from the school bus is an especially critical period of time for safety awareness.
- 1) Drivers will always follow established procedures for loading and unloading of student passengers as set forth in the Department of Education's Basic Driver Training Curriculum.
 - 2) Drivers will always directly supervise the loading and unloading of all student passengers. Drivers will be on their buses at all times while students are loading or unloading at schools. Drivers will supervise the activities of students leaving the bus until they have crossed the road safely, and will permit students to leave the bus only at their assigned stop.
- K. Under no circumstance will a driver allow a pre-kindergarten student to depart the bus when being dropped off at the designated afternoon stop, unless the student's parent or designated guardian is at the bus stop to receive the student. The same policy also applies to all special education (ESE) students who are picked up and dropped off at their home residence, unless the parent or guardian has an approved waiver on file with the transportation routing office. Upon arriving at a stop, when the parent or guardian is not present to receive the student, the driver shall follow the procedure outlined below:

- 1) notify the Dispatch Office via two-way radio
 - 2) complete remainder of run and then return to stop, if directed by Dispatch
 - 3) if parent/guardian is still not there, notify the Dispatch Office via two-way radio transport student to alternate location as directed by the dispatcher.
- L. Drivers will coordinate seating arrangements for all students assigned to ride the bus. Drivers are required to prepare an up-to-date seating chart, whenever seating arrangements are changed. One copy of the updated seating chart, L/R sheet and route sheet should be left on the bus. One copy of the updated seating chart will be given to the school principal (or the principal's designee), and a second copy of the seating chart will be given to the driver's assigned Lead Driver.
- M. Drivers who are assigned to drive buses equipped with lap belts (2002 school buses and newer) will instruct their student passengers on the proper use of lap belts, and will always instruct the students they transport to "Buckle Your Lap Belts."
- N. Pursuant to Rule 6A.3017 Section 3w. of the State Board of Education, drivers will wear a seat belt at all times when bus is in operation.
- O. Drivers are required by Florida Statute and Rules of the State Board of Education to maintain order and good behavior by students on their buses. Rules for student conduct on school buses are set forth in the Gadsden County School Board's Student Code of Conduct. Drivers will make every reasonable effort to deal with infractions of the rules of student conduct and will, to the best of their ability, maintain order and good behavior by students on their buses.
- P. Drivers will submit a "Report of Student Misconduct" as soon as possible, cases of repeated minor misconduct and/or any serious misconduct to the appropriate school. The administrator/supervisor or assistant must reply to the Student Conduct Report, even if no action is to be taken. There shall be no limit to the number of Student Conduct Report forms a driver may write within a school year.
- Q. Drivers will not permit students to bring items on board the bus which could be disruptive or present a safety hazard.
- R. Drivers will make sure a clear and unobstructed path to emergency equipment and emergency exits are maintained on the bus at all times.
- S. Drivers will never permit a student to:
- 1) Stand at the front of the bus or in the bus aisle while the bus is in operation
 - 2) Operate the service door handle
 - 3) Occupy the driver's seat
- T. Drivers will never permit children to hold on to the side or rear of the bus when skating, riding bicycles, etc.
- U. Upon completion of each run/trip, drivers are required to walk to the rear of the bus and return up the aisle checking each seat and floor area for students, and any variety of items. Drivers will complete this check of the bus regardless of whether a bus assistant is assigned to the route. Failure to fully comply with this procedure will result in disciplinary action.
- Any action which results in a child being unattended on the bus for any length of time will result in termination.
- V. Drivers will report, as soon as possible, any damage to the bus or its equipment caused by student passengers. Driver will complete and submit to their Lead Driver or Director a "Report of Vandalism of a School Bus" form immediately upon returning to the school bus compound. Additionally, if the driver is able to identify the student(s) who caused the damage, a "Report of Misconduct on a School Bus" form will be completed and submitted to the Lead Driver or Director.

- W. Drivers are required to check their mail boxes and bulletin boards at the bus compound at least once daily. It is the responsibility of the driver to check in with the compound periodically during the week.
- X. Drivers will complete, accurately and to the best of their knowledge and ability, all Required reports. Drivers will comply with established deadlines for completing and submitting required reports.
- Z. Drivers will report all accidents/crashes and incidents at the time of occurrence while they are driving a school bus to the Dispatch Office no matter how minor and regardless of damage. An incident/crash is defined as any time a school bus comes in contact with another vehicle or object, regardless of damage. If the incident/crash occurs after normal working hours or at any other time when the Dispatch Office is closed, the driver will immediately notify the Director or Designee.
- AA. All citations for moving violations issued to covered employees shall be reported, regardless of the ownership of the vehicle being driven by covered employee. All citations for moving violations shall be reported, regardless of the location where the citation was issued. Covered employees shall be responsible to report the receipt of any citation for a moving violation to their immediate supervisor by 12 p.m. (noon) on the next work day.
- BB. Drivers are expected to attend all Training Workshops, Safety Meetings, and other called meetings. Unexcused absences will be considered failure to perform required duties, and may result in disqualification to drive and/or disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant.
- CC. Drivers will not engage in private business arrangements while on duty. This includes but is not limited to, buying and selling personal property or items, or purchasing speakers and radios for buses. However, this provision does not prohibit drivers from purchasing items sold by students as part of a school connected fund raising project.
- DD. Drivers will ensure the Transportation Department always has current information on their home address, home telephone number, and emergency point-of-contact by filling out a new Employee Change of Name and Address whenever such information changes.
- EE. Cell phone usage by bus drivers will be dictated in compliance with Florida Statute and School Board Policy.

2.03 DRIVER ANNUAL RE-CERTIFICATION

- A. Dexterity test. Pursuant to Rule 6A-3.0141 of the State Board of Education, drivers of school buses must be physically capable of operating the vehicle as determined by a dexterity test administered at least annually by the school district.
- B. Physical examination. Pursuant to Rule 6A-3.0141 of the State Board of Education, drivers of school buses must be physically capable of operating the vehicle as determined by a physical examination given at least annually by a physician designated by the School Board.
- C. Drivers must possess a current, valid Medical Examiner's Certificate at all times while employed by Gadsden County Schools. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification to drive a school bus and/or disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant.
- D. Successfully complete a minimum of eight (8) hours of in-service training related to the driver's responsibilities for transporting students annually.

2.04 USE OF BUSES OWNED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD

- A. Drivers will use school buses only for the purposes of transporting students to and from school(s) on an approved school bus route/run.
- B. Drivers will not use school buses for personal errands or for the conduct of personal business

2.05 EQUIPMENT NOT AUTHORIZED TO BE INSTALLED ON SCHOOL BUSES

Only equipment authorized by the School Board and installed by the District garage is allowed.

2.06 AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS

Students are required to ride the bus to which they have been assigned. No occasional riders are to be taken aboard without the parents’ permission and the school principal’s written permission and temporary permission from the director or designee.

2.07 DRESS CODE FOR DRIVERS

A.	Pants	Jeans are acceptable to wear, so long as they are in good repair (no rips or tears). Tight fitting lycra/spandex type pants are not acceptable for wear.
B.	Skirts	Skirts must be long enough to touch the knee cap when standing. Tight fitting lycra/spandex type skirts are not acceptable for wear.
C.	Shorts	Shorts, (no shorter than three (3) inches above kneecap). Tight fitting lycra/spandex type shorts are not acceptable for wear.
D.	Dresses	Dresses must have sleeves and must be long enough to touch the top of the kneecap when standing. Tight-fitting lycra/spandex type dresses are not acceptable for wear.
E.	Shoes	Shoes must be worn which have closed toes and heel (no sandals or sling-backs). Heels may not be more than two (2) inches high. Shoes with platform soles are not acceptable for wear.
F.	Undergarments	All drivers will wear appropriate undergarments (includes bras for females)
G.	Top Garment	Shirts are to be properly worn at all times.
H.	Jacket/Outer Garment	The outer garment needs to be clean

Note: Any driver who is found to not be in compliance with the shirt and dress code requirements outlined above, at the time they check in for work, will not be permitted to operate their bus.

SECTION 3

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, STAFF & PARENTS

3.01 TEMPORARY CHANGE OF BUS STOP PROCEDURES

- A. School Principals may authorize a temporary change to a bus stop under the following conditions:
- B. School principals who authorize a temporary change to a bus stop for a student will notify Gadsden County Transportation Department prior to the change. Dispatch will be notify the bus driver before the student boards the bus.
- C. The driver must immediately notify Dispatch for any deviation from route requested.

