

# **Michigan Pupil Transportation**

## **FOLLOWING THE ROAD TO SAFETY**



### **School Bus Driver Continuing Education Curriculum Manual**

Certification for  
2013-2015



## **Acknowledgement**

Section 51 of Act No. 187 of 1990 (Pupil Transportation Act), Section 257.1851 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, requires that a driver of a school bus transporting pupils to or from school or school-related events complete an entry level school bus safety education course and a six-hour continuing education course within two years after the entry level certification, as well as each succeeding two years thereafter. Each course must be completed at an educational agency approved by the Michigan Department of Education.

The new continuing education curriculum, approved by the Michigan Department of Education for the training period July 1, 2012, to September 30, 2013, for certification through September 30, 2015, was compiled with the cooperation of many individuals concerned with the safety of Michigan's children.

## **TAAM Members and Training Agencies**

Eastern UP ISD – Gary Davis

Genesee ISD - Gary West

Iosco RESA – Vincent Weiler

Jackson ISD – Larry Ostrander

Kalamazoo RESA – Bill Dawson

Kent ISD – John Savage

Macomb ISD – Carol Juretich

Northern Michigan Training

Consortium – Bill Coaster

Northern Michigan University - Cameron Hadley

Oakland Schools - Lori Richardson

Ottawa ISD - Angela McCoy

St. Clair RESA - Carol Juretich

Saginaw ISD - Marge Schultz

Washtenaw ISD - Thomas Moore

Wayne RESA - Kim Hooper

## **Curriculum Resource Materials**

- *Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses:* This series is a product of the Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance (TA) Center, under funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) and in partnership with the National Association for Pupil Transportation and the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.
- Citizen CPR - Denise L. Bowles, Territory Service Delivery Manager II, American Red Cross, Preparedness, Health and Safety Services, Central and Northern Michigan Region, Flint, Michigan
- Curriculum Review Activity - Special thanks to Kim Hooper, Wayne RESA
- Curriculum Writer - Gary W. Davis, Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District (EUPISD) with assistance from Lori Richardson, Oakland Schools; and William Peltier, Superintendent, Moran Township Schools and School Bus Driver Instructor EUPISD

## **Training Topics**

- Introduction
  
- Year in Review and Current Issues
  
- Laws and Driving Review
  
- What Would You Do? (A)
  
- First Aid and Citizen CPR
  
- What Would You Do? (B)
  
- Intervening in Bullying Behavior
  
- Review
  
- Test

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Michigan school bus driver biannual continuing education class. Michigan school bus drivers are professional drivers who are concerned about student safety. You are part of a statewide pupil transportation system that strives to safely deliver over one quarter of a million pupils each school day. This continuing education program was written with the goal of reviewing and sharing new information that will help you to continue to provide safe travels for pupils you transport.

The Michigan Pupil Transportation *Following the Road to Safety* curriculum that will guide you through your six hours of required continuing education training will provide each participant with the opportunity to review and improve their bus driving knowledge and skills. As you proceed through the training, please consider future continuing education topics you would like to see provided and share these ideas with your instructor. A goal of this training is be relevant to the current needs of you as a professional school bus driver, and that is best done with your input on topics that will assist you to be the best driver possible.

## **Year in Review and Current Issues**

### **Vehicle Violations in a School Bus Zone**

Effective July 1, 2011, PA 59 and 60 of 2011 has increased the penalties for violations of traffic laws around a school bus. Sec. 601b

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this act, a person responsible for a moving violation in a work zone, at an emergency scene, or in a school zone during the period beginning 30 minutes before school in the morning and through 30 minutes after school in the afternoon, or in a school bus zone is subject to a fine that is double the fine otherwise prescribed for that moving violation.

(2) A person who commits a moving violation in a work zone or a school bus zone for which not fewer than 3 points are assigned under section 320a and, as a result causes injury to another person in the work zone or school bus zone, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

(3) A person who commits a moving violation in a work zone or school bus zone for which not fewer than 3 points are assigned under section 320a and, as a result causes death to another person in the work zone or school bus zone, is guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$7,500 or by imprisonment for not more than 15 years, or both.

