

Downey Unified School District

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION - RESPONSIBILITY - SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

AR 6624

The safety of the passengers of the school bus and all others using public roads requires that District bus drivers practice maximum vigilance at all times in the exercise of their duties. To this end, the school bus driver has been endowed with certain authorities by California state legislation.

Supplementing this legislation and to provide a framework of regulations to accomplish the intent of the law in accordance with Board Policy, the following regulations are established:

School Bus Rules of Student and Passenger Behavior

1. Passengers must remain seated at all times.
2. Passengers shall refrain from loud conversation and unnecessary noises.
3. No boisterous or unruly conduct will be permitted.
4. Passengers must keep all parts of body inside the bus.
5. No profanity will be allowed.
6. No eating, drinking, or smoking will be permitted on the bus.
7. Pupils with athletic footwear equipped with cleats or spikes are not permitted on buses.
8. Teachers, coaches, and/or chaperones must accompany each group of students making special trips. They must be aware of these rules, they must assist in their enforcement, and they must set proper example by their conduct.
9. Singing and/or chanting are not recommended; however, with the driver's permission, and if kept under control, singing and/or chanting may be permitted under certain conditions prescribed by the driver. It must be understood that only the driver may determine if singing is to be allowed. The driver is held responsible by law to operate the vehicle safely at all times. If the driver deems singing and/or chanting distracting, it will not be permitted.

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School Bus Rules of Student and Passenger Behavior - continued

10. Passengers may depart or enter by approved doors only.
 - a. Students will behave themselves in an orderly manner in the vicinity of bus stop.
 - b. Students will line up at the bus stop in preparation for entry on to the school bus when they see the amber flashing lights activated on the approaching school bus.
 - c. Students will be at their designated school bus stop at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of their school bus.
 - d. Students will approach the bus for entry only after the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door and indicated boarding is to begin.
 - e. Students will exit the bus via the door designated by the driver without pushing, shoving or horseplay.
 - f. Students exiting the bus will insure that their clothing, back packs, bags, etc., are not caught on other students or any portion of the bus.
 - g. Students exiting the bus who must cross the street will cross in a group under the direction and control of the bus driver.

Authorities and Limitations of School Bus Drivers

1. Authorities and responsibilities of the school bus driver are
 - a. To maintain order and discipline on the bus at all times.
 - b. To insure that all passengers observe the rules and regulations aboard the bus.
 - c. To terminate any trip at any time when, in the driver's opinion, it is unsafe to continue.

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Authorities and Limitations of School Bus Drivers - continued

The trip shall be terminated at the point of origin following consultation between the driver and site administrator, or at the nearest law enforcement agency (California Highway Patrol, Sheriff's Substation, or local police station).

- d. To request all personnel assigned in a supervisory capacity to do their best to enforce the rules and regulations and assist the driver in any manner for the safety of all aboard.
- e. To report all incidents of any consequence to the Transportation Supervisor with a copy to the site administrator.
- f. To get names and/or to identify unruly or uncooperative passengers.
- g. To obtain law enforcement assistance when all else fails. Assistance to be obtained by telephoning the California Highway Patrol or by driving to the nearest law enforcement agency.
- h. To put into the custody of a law enforcement official any student(s) causing unsafe conditions aboard the bus.
- i. To submit citations for discipline violations to school administrators.
- j. To recommend suspension of riding privileges when, in the driver's opinion, a student is so disruptive that safe driving is impossible. Such recommendation shall be made through the Transportation Supervision who shall coordinate the matter with the appropriate school administrator.
- k. To recommend changes in routes and stops for reasons of safety, convenience, or economy.
- l. To travel in caravan style on all special trips. (At the discretion of the driver or the administrator, for reasons of safety, this rule may be waived.) When an unsafe condition materializes (e.g., a riot or rock-and-bottle-throwing melee), it will be the responsibility of the driver to evacuate from the area as many passengers as possible as quickly as possible--gross overload will be permitted. As soon as practicable the caravan should reform, redistribute the passengers to a safe number, and proceed over a predetermined route to the terminus.