3.02 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT

- A. In cases of repeated minor misconduct incidents or when a serious misconduct incident occurs, the offending pupil will be reported to the school principal or the principal's designated representative. Drivers will submit a "Report of Student Misconduct on a School Bus" form on such students to the principal or designee for review and action, as appropriate.
- B. The school principal (or the principal's designee) will determine appropriate disciplinary measures for the student's actions based upon the driver's report and any other input deemed necessary from the other students and/or student involved. Disciplinary measures will be in accordance with the requirements of the Gadsden County School Boards Student Code of Conduct. The administrator/supervisor or assistant must reply to the Student Conduct Report, and notify the driver even if no action is to be taken. There shall be no limit to the number of Student Conduct Report forms a driver may write within a school year.

3.03 DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL BUS ATTENDANTS

School bus attendants are assigned to ride on bus routes to assist drivers with the safe loading and unloading of special needs students, and to provide supervision of such students while the bus is enroute to and from the school. Drivers must be familiar with the duties and responsibilities of bus attendants and be prepared to assume them, should the assistant be absent from work or otherwise not available.

The driver has the final responsibility for ensuring a safe ride for all students transported. School bus attendants work under the direction of the driver and the lead drivers.

3.04 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

- A. In cases where the physical impairment of a student renders the student unable to get on and off the bus without assistance, parents shall provide the necessary assistance for helping their child get on and off at the bus stop.

- B. Drivers and transportation dispatchers will follow the procedures outlined below, when a parent or guardian fails to meet the bus, as required by Rules of the State Board of Education and Gadsden School Board policy.
- 1) First offense. The driver will deliver the other students on the bus and then return to the stop or proceed to an alternate location (school, bus compound, police department, Department of Child and Family Services, etc.), as directed by their dispatcher.
 - 2) Second and third offenses. Deliver other students on the bus, return to residence or school. The school will notify the ESE/Transportation Liaison upon return to the bus compound; the driver will complete a Driver's Report of Incident form and submit it to their Lead Driver or Director.
 - 3) Subsequent offenses. Transport student to alternate location (school, police department, Department of Child & Family Services, etc.) as directed by the dispatcher, Lead Driver or the Director. The ESE Director will schedule a mandatory meeting with the parent(s), school officials and Transportation.

SECTION 4

SCHOOL BUS CAPACITY/SCHEDULING

Note: Procedures for establishing and changing school bus routes and bus stops are in the Transportation Department's Routing Guidelines manual. Drivers will have a basic understanding of the criteria used by the staff of the department's School Bus Routing Office. Drivers shall promptly report any situation on their route which does not meet the criteria and procedures outlined in this section.

4.01 SCHOOL BUS CAPACITIES

- A. Rule 6A-3.001 of the State Board of Education requires school districts to plan and adjust school bus routes in such manner that, "insofar as practicable the full capacity of each bus will be utilized, without standees ..." The majority of the school buses owned/operated by the Gadsden County School District are "conventional" design buses with a rated seating capacity of 65 passengers. That means up to 65 passengers, plus the driver, can legally be transported on the bus. However, in order to hold a full load of 65 passengers, three (3) students must be placed in each seat on the bus, with the exception of the rearmost seat on the right side of the bus, which is shorter and therefore will hold only two students.
- B. The Gadsden County School District recognizes that it is not always practical or safe to place three (3) students to a seat on its school buses. While most elementary school students can be comfortably accommodated at 3 students per seat, the same is not necessarily true for middle school students or for high school students. For this reason, the Transportation Department has established the following suggested guidelines for its regular (non-lift) 65-passenger school buses:
 - Elementary school: 60 – 65 students per bus (3 per seat)
 - Middle school: 50 – 55 students per bus (Smaller students 3 per seat; larger students 2 per seat)
 - High school: 44 students per bus (2 per seat)
- C. If the total number of students riding on the bus continually exceeds the suggested guidelines, then the driver will contact Dispatch and/or their Lead Driver and report the situation.

Note: These seating guidelines are just that – suggested guidelines – NOT requirements.

Drivers can legally transport more middle school and/or high school students on their buses than called for in the guidelines, so long as they are not exceeding the rated seating capacity of the bus, which is 65 passengers for most our buses.

4.02 DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. School bus schedules are prepared, and changes made to them, only by the Transportation Department's School Bus Routing Office. Drivers who have requests for changes to their bus routes and/or bus stops will submit their requests in writing to their assigned Lead Driver.
- B. Drivers will immediately report any hazards on the bus route or at bus stops which might offer an actual or potential threat to the safety of transported students to Dispatch, and to their assigned Lead Driver or Director.

- Schedule Compliance. Student stops should be made at the time indicated on the route schedule on file in the Transportation Routing Office. Drivers will try not to arrive at a stop ahead of schedule, even if it's only a minute or so early. If for some reason you fall behind schedule, notify your dispatcher by two-way radio if you are running more than fifteen (15) minutes behind schedule.

4.03 PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING DRIVERS TO BUS ROUTES, SHUTTLES, AND ACTIVITY RUNS

Procedures for assigning drivers to bus routes, shuttles, and activity runs are based on departmental seniority as per the contract with GESPA Union.

- Needs of the students
- Departmental needs
- Documented physical requirements of the driver

SECTION 5

“LEAD DRIVER” CRITERIA AND FIELD TRIP PROCEDURES

5.01 LEAD DRIVERS

A. CRITERIA

Drivers who serve as “LEAD DRIVERS will be paid ten percent (10%) above the salary to which they are otherwise entitled. The following criteria are considered at the discretion of the director as to “Lead Driver “assignments.

- Knowledge of Transportation policy and procedures
- Willingness to work as a leader and with administration
- Minimal parent, school, and district office complaints
- Minimal “speed violations”
- No charged traffic violations
- Five years minimum service

5.02 FIELD TRIPS PROCEDURES

- A. Employees may be employed in addition to their regular duties to drive school buses for field trips and other extracurricular activities, providing they hold the proper license. Drivers wishing to participate in field trips will sign-up during the in-service training workshop for drivers, conducted before school starts in August. Only full-time permanent drivers will be eligible to sign up to do field trips. Drivers who do not wish to sign-up for field trips shall be excused from doing them.
- B. Bus Drivers who request that their names be placed upon such a list will be selected to drive in order of seniority. Each driver on the list will be offered an opportunity to drive for field trips or extracurricular activities before repeat drivers are offered additional trips.
- C. There will be two documented attempts over a period of two (2) days to contact a driver.
- D. There will be a holiday sign up for those who would like to drive during Thanksgiving Recess, Winter Recess, and Spring Recess. First choice for Recess will be given to drivers on Trip List. These lists will be posted in each bus compound and drivers will be chosen by departmental seniority.
- F. If a driver calls off a scheduled trip, he/she cannot do a field trip in the AM or PM.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR FIELD TRIPS

- A. Newer buses will be assigned to night/weekend field trips when necessary and/or appropriate. Drivers who need a bus other than the one they normally drive will contact the Routing Office in order to get another bus to use for the field trip.
- B. Radio and maintenance coverage will be provided whenever buses are out on field trips.
- C. It is the responsibility of the driver to know where the field trip destination is, and how to get to it. Drivers must plan out the route they will take with particular attention to:

- Special situations or potential problems along route (low clearance bridges, road construction, etc. explain how to operate the fire extinguisher)

D. DRIVERS WILL NOT LEAVE THE FIELD TRIP SITE UNLESS THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED TO DO SO BY THE PERSON FROM THE SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE TRIP. Drivers who fail to comply with these procedures will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with School Board Policy. If the person in charge gives a driver permission to depart the field trip site, the driver will not be away from the location for more than one-half (1/2) hour. A driver who wants to leave the field trip site for more than one-half (1/2) hour must get specific permission to be absent for the longer period of time from the person from the school or organization who is in charge of the trip.

SECTION 6

ATTENDANCE POLICY, PAYROLL PROCEDURES

6.01 ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Drivers are expected to be prompt and punctual in their attendance on all work days in accordance with the current school calendar and their assigned schedule and/or contract.

6.02 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

The Contract between the Gadsden County School Board and G E S P A states: “Employees who cannot report to work for any reason (illness, tardy, emergency, etc.) shall contact their dispatch office no later than the scheduled start of their workday, or as otherwise specified by the school or department.”