(4) Subsections (2) and (3) do not apply if the injury or death was caused by the negligence of the injured or deceased person in the work zone or school bus zone.

(5) As used in this section: (b) "Moving violation" means an act or omission prohibited under this act or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to this act that occurs while a person is operating a motor vehicle, and for which the person is subject to a fine; (c) "School bus zone" means the area lying within 20 feet of a school bus that has stopped and is displaying two alternately flashing red lights at the same level, except as described in section 682(2); (d) "School zone" means that term as defined in section 627a.

### **School Bus Driver Physicals**

Beginning June 22, 2010, once every two years a Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) physical is required for Michigan school bus drivers (white physical card). An examiner can, under certain situations, require a more frequent physical. In Michigan, an exemption exists from the Federal DOT regulations for an individual who is an insulin dependent diabetic (blue card), if that person was employed as a school bus driver on June 22, 2010 and had diabetes noted at that time on their medical exam.

With the passage of PA 156 of 2011 Section 5(3) on September 27, 2011, a current school bus driver who becomes, or a new applicant to drive a school bus who is, an insulin dependent diabetic may apply to the Michigan motor carrier safety appeal board for a waiver. If approved, this waiver allows the individual to drive a school bus intrastate but not interstate. Details of the waiver process can be found in MCL 480.13 (Section 3).

Some areas where you can improve your chances of passing the required DOT physical are through healthy lifestyle choices, such as a balanced diet and exercise, which might also improve blood pressure and respiratory dysfunction, as well as sleep apnea.

The guidelines for the DOT exam, instructions for diabetic waiver, medical examination report and the DOT certificate can be found at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) website: [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530\\_6569\\_38338---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6569_38338---,00.html).

### **School Bus Driver Manual Updates**

Every driver should maintain their *Beginning School Bus Driver Manual*. The beginning driver manual has been completely updated and revised and is available on the Michigan Department of Education website at: [www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530\\_6569\\_38338---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6569_38338---,00.html).

Future updates will also be posted to this website.

### **Pupil Transportation Advisory Practices and Guidelines**

The Michigan Department of Education provides information related to the transportation of pupils in Michigan, which may not be covered under specific laws through items termed as advisory practices and guidelines.

These advisory practices and guidelines are good ideas and, in some cases, address issues identified nationally as significant. They are not supported by law in Michigan, but are included to provide direction and guidance to school transportation operations in moving forward for the purpose of continuous improvement, as district resources allow.

These items include Pre-Trip Inspections, School Bus Evacuation Drills, Advertising Inside School Buses, End of Route Student Checks, Global Positioning Systems, Prohibition Against Personal Cell Phone Use By School Bus Drivers, School Bus Emissions/Idling, School Bus Technician and Mechanic Qualifications and School Bus Maintenance. Each of these advisory practices and guidelines can be reviewed at the MDE website: [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530\\_6569\\_38338---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6569_38338---,00.html).

## **Laws and Driving Review**

### **Roundabouts in Michigan**

Traffic control at intersections in many areas of Michigan is increasingly being done through the use of roundabouts. According to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), roundabouts reduce vehicle speeds, as well as the number of conflict points. Roundabouts eliminate head-on/left-turn and angle-type crashes that frequently result in serious or fatal injuries.

Roundabouts operate with the use of yield signs instead of stop signs or traffic signals; vehicles are able to enter the roundabout when there are adequate gaps in the traffic flow. This reduces the number of vehicles that have to stop, as well as the time vehicles are stopped. This reduces delays and increases the capacity of the intersection.

Steps provided by MDOT for safely negotiating a roundabout are as follows:

1. Slow down as you approach the roundabout.
2. Use the guide signs and land designation markers to choose the appropriate lane for the intended destination.
3. Look for pedestrians and bicyclists as you approach the crosswalk. Yield to those intending to cross.
4. Slow down as you approach the yield sign and dashed yield line. Look to the left to see if other vehicles are traveling within the roundabout.
5. Once there is an adequate gap in traffic, enter the roundabout. Do not stop or change lanes once in the roundabout.
6. As you approach the intended destination, signal your intent to exit. Look for pedestrians and bicyclists as you exit.

More information regarding roundabouts can be found at:  
[http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9615\\_53039---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9615_53039---,00.html).