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Authorities and Limitations of School Bus Drivers - continued

- m. To safely evacuate the bus during other emergencies (e.g., fires, accident, etc.). Turn over the responsibility for order and discipline to the chaperone and direct full attention toward telephoning for help, putting out reflectors, giving first aid, etc. (In this event it will be the obligation and responsibility of the chaperone to maintain order and discipline.)
- n. To implement the following procedures in case of bus breakdown in caravan:
 - (1) Redistribute the passengers to the other buses. Legal capacity may be exceeded in an emergency.
 - (2) Call for required assistance.
 - (3) Secure the inoperative bus and remain with the vehicle if practicable.
- o. To maintain the students as a group until released, either at a regular stop or to an authorized school representative.
- p. To pick up stragglers (students who should be riding the bus, but who for some unknown reason are walking), provided this can be done safely.
- q. To transport a seriously ill or injured student to the nearest school or hospital and release said student to the school or hospital, then return to the normal route.
- r. To be punctual, courteous, and understanding at all times with students, chaperones, parents, and the public.
- s. To hold safety paramount to all other considerations.
- t. To activate the flashing amber warning light system as the bus approaches to within 200 feet of that route's approved bus stop, and to deactivate that system as the bus departs that bus stop.
- u. To activate the flashing red signal lights and stop signal arm systems when the bus is stopped at a highway or private road designated bus stop for the purpose of loading or unloading K-8 students. The driver may then open the door. The driver will cross students with the red lights and signal arm activated and only in front of the bus.

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- v. To activate the red flashing signal lights and stop signal arm at any approved bus stop on a 1, 2, or 3 lane highway or private road which is undivided. These systems will be deactivated when all pupils are loaded or when all students are unloaded and are a safe distance away from the bus. This item does not apply at stops for special education or ambulatory impaired loading or unloading.
 - w. To assist in the escort requirements designated by Principals, DUSD authorized personnel or a valid IEP.
2. School bus drivers do not have the authority to
- a. Suspend permanently the riding privileges of any eligible student.
 - b. Put off, or permit to leave, any student on the way to or from school or special event, except as permitted under sections g and h preceding.
 - c. Refuse transportation to eligible students.
 - d. Punish physically any student.
 - e. Permit the rules and regulations to be ignored and/or broken.
 - f. Add, subtract, alter, or change in any manner, except under emergency conditions, any bus stop or route, without written permission from the Transportation Supervisor. If conditions are such that the prescribed route cannot be followed, the driver shall deliver all other students first, return to a point as near as possible to the prescribed stop, secure the bus, and walk the entire group to the prescribed stop(s). Telephone the Supervisor as soon as possible after determining such a condition exists. The school and, when possible, the parents will be notified.
 - g. Suspend any of the prescribed rules and regulations except under conditions of extreme emergency and/or for reasons of safety.
 - h. Load the bus beyond its legal rate of capacity except under conditions of extreme emergency.
 - i. Move the bus until all passengers are seated.

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Authorities and Limitations of School Bus Drivers - continued

3. The principal of each school provided with transportation will be responsible for
 - a. Making available competent onsite personnel to take charge of the students arriving and departing by bus, especially sick, injured, or disorderly students. Those competent personnel will assist in the safe arrangement of the students in preparation for boarding a bus and the enforcement of a safety zone around the bus as it arrives and departs.
 - b. Providing competent onsite personnel during the normal hours of regular pupil transportation to receive any seriously ill or injured student being discharged under the provisions of section 1. q. preceding.
 - c. Informing supervising adults of the rules and their responsibilities as passengers on a school bus.
 - d. Receiving and investigating bus drivers' recommendations to suspend riding privileges and report the resultant decision to the Transportation Supervisor. Determine penalties for infractions of the rules established under this administrative regulation. The following are suggested as guidelines:
 - (1) First citation - warning or possible bus-riding suspension.
 - (2) Second citation - bus-riding suspension for three to ten days.
 - (3) Third citation - bus-riding suspension one week to remainder of year.
 - (4) Immediate suspension for threatened or actual bodily harm.
 - e. Providing instructions to the students, parents, other adults responsible for students and the Transportation Supervisor concerning the required escort parameters for school bus riding students.

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