- A. Drivers must notify their assigned Dispatch that they will not be reporting to work in accordance with the timeframes specified below:
 1. Morning absences. Drivers must notify their assigned Dispatch at the earliest possible time, but not later than one-half (1/2) hour prior to the driver’s scheduled reporting time, or by 5:30 a.m., whichever is earlier.
 2. Afternoon absences. Drivers must notify their assigned Dispatch at the earliest possible time.
 3. Even in an emergency, drivers must make every possible effort to notify their assigned Dispatch. If the situation requires you to leave the area and you cannot make the call yourself, have a relative or friend contact your Dispatch in your place.
 4. Drivers must provide their assigned Dispatch with the reason for their absence (illness of self, illness of family member, etc.) and the date/time at which they expect to be able to return to work, if possible.
- B. Drivers must notify their assigned Dispatch that they will not be reporting to work, with a complete update of their situation. The only times drivers will not have to contact their Dispatch on a daily basis are as follows:
 - Admission to a hospital as a patient
 - Driver has a doctor's work release for a specified number of days
 - Approved Leave of Absence
 - Driver out-of-town for an emergency
- C. For any and all absences, drivers will complete and submit to Payroll an Employee Absence Form, no later than the end of the next work day.

6.03 PROCEDURES TO APPLY FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- A. All School Board employees who need to be absent from work for an extended period of time are required to apply for a Leave of Absence. Specifically, if an employee needs to be absent for more than five (5) consecutive unpaid days, or for more than ten (10) consecutive paid days, the employee must apply for a Leave of Absence. Drivers may be granted a Leave of Absence for the following reasons:
 - Illness of Self *
 - Caring for seriously ill child, spouse, or parent *

- Birth of child to immediate family *
- Adoption or foster care of a child *
- Military duty

* Note: Employees who need to be absent from work for these reasons may be eligible for leave under the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The determination of whether or not an employee qualifies for leave under FMLA is made by the Personnel Department.

- B. Documentation must be submitted at the time the employee applies for a Leave of Absence to substantiate the need for the employee to be absent from work (doctor’s note, copy of military orders, etc.). “Request for Leave of Absence” forms must be submitted to their designated Payroll Clerk for processing and approval.

6.04 ABSENCES, UNAUTHORIZED

- A. The Contract between the Gadsden County School Board and the GESPA states: “Except in case of extreme emergency (sudden incapacitation, sudden illness, or accident which prevents prior approval for absence), If an **UNREPORTED ABSENCE** is for three (3) consecutive workdays, the School Board, upon the recommendation of the School Administrator and Superintendent, may consider the employee to have abandoned the position and resigned from the School District.”
- B. The Contract between the Gadsden County School Board and GESPA states: “Each employee must, for any absence from his/her work, secure official permission in advance, and no action purporting to grant leave retroactively shall be recognized. Leave for sickness or other emergencies which were verbally approved in advance may be deemed to have been granted in advance of the employee makes his/her supervisor, at the earliest practicable time on the first day that he/she returns to work after such absence, a proper written report and explanation of the absence.

Employees who are absent from work without authorization shall be subject to disciplinary action.

6.05 PAYROLL PROCEDURES

Drivers are responsible for submitting all required paperwork used to process paychecks correctly and on time.

SECTION 7

SCHOOL BUS OPERATING PROCEDURES

7.01 SCHOOL BUS OPERATION

Drivers must always operate their bus in accordance with the requirements of the Florida Uniform Traffic Control Law (Florida Statutes, Chapter 316) and the Rules of the Florida State Board of Education regarding Transportation of School Children (Chapter 6A-3).

7.02 SCHOOL BUS STOP LAW (Florida Statute 316.172)

Motorists who pass a stopped school bus which has activated the flashing red loading/unloading lights and stop arms have committed a serious violation of the law and have put the lives of school children in jeopardy. Drivers who observe this happen should do the following:

- A. If the motorist has violated the law, get a description of the vehicle (must include license plate number). Upon returning to the bus compound, complete a Vehicle Passing Stopped School Bus form and submit it to your assigned Team Leader. Completed forms will be forwarded to the Director of Transportation, who will use the forms to prepare a monthly report on violations to local law enforcement agencies.
- B. Use of flashing amber and red loading/unloading lights. A school bus is a moving traffic signal. Drivers have the power, granted by law, to stop traffic. Accordingly, it is extremely important drivers know the legal and proper use of the flashing loading/unloading lights and stop arms.

7.03 LOADING AND UNLOADING OF STUDENT PASSENGERS

Drivers will comply with the following:

- A. No passenger will be picked up or discharged on an expressway, connection ramp, or shoulder on an expressway. Always load/discharge students on the extreme right side of the road. Never unload students into an open traffic lane! Loading/unloading will only be conducted at approved stops according to the route sheet.
- B. Keep kids in sight. Anytime the driver loses sight of a child when loading the bus, the driver must wait until the child is accounted for. The bus must never be put in motion until all children have been accounted for.
- C. Under no circumstances will a driver allow a pre-kindergarten student to depart the bus when being dropped-off at the designated afternoon stop, unless the student's parent or designated guardian is at the bus stop to receive the student. The same policy also applies to all special education (ESE) students who are picked-up and dropped-off at their home residence, unless the parent or guardian has an approved waiver on file with the Transportation Routing Office. Upon arriving at a stop, when the parent or guardian is not present to receive the student, the driver will follow the procedure outlined below:
 - Notify your Dispatch Office via two-way radio
 - Complete remainder of run and then return to stop
 - If parent/guardian is still not there, notify the Dispatch Office via two-way radio

- Transport student to alternate location (school, police department, Department of Child & Family Services, etc.) as directed by the dispatcher
- D. School loading/unloading zones. Drivers must be especially cautious at the school loading area. School locations are often especially congested with traffic and pedestrians. The scene is sometimes confused with kids getting in and out of private cars as well as buses.
- 1) Approach the loading area very cautiously and at a slow rate of speed. The speed limit in school loading areas is five (5) miles-per-hour.
 - 2) Drivers must be on their buses when students board the bus. Students will not be permitted on buses if the driver is not present. Drivers must also stay with their bus in the morning until the last student has unloaded.
 - 3) Flashing red or amber loading/unloading lights will not be used at school loading areas unless the bus is loading/unloading outside a designated bus circle.

LOADING STUDENTS ON THE HIGHWAY OR STREET

- Check mirrors and traffic
- Activate the turn signal, if a lane change is required
- Slow down
- Turn on amber loading/unloading lights at least 200 feet in advance of the stop location
- The bus will stop 200' from a controlled intersection where there is a traffic light, stop sign, etc., and 100' from an uncontrolled intersection.
- Pull as far to the right as possible, staying on the traveled portion of the roadway, and stop
- If possible, do not pull up any closer than 10 feet from the waiting students
- Apply the emergency brake, then shift to Neutral
- Cancel turn signal, if activated
- Cancel amber loading/unloading lights and activate red loading/unloading lights and stop arms
- Check all mirrors and traffic
- After traffic has come to a complete stop, open door as the signal for students to begin loading
- All student stops must be located a minimum of 200' from the railroad tracks.
- Load students in an orderly manner. Be sure all students are in the bus. Check mirrors to be sure.
- Close the door and check to see that students are seated
- Cancel red loading/unloading lights and stop arms
- Shift to Drive, then release the emergency brake
- Check all mirrors and allow traffic to clear before proceeding on route

UNLOADING STUDENTS ON THE HIGHWAY OR STREET

- Follow the same procedure which is used for loading as you bring your bus to a stop:
- Check mirrors and traffic
- Activate turn signal, if a lane change is required
- Slow down
- Turn on amber loading/unloading lights at least 200 feet in advance of the stop location
- All student stops must be located a minimum of 200' from the railroad tracks.
- The bus will stop 200' from a controlled intersection where there is a traffic light, stop sign, etc., and 100' from an uncontrolled intersection.
- Pull as far to the right as possible, staying on the traveled portion of the roadway, and stop
- Apply emergency brake, then shift to Neutral
- Cancel turn signal, if activated
- Cancel amber loading/unloading lights and activate red loading/unloading lights and stop arms
- Check mirrors and traffic before opening the service door. Do not open the door to students until it is safe to cross the road. This means traffic must have come to a complete stop!
- Students must remain seated until the door is opened
- When you have determined it is safe, open the door as the signal for students to begin unloading from the bus
- Count the students as they leave and count them again as they move away from the bus – especially those who must cross the road (all students must be accounted for!)
- Check all mirrors again to make sure all children are safely away from the bus
- Follow the loading procedure for getting underway:
- Close the door and check that all remaining students are seated
- Cancel red loading/unloading lights and stop arms
- Shift to Drive, then release the emergency brake
- Allow traffic to clear before proceeding on route

7.04 PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL BUSES EQUIPPED WITH LAP BELTS

Which school buses do these procedures apply to? For school buses owned/operated by Gadsden County Schools, all 2002 school buses and all school buses purchased thereafter (2003 and 2004 buses).