### **Traffic Tickets with a Conviction**

If a school bus driver receives a traffic ticket and pleads guilty or is convicted of the violation, in certain circumstances he/she can be required to retake the Michigan Secretary of State school bus driving skills test before being allowed to drive. The skills test consists of three separate tests administered in this order: The Vehicle Inspection Test, The Off-Road Basic Control Skills Test, and The On-Road Driving Test.

- This can happen if a school bus driver has had his or her driver's license or commercial driver's license suspended, canceled, or denied due to a felony or a conviction of a crime under the law of this state, a local ordinance, or law of another state substantially corresponding to a law of this state. [MCL 257.303 and 319]
- Remember that it is your responsibility to notify your school district if you receive a ticket.
- Be reminded that you will need to be road skills tested if convicted of any of the disqualifying offenses while operating a commercial motor vehicle or any offense in a noncommercial motor vehicle that would be a disqualifying condition committed in a commercial motor vehicle. [49 CFR 383.51(b)]
- A driver who is required to take a road skills test under this law shall not operate a school bus until that driver has passed the test. Furthermore, based on school district policy, a bus driver may be suspended and not allowed to drive once the violation is issued.
- The commercial driver license skills test shall be conducted by an examiner not employed or under contract with the same agency or school of the driver being tested.

## **Homeless Children**

Homeless children have a right to a free and appropriate education just like other children. Under a federal law, known as the McKinney-Vento Act, any child without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence is considered "homeless." This includes students who are:

- Living with a friend, relative or someone else because they lost their home due to eviction, foreclosure, economic crisis or other emergency situation.
- Staying in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground because they have nowhere else to go.
- Living in a shelter, including emergency or transitional shelters, domestic violence shelters, and runaway and homeless youth shelters.
- Staying in substandard housing.
- Living in places not ordinarily used for sleeping, including cars, parks, public places, abandoned buildings, or bus or train stations.
- Are in the first six months of any foster care placement.

Students have the right to either continue to attend the school they were attending prior to losing housing or to immediately enroll in the district where they are temporarily located. Under the law, school districts must remove barriers to

attendance and success for homeless students. This includes providing transportation assistance.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires school districts to provide transportation for students experiencing homelessness in three situations:

1. School districts must provide transportation to the school of origin upon the request of a parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, upon the request of the McKinney-Vento liaison. [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)] This is true regardless of whether the district provides transportation for other students. The school of origin is defined as either the school the child attended before they lost housing or the last school attended.
2. For other transportation (as opposed to the school of origin), the McKinney-Vento Act requires that districts provide transportation comparable to that provided to housed students. [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(4)(A)] Therefore, if the district transports housed students to the local school or to a summer program, it must also transport students experiencing homelessness.
3. School districts must eliminate barriers to school enrollment and retention of students experiencing homelessness. For example, if a student is living on or near an extremely busy intersection, in a very dangerous neighborhood, or is otherwise unable to attend school without transportation, the district must eliminate lack of transportation as a barrier to the child attending school.

Rerouting school buses is one of the most familiar options. Regular school buses may be able to stop at local shelters or other transitional housing locations, such as motels or campgrounds, and pick up homeless students.

The Federal Guidelines for the McKinney-Vento Act suggests the following steps to support the transportation of homeless children and youth:

1. Communicate regularly with the district homeless liaison.
2. Establish procedures to receive information about the transportation needs and pick-up location of homeless students.
3. Train bus drivers and dispatchers on the rights and needs of homeless students, as well as on the need for sensitivity and confidentiality.
4. Develop a bus routing system that can respond flexibly and quickly to new "pick-ups." Be aware of new motel and shelter locations and prepare to create bus stops nearby.
5. Support increased district commitment to provide homeless students transportation to school, as well as to before and after school programs.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires every local educational agency to "designate an appropriate staff person" to serve as liaison. [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)] If you are concerned that a student may be homeless, contact your district's homeless liaison. To obtain contact information for the Homeless Education Liaison or Regional Grant Coordinator in any Michigan public school district, go to the interactive map on the MDE Homeless Education website:



[www.michigan.gov/homeless](http://www.michigan.gov/homeless). The site also has other resources and documents related to this law and the services available for homeless students.