- A. Instructions to student passengers.
 - 1) Florida Statute 316.6145(2) requires that, “Each passenger on a school bus that is equipped with safety belts ... shall wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt at all times while the bus is in operation.”
 - 2) Drivers who will be transporting students on these buses will always inform their students to “Buckle Your Lap Belts.” After drivers have instructed their students in the proper use of the lap belts, they will continue to remind students to “Buckle Your Lap Belts,” as students board at bus stops and schools. They will also remind students to refasten the buckle on lap belts as students depart the bus at the end of the trip.

- B. Non-compliance with procedures by student passengers.
 - 1) Any student who refuses to properly fasten their lap belt upon boarding a school bus will be given a second reminder to do so by the driver. If the student still refuses to comply after being given a second reminder, then the driver shall complete a Report of Student Misconduct on a School Bus form and submit it to the school administrator for follow-up and disciplinary action, as appropriate.

7.05 ITEMS NOT PERMITTED ON A SCHOOL BUS

Students are not permitted to bring items on board the bus which could be disruptive or present a safety hazard. The Gadsden County School Board has established a policy specifically prohibiting students from bringing the following items on board school buses (reference Student Code of Conduct):

1. Animals, which includes, but is not limited to: dogs (exception: service dogs), cats, rabbits, hamsters/guinea pigs, birds, snakes, frogs, insects, etc.
2. Glass containers
3. Weapons or any dangerous object (includes firecrackers)
4. Facsimile of guns or knives
5. Alcohol
6. Cigarettes/tobacco products
7. Illegal/illicit drugs of any type
8. Large bulky items (or band instruments) which block the entrance ways, aisles or seats, or which deprive a student of a seat.
9. No sharp objects, balls, bats, hockey sticks, roller skates, skateboards, helium balloons, or cutting instruments of any kind are allowed.
10. In the event that a student attempts to board the bus with a prohibited item, the driver will immediately contact the Dispatch office to report the incident and get instructions on how to proceed.

ITEMS PERMITTED ON A SCHOOL BUS:

1. Listed below are some of the musical instruments which meet the criteria permitting them to be carried on school buses:

Piccolo	Flute	Clarinet
Alto Clarinet	Oboe	English Horn
Trumpet (Cornet)	Flugel Horn	Trombone (Tenor)
Alto Saxophone	Violin	Viola

If band instruments are brought on the bus, they cannot be placed on seats if it causes a student to have to stand.
2. Batons and drum sticks will be permitted on school buses only in their proper cases.
3. Drivers must always make sure a clear and unobstructed path to emergency equipment and emergency exits are maintained at all times.

7.06 SAFE DRIVING PRINCIPLES – EMERGENCY VEHICLES

Emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks, police cars, and ambulances always have the right-of-way when they are giving warnings by means of a siren and/or warning lights. Upon the approach of such vehicles, drivers must pull their bus over as far to the right as possible, and stop until

they have passed. If it is not possible to pull over to the right, then you should stop the bus, and let the emergency vehicle(s) go around you. If you are in the process of unloading students when approached by an emergency vehicle, leave your flashing red lights and stop arms activated, but immediately close the door to the bus and stop students from getting off. If you are in the process of loading students when approached by an emergency vehicle, leave your flashing red lights and stop arms activated, but immediately close the door to the bus and direct students to wait off the road until after the emergency vehicle has passed. You may also need to blow your horn, and/or wave at your students to get their attention to make sure they know they need to wait off the road.

7.07 SAFE DRIVING PRINCIPLES – RAILROAD CROSSINGS

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

- There are fewer trains than there used to be, so drivers are less alert.
- Radios and other noise (from students, etc.) distract drivers and drown out the sound of train horns.
- Freight trains don't always run on specific schedules, so drivers are not anticipating them.
- Trains travel at high speeds. Buses accelerate slowly. It takes about ten (10) seconds for a bus to fully cross a typical set of railroad tracks.

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

- A. General procedures for crossing railroad tracks. The general procedures for crossing railroad tracks are outlined in Figure 7-3. Drivers must follow this procedure without fail, whenever they must cross a set of rail road tracks.
- B. Crossing railroad tracks where crossing is controlled by warning signals (red flashing lights/bells). Drivers will stop, look and listen at every railroad crossing at which there are in operation flashing red warning lights and/or bells. Drivers will not proceed across railroad tracks when such warning devices have been activated, regardless of whether or not an approaching train is visible, unless directed by a law enforcement officer.
- C. Crossing railroad tracks where crossing is controlled by crossing gate or barrier. The procedures set forth in paragraph b., above, also apply to railroad crossings which have crossing gates or barriers in addition to warning signals. No driver will drive his/her bus through, around, or under any gate or barrier at a railroad crossing while such gate or barrier is closed or being opened or closed. The driver must never interpret a lack of movement as an indication that a crossing gate or barrier is either in or out of order, but must always assume the crossing is dangerous. In a situation where a crossing gate or barrier is fully or partially closed and other warning devices (red flashing lights and bells) have not activated the driver will not

proceed to cross the tracks until he/she has conclusively ascertained that no train is approaching.

D. Multi-track railroad crossings.

1. The driver must first determine if the bus must be stopped for each set of tracks, or if it is permissible to cross all of them at once. If there is enough room between each set of tracks for the bus, plus fifteen (15) feet in front of and behind the bus, you must stop for each set of tracks.
2. If the bus must be stopped for more than one set of railroad tracks, the complete crossing procedure (see Figure 7-3) must be followed for each and every set of tracks.
3. If you will be crossing more than one set of railroad tracks all at once:
 - Make sure no train is approaching on any of the tracks
 - If a train is approaching, wait until it has cleared the crossing to the point that all tracks are completely visible (be sure another train has not been hidden from view by the first train)

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

1. The tracks have been abandoned pursuant to State or Federal Law.
2. The tracks have been covered or removed.
3. All signs, signals and other warning devices have been removed.

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

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR CROSSING RAILROAD TRACKS

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Drivers should approach and cross railroad tracks from the right lane of traffic, whenever possible. If a driver must cross railroad tracks in the left lane of traffic due to the way the bus route is set up, the driver will immediately contact their assigned Operations Coordinator or Area Supervisor and request rerouting of the bus to eliminate the need to cross railroad tracks from other than the right lane.2. Deactivate the master switch for the student loading/unloading lights. Neither the amber nor the red flashing loading/unloading lights on the school bus shall be used at railroad crossings.3. Activate the hazard lights (4-way flashers) at least 200 feet away from the railroad tracks. (NOTE: Other vehicles may attempt to pass the bus when the 4-way flashers (hazard lights) are activated and the driver begins to slow down the school bus. Drivers must always be alert to this possibility and watch for vehicles abruptly pulling out to pass.)4. Turn off all noise-making devices, or activate noise abatement switch if bus is so equipped. Turn on dome lights as signal to students to stop talking and remain quiet.5. Open the driver window completely.6. Bring the bus to a stop at least fifteen (15) feet, but not more than fifty (50) feet, from the nearest rail of the railroad crossing.7. When stopped, apply the emergency/parking brake. |
|--|

8. Shift to Neutral
9. Fully open the service door.
10. Look carefully in both directions and listen for approaching trains.
11. When it is clear to do so, close the service door, shift to Drive and release the emergency/parking brake, (Never let the bus sit in Neutral without the emergency/parking brake being applied!)
12. Noise abatement switch (if bus is so equipped) may be released at this time.
13. Look both ways and listen again.
14. If the tracks are still clear, go. Drivers will not shift gears nor stop until the bus has completely cleared the railroad crossing. Always make sure there is sufficient space on the other side of the tracks for the bus to completely clear the crossing without any part of the bus being left on the crossing. Any time the route is designed such that the railroad crossing is immediately preceding an intersection, the driver must be certain the bus can proceed without the need to stop, before beginning to cross the tracks.
15. Turn off hazard lights (4-way flashers) and close window next to driver's seat.

7.08 SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES – RESTRICTED CLEARANCES

Drivers must always be on the lookout for overhanging or projecting obstructions when driving near curbs or on narrow roads. Beware of low hanging tree limbs! If you encounter an unsafe condition, complete a Driver Report on Road Hazards form and give it to your assigned Field Operations Supervisor or Area Manager.

7.09 USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES

The use of cellular telephones while driving a Gadsden County school bus is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Cellular telephones may be used on a school bus only when the bus is parked.

7.10 COMPOUND TRAFFIC RULES AND STORAGE OF BUSES

- A. The speed limit within the bus compounds is five (5) miles-per-hour.
- B. Fueling of buses. The procedure below will be followed when refueling school buses:
 1. Set the emergency/parking brake, shift to neutral or park, and shut off the engine.
 2. All passengers must get off the bus and wait at least 50 feet away while the bus is being refueled.
 3. Insert your pump key in the designated slot on the fuel pump. Follow the instructions to enter the mileage reading from the bus odometer.
 4. Never back the bus away from the fuel pumps unless you are instructed to do so and someone is available to direct you.
- C. When returning from the morning or afternoon runs, or a field trip, drivers must park their bus in the designated parking space/slot for that particular vehicle.
- D. When returning from the morning or afternoon runs, or a field trip, drivers must complete the post-trip inspection.
 1. Check for adequate fuel. If there is any doubt that the amount of fuel is enough to complete the next trip, get the bus fueled. There can be no excuse for allowing your bus to run out of fuel!

2. Check for vandalism of seats, interior paneling, and windows which might have taken place while you were out on the road.
 3. Collect any clothing or materials students may have left behind on the bus. Have them ready to give back to the owners the next time you see them.
 4. Clean up any mess and pick up any trash or refuse. Sweep the bus and place trash/refuse into the proper receptacle (do not sweep trash/refuse out the bus and on to the ground!).
 5. Make a note of supplies you might need (for example, items for the First Aid Kit or report/inspection forms). Be sure you remember to get what you need before departing on the next trip.
 6. Secure the vehicle.
 - Make sure the emergency/parking brake is engaged and the gear shift is set to Neutral or Park!
 - Remove the ignition key.
 - Close all windows, vents, and doors.
- E. Complete any necessary forms or reports and deliver them to your Dispatcher, Service Manager or the Director before departing the compound.
- F. Always follow procedures for turn-in of your bus keys. Put your bus keys back up on the compound's front desk, unless instructed to do otherwise.
- G. Drivers who experience a mechanical problem with their bus while they are on a route or trip must make sure a Driver Request for Repair form is promptly completed and turned in to the Bus Service Manager or Lead Mechanic, upon returning to the compound from a trip. Drivers are not permitted in the garage service bays and should stay clear of buses being serviced on the apron to the bays.

7.11 NO IDLING POLICY, ENERGY CONSERVATION AND EMISSIONS REDUCTION

The cost of pupil transportation is a major item in the annual budget of the school district and the cost of fuel for school buses is a large part of that budget. The amount of money available to run our transportation system is not unlimited. It is imperative, therefore, that drivers make a reasonable effort to get the most miles-per-gallon out their buses. They do this by the way they operate the bus. Saving fuel saves money and that can save jobs!

- A. No Idling Policy. As of the 2006/2007 school year. Gadsden County Schools has a strict "no idle" policy for all school buses in compliance with Federal Law. As a general rule, buses should be moving whenever the engine is on. The engine should be turned off after arriving at loading or unloading areas. The school bus should not be restarted until it is ready to depart. Federal Motor Carriers Rule 62-258.420, Heavy Duty Idling Reduction, effective December, 2008, prohibits idling of commercial vehicles, including school buses, for longer than five minutes except under certain situations:
- When a special needs bus is stopped and the lift door is open and lift is in use
 - When the bus is stopped at a railway crossing and a train is approaching, the bus is required to wait for the train until it passes.

- There are large numbers of passengers at some bus stop location and the five minute time limit could be exceeded when the bus is stopped for either loading or unloading students.
- B. Stop and start smoothly and gradually. Plan ahead. Do not accelerate to an unnecessary speed when you can see ahead that soon you are going to have to stop again. When you can see that you are going to have to stop, take your foot off the accelerator sooner and coast so that you slow down more gradually. The sooner you get your foot off the accelerator, the more fuel you save. In starting up, acceleration should be moderate. A bus can only get under way so fast and so over-accelerating merely wastes fuel.
- C. Maintain correct tire pressure. Low air pressure in tires causes higher rolling resistance and leads to increased fuel consumption. If a tire appears to be low or if the bus keeps pulling to the left or the right, have the tires checked.
- D. Maintain smooth, steady driving at constant speeds whenever possible. It takes much less fuel to maintain a given speed than it does to accelerate up to that speed. The most fuel efficient way to drive is at a steady speed, avoiding constant changes up and down through acceleration and braking.
- E. Whenever the bus is parked for a period of time which exceeds two or three minutes, turn off all lights and switches to conserve the battery. This includes stops made at schools while waiting to load or unload students, waiting in line for fuel, etc.

7.12 USE OF AM/FM RADIOS ON SCHOOL BUSES

School buses purchased by Gadsden County Schools are equipped with factory installed AM/FM radios. School bus drivers have the option to play the radio on these buses while they are transporting students. The use of a radio can provide drivers with an effective tool to help promote good student conduct on buses. School bus drivers need to understand, however, that some radio stations broadcasting in the area have programming that contains obscene and profane language, and/or discussions of adult subjects which could be objectionable to some students and parents.

SECTION 8

USE OF TWO-WAY RADIOS

8.01 GENERAL PROCEDURES

All school buses operated by Gadsden County Schools are equipped with a two-way radio. These radios are to be used primarily for emergency situations (accidents, incidents, and breakdowns). Transportation Dispatch also uses the two-way radios to assist drivers who are in need of immediate information in order to be able to complete their bus route.

- A. Night/weekend field trips. When a driver is out on a field trip which is operating when the transportation department's offices are closed (nights, weekends, holidays), the two-way radio on the bus must be set on channel 3. Gadsden County Sheriff's office monitors radio calls on channel 3 during these times and can contact transportation supervisory personnel to provide assistance in an emergency.
- B. All radio transmissions shall be made in a professional and businesslike manner at all times.
- C. No personal messages will be transmitted nor personal conversations between buses be allowed.

8.02 RADIO CODES

To ensure all two-way radio transmissions are understood and all messages transmitted uniformly, the code system detailed on the following table will be used for all radio transmissions.

CODE	WHAT IT MEANS
10-3	All units <u>stop</u> transmitting until advised by Dispatch
10-4	Yes/affirmative Response
10-7	Unit is out-of-service
10-8	Unit is in service
10-9	Please repeat your message/say again
10-20	Current location (as in: "What's your 10-20?")
10-22	Disregard last transmission
10-23	Stand-by (wait a minute while I check on something, etc.)
10-26	Last transmission was received and understood
10-45	Call me by telephone
10-51	I'm enroute (as in: "Are you 10-51 to ____?")
10-54	No/negative response
10-98	I have arrived/completed assignment
SIGNAL 0	Armed Student
SIGNAL 4	School Bus Accident (this code is to be used only for accidents involving a school bus!)
SIGNAL 13	Suspicious vehicle (as in: "Signal 13 following my bus...")
SIGNAL 13P	Suspicious person (as in: "Signal 13P at bus stop...")
SIGNAL 22	Disturbance at bus stop
SIGNAL 38	Assault/fight
SIGNAL 49	Injury on bus

SIGNAL 62	Disorderly conduct on bus
-----------	---------------------------

* Note concerning requests for time checks: Dispatch will NOT respond to requests for time checks! A special time clock is provided at the bus compound for drivers and staff to use to set their watches with the correct time. It is the driver's responsibility to make sure their watch is set to the correct time. Drivers who abuse radio procedure in this manner shall be subject to disciplinary action.

SECTION 9

SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER MANAGEMENT

At the start of every school year or when a new driver is assigned to a route, students should have each bus behavior expectation explained and demonstrated. Communication with students can be difficult, at times. Promote a positive bus environment. Drivers who have frequent positive interactions with students generally experience significantly better bus behavior than drivers who primarily emphasize reprimands and punishments.

Remember, having the students in their seats will encourage a safe bus ride. The school bus shall not depart the bus circle or bus stop until all students are safely seated.

TWENTY-FIVE (25) WAYS TO MAINTAIN STUDENT DISCIPLINE

(Reprinted from School Bus Fleet Magazine)

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

9.01 GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BUS SAFETY RULES

Rules for student conduct on school buses are set forth in the Gadsden County School Board's Student Code of Conduct. Each of the Transportation Department's school buses has a list of bus rider safety rules posted inside so students shall know what is expected of them.