## **Distracted Driving**

Driving while distracted is a choice that drivers make that can lead to serious or even deadly consequences. Distracted driving can include texting, using a cell phone, reading a map or other document, radio use and eating while a vehicle is moving. As a professional school bus driver, there is no room for distractions.

- **Research on distracted driving reveals some surprising facts:**
  - Twenty percent of injury crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving. [Source - National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA)]
  - Of those killed in distracted driving-related crashes, 995 involved reports of a cell phone as a distraction (18% of fatalities in distraction-related crashes). (NHTSA)
  - In 2009, 5,474 people were killed on U.S. roadways, and an estimated additional 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that were reported to have involved distracted driving. (FARS and GES)
  - The age group with the greatest proportion of distracted drivers was the under-twenty age group – 16% of all drivers younger than twenty involved in fatal crashes were reported to have been distracted while driving. (NHTSA)
  - Drivers who use handheld devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Source - Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
  - Use of a cell phone while driving, whether it's handheld or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08%. (Source - University of Utah)
- **Texting:** On July 1, 2010, a Michigan law banning texting while driving took effect. The law states: Except as otherwise provided in this section, a person shall not read, manually type, or send a text message on a wireless two-way communication device that is located in the person's hand or in the person's lap, including a wireless telephone used in cellular telephone service or personal communication service, while operating a motor vehicle that is moving on a highway or street in this state. As used in this subsection, a wireless two-way communication device does not include a global positioning or navigation system that is affixed to the motor vehicle. [MCL 257.602b (1)]

Exceptions were built into the law for law enforcement officers, medical emergencies and when related to personal protection.

Under Michigan law, texting while driving is classified as a primary offense, which means you can be pulled over and ticketed based on a text messaging

offense alone. Violators will face a fine of \$100 for the first offense and \$200 for subsequent offenses.

- **Prohibition Against Personal Cell Phone Use By School Bus Drivers:** Personal cell phone use by school bus drivers while driving is a potential safety risk. The Michigan Department of Education, upon the recommendation of the Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee, recommends the following guideline be implemented by all Michigan school districts:

“Recognizing that personal cell phone use by a school bus driver at times the vehicle is in operation on the roadway poses a potential safety risk, and further, that personal cell phone use by the driver while the bus is in operation can be a distraction causing further potential safety risk, it is a best practice that school bus drivers not operate personal cell phones while the school bus is in operation. It is an additional guideline that personal cell phones be placed in the "off" position when in the possession of the school bus driver while the bus is in operation. Cell phones may be used in case of emergency. Special care must be taken at all times in the use of any communication device while the school bus is in operation.”

## Mirror Usage and Settings

Proper mirror adjustment and usage helps to prevent danger zones around the bus by reducing the blind spots where pupils may be hidden from view. Your pre-trip inspection must include proper mirror adjustment.

- **Federal Mirror Law:** Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) 49 CFR 571.111 requires that all mirror standards apply to all school buses, requires that all drivers be capable of viewing, either directly or indirectly, critical areas around the bus through the rearview or crossover mirrors, and requires image clarity standards as well as setting criteria that may be installed with stable supports.
- **Mirror Adjustment Assessment Review:** For each of the school bus mirrors below, fill in the blanks with the federal standard for proper adjustment.
  - Using the front crossover mirrors, you should be able to see:  
All the way across the front bumper of the school bus plus not less than \_\_\_ **feet** on either side from the ground to the point where direct observation is possible and not less than \_\_\_ **feet** in front of the school bus.
  - Using the right convex mirror, you should be able to see:
    1. The entire \_\_\_\_\_ **side** of the bus up to the mirror mounts.
    2. The front of the **rear** \_\_\_\_\_ touching the ground.
    3. At least \_\_\_\_\_ **traffic** lane on the \_\_\_\_\_ **side** of the bus.
  - Using the left convex mirror, you should be able to see:

1. The entire \_\_\_\_\_ **side** of the bus up to the \_\_\_\_\_ **mounts**.
  2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the rear tire touching the ground.
  3. At least \_\_\_\_\_ **traffic** lane on the \_\_\_\_\_ **side** of the bus.
- Using the side flat mirrors (west coast), you should be able to see:
    1. The side of the bus in the inside edge of the mirror but not enough to count the \_\_\_\_\_.
    2. The ground within approximately \_\_\_\_\_ **inches** of the rear dual wheel.
    3. Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ **feet** four bus lengths behind the bus.
- Reminder:** The side flat mirrors (west coast) can also create blind spots that can hide a vehicle as large as another school bus. When approaching an intersection, be cautious and lean towards the steering wheel to peer around the mirrors to see if traffic is clear.
- The inside rear view mirror should be adjusted to see the students inside the bus and any traffic **directly** \_\_\_\_\_ the bus.

Many school districts have a school bus mirror adjustment grid painted on a parking lot area that is out of the way. By parking your bus in the designated area, you can make sure all of your bus mirrors are adjusted to meet the safety standards required. If you cannot adjust the mirrors to meet the minimum standards, you need to contact the bus mechanic or supervisor for assistance.

### **Working with Young Students or Students with Disabilities**

All children have a right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). As such, one service a bus driver provides is a safe ride to and from school. As the age group or disability varies, so must how you work with each individual child. When working with young children or children with disabilities, many times one needs to have a higher level of patience and understanding of individual child development levels. Pupils with learning disabilities are required to be placed in the least restrictive environment where they can be successful. This means that they are to be in classes, activities and related services, such as busing, with general education students as much as possible.

In a recent Michigan school bus driver continuing education curriculum, drivers learned about using a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) system for working towards positive student behavior. PBIS is described as a proactive, team-based framework for creating and sustaining safe and effective schools. PBIS is all about:

- Prevention – changing the things that trigger the behavior.
- Teaching – acceptable ways to get needs met.
- Responding – quick response and intervention.

As you are aware, PBIS works by establishing a positive climate, emphasizing the importance of preventing behavior problems, being proactive and positive, rather than negative and punitive, and spreading positive support beyond your students to staff, family and others.

By establishing the positive expectations for students on a school bus, the driver sets the standard for proper bus behavior. When dealing with young children or those students with disabilities, every school bus driver needs to anticipate that proper behavior expectations will be met by all students; however, a school bus driver must also plan on modifying their approach when solving issues with these children. A driver will need to be patient, not raise his/her voice, not look angry, use simple words and one- or two-step direction, use slow and deliberate speech, and possibly use a bus aide or another pupil to help interpret what is needed. Instructions and praise may have to be repeated frequently.

There are thirteen disability areas defined by the State of Michigan that entitle a student to special education programs and services. These thirteen disabling conditions range from Early Childhood Developmental Delay (ECDD) or Emotionally Impaired (EI) to Speech and Language Impairment (SLI). No matter what the identified disability, student discipline infractions should be reviewed by the Individual Educational Planning (IEP) team as necessary to determine if additional assessments are required. Should the IEP team determine that the behavioral management plan will include busing, the regular bus driver and/or monitor/aide must follow the behavioral management plan agreed upon by the IEP team. A student's need for special transportation should be reviewed at least annually by the IEP team, and more frequently if the need arises.

Look at each pupil as an individual by keeping in mind communication techniques that are appropriate for his/her age or disability. If you need specific techniques to assist a child, you can talk to the child's teacher, parents, aides or principal. Everyone needs to be pulling for the child's success.

### **What Would You Do?** **School Bus Driver Situational Scenarios (A)**

Categories: Loading and Unloading, Railroad Tracks, Alternately Red and Hazard Light Stops, Student Drop-off, Winter Driving and Pre-trip Inspection.

Your instructor will be dividing the class into several small groups. After the groups have been established, each group will receive a list of school bus driving scenarios, including things that may happen from day to day with a school bus, as well as a copy of PA 187 school bus laws.

Each group will be assigned one or two of the scenarios to review, discuss and then write down the action steps they would take to solve or deal with the scenario and finally, list the law, rule or school policy that will support their action steps.

After a few minutes, the instructor will ask each group to report the scenario, action steps and the supporting law, rule or school policy.