YOUR RIDE IS ALL ABOUT "SAFETY"

- Sit and stay in assigned seat
- Act responsibly and respectfully at all times
- Feet, hands, and objects kept to self and inside the bus
- Emergency and railroad tracks – voices off
- Talk quietly to your neighbor
- Your driver is the leader

Drivers are to instruct students on the rules of acceptable conduct at the beginning of each school term and as frequently thereafter as necessary. Drivers will enforce, to the best of their ability, all rules, regulations, and instructions which prescribe proper behavior on the part of transported students. Section 1006.147, Florida Statutes, requires districts to adopt a policy prohibiting bullying and harassment of students and staff on school grounds, at school- sponsored events, on school buses, and through school computer networks.

9.02 DRIVER GUIDELINES AND HANDLING STUDENTS

Drivers are required by Florida Statute and Rules of the State Board of Education to maintain order and safe behavior by the students on the school bus. Rules for student conduct on the school buses are set forth in the School Board's Student Code of Conduct.

- A. Assign seating for the entire bus. Assigning seats for all riders can help a driver learn student names more rapidly, set a tone of behavioral control, and turn student seating into a familiar routine rather than a daily free-for-all. At the start of the year, create a seating chart for the bus. The suggested procedure for arranging seating is to load window to aisle or back to front according to stops. An accurate seating chart is required to be maintained at all times. A copy of the seating chart will be given to the School, Lead Driver, and a copy will be left on the bus.
- B. Drivers will make every reasonable effort to deal with infractions of the rules of student conduct. If a driver overlooks the misbehavior of the student(s) in their care, they will lose the respect of the well-behaved students.
- C. In cases of minor infractions, the driver should warn the student(s) involved without stopping the bus, if possible.
- D. Drivers will, if at all possible, stop the bus if the behavior problem is a serious one. Change the students' seats when possible to de-escalate the situation. Drivers will immediately contact the dispatch office for their assigned area via two-way radio and provide them with details of the situation. If there is a physical confrontation between two or more students, drivers may take all reasonable measures necessary to separate the students involved in the confrontation to preserve safety and prevent injury.
- E. Except in situations of an extremely unusual or serious nature, drivers will not park buses on the side of the road for an extended period of time. Such action should be limited to no more than five (5) minutes in duration. The driver will not return a group of students to a school in the afternoon after reaching a point approximately

one-half (1/2) the distance between the school and the last stop on the trip. It is acceptable to pull into a nearby school for assistance; provided dispatch has been contacted and the school is notified. If you do have to return to a school, contact dispatch so they can call the school and arrange for an administrator to meet the bus. The driver is required to obtain the names of students leaving the bus. The driver will notify the Lead Driver and dispatch and/or director, upon returning to the compound that the students have been removed from the bus.

9.03 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR STUDENT MISCONDUCT

- A. Drivers will make every reasonable effort to deal with minor infractions of the rules of student conduct. The driver will give the child a verbal warning, go over the bus rules, change the student's seat, and request a school administrator to talk with the student prior to writing a report of misconduct. When it is necessary to write a report of misconduct, it will then be given to the school principal or his/her designee.
- B. Drivers will fill out a Report of Misconduct on a School Bus form in cases of repeated minor misconduct incidents, or when a serious misconduct incident occurs on a school bus and is witnessed by the driver. If the driver did not witness the incident, they will complete a Driver's Report of Incident form and submit it to their Lead Driver. The Report of Misconduct shall be given to the school in a timely manner.
- C. There are many reasons for a request for video to be pulled:
 - 1) Sexual contact of any kind
 - 2) Fight
 - 3) Theft
 - 4) Repeated misconduct/misconduct related to safety
 - 5) AccidentShould there be a request made for a video to be pulled, the Director will be notified immediately. If the police are involved, the Gadsden County Safety Coordinator is to be notified.
- D. Drivers will not physically discipline, nor suspend the transportation of any student. The driver should instruct every student they are only allowed to disembark the bus at their assigned bus stop or at the students' school under proper supervision. Should a student leave the bus at an unassigned bus stop, the driver will immediately contact dispatch and write a Report of Misconduct. Drop-off of a student at any other location must be approved, in advance, by a School Principal/or designee, Dispatch, and/or the Director. (Note: Transportation is responsible to transport all students until such time as the parents have been properly notified that their child's bus riding privileges have been suspended.)
- E. The school principal or his/her designee, will determine appropriate disciplinary measures for the student's actions based upon the driver's report and any other input deemed necessary from other students and/or the student involved.
- F. In the event a driver does not feel the school principal, or the principal's designee, is not adequately supporting them in matters pertaining to student misconduct, the driver will seek assistance from the Director of Transportation.

9.04 EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

- A. Handling behavior problems with Exceptional Education Students. The information on student behavior management contained in this Section of Driver Handbook applies to all students, including Exceptional Education Students. However, drivers must recognize that Exceptional Education Students are different from the children they may have been used to dealing with. Students with disabilities may have shorter attention spans, low tolerance for frustration, and difficulty in adjusting from one situation to another. These problems can result in episodes of serious student misconduct, which can endanger the well-being of other students and the safety of the bus, if the driver and bus attendants are not prepared to handle such situations in an effective manner.
- B. Dealing with Health Problems. The health of students on the bus is another problem drivers may face, particularly when transporting Exceptional Education Students. Drivers should learn as much as they can on what to do when faced with health problems in general, and who to contact for dealing with specific health needs.

Students with a Specialized Transportation Service Plan will be documented and attached to their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Special caution to Drivers: Information on student enrollment in exceptional education programs and information pertaining to a student's disability and/or medical condition is Strictly Confidential. Such information provided to drivers is "For Official Use Only" and must not be disclosed to unauthorized persons and/or persons without a legitimate "Need to Know". Drivers who fail to maintain the confidentiality of such information shall be subject to severe disciplinary penalties and may also be subject to civil liability in a court of law!

SECTION 10

FIRE PREVENTION, EMERGENCY STOPS, INCIDENTS/CRASHES

10.01 FIRE PREVENTION

- A. Fire prevention safety rules. Drivers shall observe the following fire prevention safety rules.
- The engine must be turned off when refueling. No smoking or open flame shall be permitted within fifty (50) feet of the bus. Students shall not be allowed on or near the bus while refueling.
- B. Using a fire extinguisher. During any fire, time is of the essence. There is no time to be fumbling around trying to find the fire extinguisher or figuring out how to operate it. It is important that drivers know the location of the extinguisher, how to operate it, and how to fight a fire. The response to fire must be almost automatic. Operating instructions for the type of fire extinguisher carried on school buses are detailed below.
1. Pull the pin. A twisting motion should be used because there is a small safety wire that must be broken. The wire will break easier if it is twisted.
 2. Hold the extinguisher upright. It should always be held in an upright position.

There is a tendency to hold it sideways, so a conscious effort must be made to keep it straight upright.
 3. Squeeze the trigger in short bursts.
 4. Direct the chemical at the base of the fire.
 5. Use a gradual side-to-side motion to cover the entire burning area.
 6. Decide whether or not to evacuate the bus. A school bus should always be evacuated when:
 - There is a fire
 - There is a potential for a fire to occur
 - The bus has come to a stop in a dangerous position
 7. Drivers are to take no chances in fighting a fire which would endanger their personal safety or that of the passengers. When in doubt, evacuate!
 8. Seats are fire retardant, not fireproof.

10.02 EMERGENCY STOPS

- A. Students must NEVER be left unattended on board a school bus! If the situation is such that the driver must temporarily leave the bus, arrangements must be made for another driver, supervisor, or school staff member to meet the bus at the stop location.
- B. Decide whether or not to evacuate the bus.
- C. Contact Dispatch. Drivers will give the Dispatch Office as many details as possible concerning the situation.
- D. A safe location must be identified to stop the bus.
- E. When a situation occurs where a driver is unable to continue driving their bus, due to illness or other reasons, the driver will immediately contact the Dispatch Office and request permission to make an unscheduled stop.

10.03 PLACEMENT OF TRIANGULAR REFLECTORS

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

- A. Placement of triangular reflectors on a two-lane and/or multi-lane roadway.
 - 1) Place the first reflector on the traffic side of the bus approximately ten (10) feet from the rear of the bus.
 - 2) Place the second reflector approximately one hundred (100) feet behind the bus.
 - 3) Place the third reflector approximately one hundred (100) feet in front of the bus.
 - 4) On a multi-lane highway, place the third reflector approximately two hundred (200) feet behind the bus.
- B. Estimating required distances. Drivers should pace off the distances, using the following guideline: generally, 10 feet is about 4 paces; 100 feet would be approximately 40 paces.

10.04 BUS INCIDENTS/CRASHES

- A. In all instances where a school bus is involved in an incident/crash, the driver will remain at the scene of the incident/crash until they have been released by the law enforcement officer(s) and the Director or Designee.
- B. Drivers will assist injured persons to the limits of their ability and training in first aid.
- C. Drivers will immediately notify Dispatch by two-way radio when they have an incident/crash while driving a school bus. If the bus is in an area which is out of radio range, drivers will call their Dispatch or Gadsden County School Board office by telephone if they can get access to one promptly, or they may obtain assistance from bystanders or other motorists to call on their behalf.
- D. Drivers will, without fail, report every incident/crash regardless of how minor and regardless of damage. An incident/crash is defined as any time the vehicle (bus) comes into contact with another vehicle or object.
- E. When reporting an incident/crash, drivers must be specific as to location, time, and extent of injuries and/or bus damage.
- F. Drivers will immediately ask if any student is injured or feels any discomfort which could be associated with the incident/crash. If a student complains of pain or is visibly injured, even slightly, the incident/crash will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the Transportation Department as an "accident with injuries." Students will be advised that if they feel any pain or discomfort after leaving the bus, to report it to their school office.
- G. If students are on the school bus at the time of the incident/crash, they will not be allowed to leave the scene, unless they need to be transported for medical treatment. (Note: Drivers cannot forcibly restrain any student from leaving the bus at any time; however, drivers are not to instruct students to do anything other than to remain at the scene. If the parent of a student refuses to allow their child to remain at the scene, the driver will ask to see the parent's driver's license or other photo

identification before allowing a student to depart, unless the parent is personally known to the driver. Drivers will also make sure to note the apparent condition of the student.)

- H. Any person who is injured in a school bus incident/crash or who complains of pain or discomfort will not be released from the scene of the accident without being checked by emergency medical personnel or other certified medical persons.
- I. Drivers are to make no statements regarding fault to other parties involved in an incident/crash. Drivers are to be courteous, to offer to give their name, license number and insurance information, but will not argue with other parties or police officers. If requested to sign any statement other than one requested by the police, the driver is to refer the statement to their Director.
- J. If a driver is issued a traffic citation (ticket) in connection with an incident/crash involving a school bus, the driver will not argue with the police officer nor refuse to sign the traffic citation (either can result in arrest).
- K. Drug and Alcohol Testing Requirements. Under certain circumstances, Federal and State Law require drivers to be tested for drugs and alcohol after having an incident/crash.

Any driver who refuses to submit to an immediate drug/alcohol test required as a result of an incident/crash meeting the criteria outlined above will be subject to dismissal from his/her position.

- L. If a driver is issued a citation for a moving violation in connection with an incident/crash involving a school bus, and the Director or designee is not present at the incident/crash scene when the citation is issued, the driver will immediately notify his/her Dispatch Office, or Gadsden County Schools Board Safety Coordinator, if it is after normal working hours.
- M. If the bus is cleared to be driven (not towed) from the scene of the incident/crash, and the driver is not required to take a drug/alcohol test, the driver will immediately return the bus to their compound where it will be inspected and a damage/repair estimate prepared, unless instructed otherwise by the Director or Service Manager.
- N. If a child restraint system was in use at the time of the accident, they must be inspected or replaced if it is necessary. Drivers should check their Bus Service Recorder at their compound before transporting infants or toddlers after an accident, to make sure this has been done.
- O. Incident/Crash Reports.
 - 1) Drivers must always complete the Accident Report form when they have been involved in an incident/crash with a school bus. The completed report form must be submitted to the Office Manager or Director by the end of the next working day following the incident/crash.
 - 2) Drivers must also complete a School Bus Seating Chart form when students are on board the bus at the time of the incident/crash. This report form must be completed by the driver before they depart the scene of the incident/crash.

10.05 INCIDENTS

- A. An incident is any infraction that occurs on/or to the bus, the driver, students, or other passengers on the bus or at a bus stop. The driver will report the incident by two-way radio to Dispatch. If the bus is in an area which is out of radio range, drivers will call their Dispatch or Gadsden County Schools Safety Coordinator by telephone if they can get access to one promptly, or they may obtain assistance from bystanders or other motorists to call on their behalf. The telephone number for Gadsden County Schools Safety Coordinator number is (call when Dispatch is closed) is 627-9651 ext. 1248.
- B. If emergency assistance is requested and dispatched to the incident location drivers will not leave the scene until they have been released by the law enforcement officer(s) and the Director or Designee. If students are on the school bus at the time of the incident, they will not be allowed to leave the scene, unless they need to be transported for medical treatment. (Note: Drivers cannot forcibly restrain any student from leaving the bus at any time; however, drivers are not to instruct students to do anything other than to remain at the scene. If the parent of a student refuses to allow their child to remain at the scene, the driver shall ask to see the parent's driver's license or other photo identification before allowing a student to leave the scene, unless the parent is personally known to the driver. Drivers will also make sure to note the apparent condition of the student.)
- C. Any person who is injured in a school bus incident or who complains of pain or discomfort shall not be released from the scene of the incident without being checked by emergency medical personnel or other certified medical persons.
- D. Incident Reports
Drivers must always complete the Driver's Report of Incident form when there has been an incident. The completed report form must be submitted to the Director's office by the end of the next working day following the incident.

10.06 STUDENT INJURIES AND ILLNESS

- A. Drivers will complete a Driver's Report of Incident form whenever the following situations occur: a student becomes ill while a passenger on the bus, a student is injured as the result of an incident while on the bus, or when a student is injured while boarding or exiting the bus.
- B. In the event a student becomes seriously ill while enroute to or from school, the driver shall immediately park the bus in a safe area and render first aid up to the limit of their training and ability, if necessary. Drivers will immediately notify Dispatch of the situation and shall seek prompt aid by the best possible means available. Drivers will not attempt to drive the bus with a seriously ill student aboard except in an emergency to get to the nearest place where help may be obtained (e.g. fire station or hospital).

SECTION 11

PRE-TRIP INSPECTION/MAINTENANCE

The driver plays an important role in the school district's preventive maintenance program. Pre-trip inspections are required every time a bus is put into service. The driver must be alert for evidence of conditions which require attention. The inspection must be carried out in a manner which will allow the driver to detect any possible electrical, mechanical, or other condition which could prevent the bus from making a trip safely and on schedule. The driver need not be an expert mechanic to observe and report problems such as the following:

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

Drivers who fail to properly complete the pre-trip inspection of their bus jeopardize the safety of the students they transport and other motorists!

A thorough pre-trip inspection consists of the following:

- The inside check
 - The walk-around outside check
 - The on-the-road check
- A. The inside check. Drivers shall check the operation of all gauges, controls, emergency exits and interior lights, and inspect emergency equipment, condition of seats, windows and the general interior.
 - B. The outside check. Drivers shall check the operation of all exterior lights, check inflation and condition of tires, look for evidence of leaks, check the operation of emergency exits, inspect the exhaust system for loose tail pipes or leaks, and check the overall condition of the bus exterior.
 - C. The on-the-road check. Drivers shall check brakes and steering for proper functioning, and mirrors for proper adjustment.

THE SUCCESS OF A GOOD PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM DEPENDS ON THE FULL COOPERATION OF DRIVERS TO PROPERLY CARRY OUT THE PRE-TRIP INSPECTION. DRIVERS SHOULD ALWAYS NOTIFY THEIR BUS SERVICE MANAGER OR GARAGE MECHANICS BEFORE OPERATING A BUS IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE BUS.