### **First Aid and CPR**

By definition, first aid is care given to an injured individual that is designed to save a life and prevent further injury. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is used to keep blood circulating through the body of someone whose heart has stopped beating. School bus drivers need to be prepared to help in an emergency and to provide proper care to injured pupils.

During the video *"First Aid Training for School Bus Drivers,"* you will be viewing many emergency situations. For some of the types of injuries discussed, a place for notes is provided below.

First Aid Kit - Every school bus in Michigan is required to have a basic first aid kit. As part of your pre-trip inspection, you check to see that the kit is present and you should be opening the kit to assure that all of the minimum required contents are present. [MCL 257.1825 (2)]

Bloodborne Pathogens - Remember proper first aid care needs to begin with you taking universal precautions to protect yourself from infections carried in blood and other body fluids (wearing disposable gloves and face masks, not touching body fluids and washing your hands immediately after providing care).

Controlling bleeding - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Injuries to bones and joints - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Shock - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Allergic reactions - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Seizures - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Suspected head, neck or back injuries - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other first aid notes - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Hands-Only CPR**

The American Red Cross course for Citizen CPR is designed to teach the untrained bystander how to describe when and how to perform CPR and to demonstrate how to carry out hands-only CPR.

# HANDS-ONLY CPR

FOR WITNESSED SUDDEN COLLAPSE



## CHECK AND CALL

1. **CHECK** the scene, then **CHECK** the person.
2. Tap on the shoulder and shout "Are you okay?" Quickly look for breathing.
3. CALL 9-1-1 if no response.
4. If unresponsive and not breathing, BEGIN CHEST COMPRESSIONS.

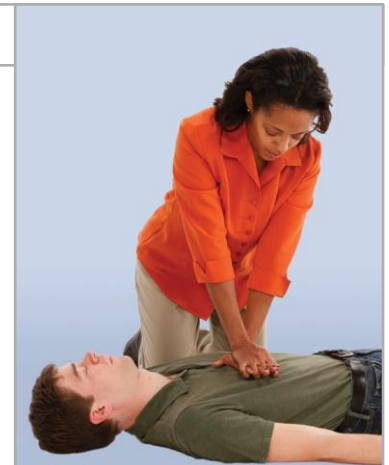
### TIPS:

- Whenever possible use disposable gloves while giving care.
- Occasional gasps are not breathing.



## GIVE CHEST COMPRESSIONS

1. Place the heel of one hand on the center of the chest.
2. Place the heel of the other hand on top of the first hand, lacing your fingers together.
3. Keep your arms straight; position your shoulders directly over your hands.
4. Push hard, push fast.
  - Compress the chest at least 2 inches.
  - Compress at least 100 times per minute.
  - Let the chest rise completely before pushing down again.
5. Continue chest compressions.



## DO NOT STOP

### Except in one of these situations:

- You see an obvious sign of life (breathing).
- Another trained responder arrives and takes over.
- EMS personnel arrive and take over.
- You are too exhausted to continue.
- An AED is ready to use.
- The scene becomes unsafe.

## AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR

### If an AED is available:

1. Turn on AED.
2. Wipe chest dry.
3. Attach the pads.
4. Plug in connector, if necessary.
5. Make sure no one is touching the individual.
6. Push the "Analyze" button, if necessary.
7. If a shock is advised, push the "Shock" button.
8. Perform compressions and follow AED prompts.

Go to [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or call your chapter to sign up for training in full CPR, First Aid, Babysitter's Training, Pet First Aid and much more.

Developed with the support of the  
American Red Cross Badger Chapter.

**What Would You Do?**  
**School Bus Driver Situational Scenarios (B)**

Categories: Emergency Situations, Bully on the Bus, Wheelchair Assistance, Confidentiality, Illegal Bus Stop, and Security Issues.

Your instructor will again be dividing the class into several small groups. As earlier, after the groups have been established, each group will receive a list of school bus driving scenarios, including things that may happen from day to day with a school bus, as well as a copy of PA 187 school bus laws.

Each group will review, discuss and then write down the action steps they would take to solve or deal with the scenario and finally, list the law, rule or school policy that will support their action steps.

After a few minutes, the instructor will ask each group to report the scenario, action steps and the supporting law, rule or school policy.