GAUGES & WARNING LIGHTS & THEIR FUNCTION

- **Air Pressure Gauge.** This gauge should indicate enough air pressure to operate the brakes. Pressure should build up to 120 pounds per square inch (psi) when the engine is running. Do not operate the bus until the air pressure is at least 90 psi. Excessive loss of pressure overnight can indicate a leak in the air system.
- **Low Air Pressure Warning Light.** When air brake pressure falls below 60 psi a red warning light on the instrument panel will turn on and a buzzer will sound or the “wig wag” warning arm will drop down, depending on the model of bus you are driving. You must stop as quickly and safely as possible because when the air pressure reaches about 30 psi the emergency braking system will lock up the wheels.
- **Oil Pressure Warning Light.** This light indicates that oil pressure is too low for engine operation. If this light comes on and stays on you must turn off the engine and report the condition immediately to your Bus Service Recorder or (if you are on the road) to the Dispatch Section. Continued operation of the bus without adequate oil pressure can destroy the engine.
- **Voltmeter.** This should indicate in the green area, or over 12 volts, when the engine is running to show normal alternator/battery function. If the gauge is in the red area or is indicating less than 12 volts the battery will soon be run down, resulting in failure of the electrical system.
- **Water temperature gauge.** This gauge shows the temperature of the engine coolant. The gauge should be in the normal area or show a temperature of not more than 212 degrees. Overheating can ruin the engine, so the bus must be stopped until the engine is cooled down and the cause of the overheating corrected.
- **Fuel gauge.** The fuel gauge should indicate you have enough fuel for the trip to be undertaken, plus a comfortable reserve in case something unexpected occurs. There is no excuse for a driver ever to run out of fuel!

THE PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

Walk up to the bus:

- Look under bus for leaks
- Inspect service door
- Inspect steps (condition)
- Inspect handrail

Check interior of bus:

- Inspect fire extinguisher
- Verify that the vehicle registration and insurance papers are present
- Inspect 1st aid kit.
- Inspect body fluid spills clean-up kit
- Inspect belt cutter
- Inspect emergency marker triangles
- Inspect driver's seat and seat belt
- Verify that emergency/parking brake is on, then start engine and turn on head light switch
- Check step well light
- Check all gauges
- Turn on left turn signal
- Check horn
- Check two-way radio
- Check switches:
 - heater, defroster(s)
 - fan(s)
 - windshield wiper/washer(s)
 - dome lights
- Turn on Master Switch and check front amber student loading/unloading lights
- Put bus in drive and depress accelerator pedal to check emergency/parking brake
- Put bus in reverse, listen for warning beeper (if so equipped)
- Walk to back of bus checking that the seats are secure.
- Open emergency exit door and listen for warning buzzer
- Check reverse lights
- Check amber student loading/unloading lights
- Check left turn signal light
- Walk back to front of bus checking:
 - Seat cushions are secure
 - Seat condition
 - Student lap belts (if so equipped)
- Put bus into Neutral and turn on right turn signal
- Walk to back of bus again, open the emergency exit door and check the right turn signal light
- Walk back to front of bus checking:
 - Cleanliness
 - Decals

- Wheelchair tie-downs (if so equipped)
- Emergency roof hatches (if so equipped)
- Emergency window exits
- With bus in Neutral, disengage emergency/parking brake, depress brake pedal and check air pressure gauge – it should not drop more than ten (10) pounds.
- Turn on red student loading/unloading lights and 4-way flasher/hazard lights

Outside Walk-around:

- Verify that all lights are working and that the lenses are secure and not cracked or broken:
 - Clearance
 - Turn signals
 - 4-way flasher/hazard
 - Brake (have another driver assist in checking the brake lights)
 - Strobe (if so equipped)
 - Student loading/unloading
 - Headlamps (low and high beam)
- Check general body condition
- Check fuel cap
- Check windows
- Check reflectors
- Check tires and lug nuts
- Check wheelchair lift (if so equipped)
- Check emergency exit door
- Check exhaust system
- Check stop arms
- Check battery door
- Check Super Stopper (if so equipped)
- Check windshield
- Check mirrors
- Check proper operation of “Child Reminder System” (CRS)

THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF GADSDEN COUNTY GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA SAFE DRIVER PLAN

	**VIOLATIONS CATEGORIES		MAXIMUM POINTS TO BE ASSIGNED
<p>INTRODUCTION: In order to minimize the potential for vehicular accident and injury, persons whose essential duties involve driving a school board vehicle and who have poor driving records shall not be hired.</p> <p>PLAN: In order to qualify for and remain employed by the District School Board of Gadsden County, every driver must establish and maintain an overall driving and safety record, which exemplifies careful driving habits and meets the criteria by this plan. The Supervisor of Transportation is responsible for monitoring the driving records of all employees who are assigned to drive a school district vehicle. Drivers are required to report to their immediate supervisor all accidents and violations in which they are involved as the driver of a school district vehicle. Supervisors must report all accidents and violations to the Risk Manager. FAILURE TO REPORT MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.</p> <p>APPLICABILITY: This plan applies to all drivers and operators of school district equipment. No employee will be terminated solely based on his or her safety record prior to School Board approval of the plan.</p> <p>EFFECTIVE DATE: This plan supersedes all preceding plans and is effective immediately.</p> <p>THE POINT SYSTEM: The driving record of all drivers of school district vehicles will be reviewed at least annually. Points may be assigned as violations occur according to the following schedule. A driver involved in a single accident or event but cited for more than one violation will receive points only in the category receiving the highest number of points.</p>	1	At fault accident due to _____	2
	2	Conviction of driving while impaired (DWI), driving under the influence (DUI), or driving with unlawful blood alcohol level (DUBAL)	10
	3	Speeding 15 MPH or less over the posted limit	3
	4	Speeding more than 15 MPS over posted limit	4
	5	Careless driving	4
	6	Reckless driving	4
	7	Failure to observe stop sign	4
	8	Failure to observe red light	4
	9	Failure to observe traffic instruction sign	1
	10	Operating without a valid driver's license or improper (revoked, suspended, (ETC) license	10
	11	Improper lane changing	4
	12	Failure to have vehicle under control	4
	13	Crossing private property to avoid traffic light or stop sign	2
	14	Driving on wrong side of road	2
	15	Improper turn	2
	16	Failure to yield – Entering through highway	4
	17	Failure to yield – Right of Way	4
	18	Improper backing	2
	19	Following too close	2
	20	Improper passing	4
	21	Leaving a scene of an accident	10
	22	Failure to report accident or motor vehicle moving violation, in which you are involved, in a timely fashion	
		(A) District owned vehicle	10
		(B) Private vehicle	4
	23	Failure to stop at railroad crossing (when you are required to do so)	5
24	Fleeing or attempting to elude police officer	10	
25	Abuse, neglect, or driver error resulting in damage to vehicle	0-10	

**Cited violations shall carry maximum point assignment
Uncited violations are 1 point less

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Safe Driver Plan established by the District School Board of Gadsden County in regard to accidents, driving violations and district regulations

Date: _____ Payroll Signature: _____ Department: _____

Print your name as it appears

(Attach copy of driver's license in this space)

on your Driver's License: _____

Florida Driver License Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Any violation, accident or incident involving a school district vehicle may be reviewed by the Committee at any time. An accumulation of points may result in the following administrative action.

NO. OF POINTS	TIME PERIOD	ACTION
1-4 points within	12 month period	Documented warning
5-6 points within	12 month period	Safe driving course, documented warning
7-9 points within	12 month period	Suspension until safe driving course complete
10 points within	12 month period	Termination of employment
15 points within	24 month period	Termination of employment
20 points within	36 month period	Termination of employment

It is the responsibility of all employees to report the occurrence of the following events to their immediate Supervisor as soon as possible but not later than the end of the next working day.

1. Any accident and/or incident in which they are involved as the driver of a school district vehicle.
2. Receipt of any motor vehicle moving violation while operating a school district vehicle.
3. Suspension or revocation of driver's license. No driver shall be allowed to drive a vehicle belonging the school district.
4. Any conviction or arrest for driving under the influence, driving while intoxicated; or driving with unlawful blood alcohol level. Any employee arrested for DUI will not drive a school board owned vehicle pending the results of their case.

Failure to report as required above or making a false or misleading report may be grounds for termination of employment

Employees shall not be assigned points for cited violations until court action is complete. If they are found guilty or do not contest the charge, they will be immediately assigned points, and administrative action, if required, shall begin immediately.

Exception: DUI

ADMINISTRATION:

This plan will be administered by the District Safety Committee

Each employee covered by this plan shall receive a written copy of the plan and shall have the opportunity to have any questions he/she may have answered. Each employee covered by the plan shall sign a form indicating that he/she has received a copy of the plan, has had any questions answered and understands its contents.

APPEAL PROCESS:

An employee has the right to appeal assignment of points and/or administrative action relating thereto by requesting a hearing before the District Safety Committee. The appeal must be in writing addressed to the chairperson of the Committee and delivered within 5 working days of receipt of notice of administrative action. It must state the employee's objections in detail.