**Intervening in Bullying Behavior**

The following are excerpts adapted from the training module (1) on intervention in bullying behavior, the *Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses*, which was developed by the Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance (TA) Center, under funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) and in partnership with the National Association for Pupil Transportation and the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.

For more information, visit <http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=01>.





# Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses

## **Module 1: Handout 1**

*Note: Numbers within parentheses refer to the source of the information presented in the handout.*

### **See Something: What Does Bullying Look Like?**

**General definition:** Bullying is a problem behavior based on power relationships in which a student or a group of students uses power aggressively to cause emotional or physical pain and distress to another student. (7)

#### **Four Types of Bullying (7, 2)**

Put a check mark by how often you see this kind of behavior on the bus.

**1. Physical bullying** — Hitting, kicking, inappropriate touching, sexual gestures, groping, threatening with/without a weapon.

\_\_\_ 1 = Never \_\_\_ 2 = Occasionally \_\_\_ 3 = Sometimes

\_\_\_ 4 = Frequently \_\_\_ 5 = Very often

What the research says about how often this form of bullying occurs:

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**2. Verbal bullying** — Name calling, starting rumors, teasing, threats.

\_\_\_ 1 = Never \_\_\_ 2 = Occasionally \_\_\_ 3 = Sometimes

\_\_\_ 4 = Frequently \_\_\_ 5 = Very often

What the research says about how often this form of bullying occurs:

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**3. Relational bullying** — Excluding others from the group, rolling of eyes, tossing of hair, ignoring and shunning, gossiping, spreading rumors, telling secrets, setting others up to look foolish, damaging friendships.

\_\_\_ 1 = Never \_\_\_ 2 = Occasionally \_\_\_ 3 = Sometimes

\_\_\_ 4 = Frequently \_\_\_ 5 = Very often

What the research says about how often this form of bullying occurs:

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**4. Cyber bullying** — Use of e-mail, social network sites, cell phones, webcams, text messages, and Internet sites, etc., to embarrass or humiliate, verbally harass, socially exclude, or threaten physical or psychological harm.

\_\_\_ 1 = Never \_\_\_ 2 = Occasionally \_\_\_ 3 = Sometimes

\_\_\_ 4 = Frequently \_\_\_ 5 = Very often

What the research says about how often this form of bullying occurs:

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### **Common Signs of Bullying\***

There are many warning signs that could indicate that someone is involved in bullying, either by bullying others or by being bullied. As a bus driver, you may be more likely to see some signs than others. For example, a parent would notice if a child is depressed and withdrawn at home, but you might be more likely to see how one child teases another while riding the bus or how a normally happy child you've seen often suddenly seems isolated and frightened. You may see changes in young people that you see every day or you may see patterns emerge over time. Following are some of the common signs of bullying to look for.

- Possible signs of someone who is being bullied:
  - Reports losing items such as books, electronics, clothing, or jewelry
  - Has unexplained injuries
  - Complains frequently of headaches, stomach aches, or feeling sick
  - Hurts themselves
  - Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
  - Is afraid of going to/from school or other activities with peers
  - Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious, or depressed
  - Talks about suicide
  - Feels helpless
  - Suddenly has fewer friends
  - Avoids certain places
  - Acts differently than usual
  - Wants to sit near the driver
  - Wants to sit with the same "safe" student or group of students all of the time (behind them, in front of them or surrounded by them)
- Possible signs of someone who is bullying others:
  - Becomes violent with others
  - Gets into physical or verbal fights with others
  - Gets in trouble a lot, including being sent to the principal's office or detention
  - Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained
  - Is quick to blame others
  - Will not accept responsibility for their actions

- Has friends who bully others
- Needs to win or be best at everything
- Tries to move near enough to the student being bullied to continue bullying—for example, the bullying student may move near enough so the student being bullied can hear remarks, be touched, or be bothered
- Vies for attention, talks loudly, waves at the driver in the mirror, or moves from seat to seat
- Watches the driver and changes seats to be near the student being bullied when the driver is at an intersection or watching the road

Visit <http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=9&eid=436>.

\*Adapted from [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov).



# Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses

## **Module 1: Handout 2**

*Note: Numbers within parentheses refer to the source of the information presented in the handout.*

### **Do Something: Dealing With Bullying Behaviors**

Bus drivers can take steps *ahead of time* to prepare themselves and their students to create a safe and positive atmosphere on the bus that may help keep bullying from happening in the first place.

*Bus Discipline: A Positive Approach* by Randall Sprick and Geoff Colvin (1992) emphasizes the following five basic rules for managing student behavior on the bus (14):

1. Be positive and professional.
2. Acknowledge responsible behavior.
3. Use consequences calmly, consistently, and immediately.
4. Provide continual supervision.
5. Anticipate and think ahead.

Bus drivers can (4, 9):

- Be up-to-date on their own school district's rules, regulations, and policies for dealing with bullying.
- Make sure all students understand a specific, easy-to-follow set of rules for entering, exiting, and riding the bus and why the rules are in place.
- Clearly establish your expectations for your students' behavior.
- Let students know that if something occurs about which they're concerned, they can quietly give you a note or communicate with you in some other way to let you know what's going on.

A bus driver's attitudes and interactions with students also can help establish a safe and positive atmosphere on the bus. Young people respond well to bus drivers who are (9):

- Firm but not tough.
- Courteous and not sarcastic.
- Equal and fair with everyone.
- Consistent.

Before problems develop, you can:

- **Anticipate what to look for before the bus is in motion:** School bus drivers in one study reported seeing discipline problems increase in the afternoon (when children are tired) and before winter and spring breaks (when children look forward to being out of school). Anticipation may help drivers be better prepared to keep a sharp eye out for potential problem times and stresses when

bullying may be more likely to occur. Post clearly a simple set of rules and reinforce them periodically. (11, 4)

- **Understand the different behaviors and needs of children of different ages:** Successful student management depends on understanding how children's minds work. Although not every child is alike, age and developmental level share certain broad characteristics. Different behavior management strategies are needed for each group. (4)
- **Learn "planned ignoring":** Know when to ignore minor irritating behavior, such as occasional bursts of loud language or minor horseplay. Sometimes children merely want to provoke an adult for fun. But—never ignore potentially dangerous behavior, such as moving from seat to seat. (4)

Students say behavior is more positive when they feel a bond between the driver and students. (6) Following are a few quick tips for developing positive connections with your students (4):

- **Get to know their names.** You may have a lot of students, but use their names when you can.
- **Greet them when they get on the bus.** This can be especially important in the afternoons when they're tired and have had a long day.
- **Be a role model.** Model responsible, safe, and mature behavior for your students. If you want respect from the kids, give it to them. If you want kids to use "please" and "thank you," use them yourself.
- **Keep your sense of humor.** The great majority of children are delightful to be around.

When bullying does occur on the bus, it is best to address it when you see it. It is not always possible or even desirable to stop the bus and deal with an incident, so try these strategies while driving only if it is safe to do so or after the bus has stopped (4, 9):

- In an even tone, give a verbal warning for the behavior to stop.
- When the bus has stopped, move the affected child to a different seat.
- Consider seat assignments in the future.
- After the bus ride, talk to the student who was bullying about his or her behavior in a nonthreatening but firm and even-handed manner. Repeat the rules for riding the bus, and make sure he or she knows the consequences for not following the rules.
- Document and report incidences as required by your school district's policies.

If a behavior escalates and you are concerned (4):

- Call your supervisor about the behavior.
- If you feel you need to stop the bus to deal with the behavior, call in to inform your supervisor.

If you must stop the bus, do so in a safe location, and then:

1. Always follow district procedures.
2. Secure the bus. Take the keys with you, for example, if you need to move around the bus.
3. Stand up and speak to the student or students involved in the bullying.

4. Change the seat of the student who was bullying and/or the student being bullied if needed.
5. Never put a student off the bus except at school or at his or her residence or school bus stop. If you feel that the offense is serious enough that you cannot safely drive the bus, call a school administrator, law enforcement, or a parent or caregiver, as appropriate, to remove the student. You may also return to the school.
6. When intervening, use caution not to challenge or provoke a student who is bullying because it may initiate further negative behavior.

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# Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses

## **Module 1: Handout 3**

Successful student management depends on understanding how children's minds work. Students are not one-size-fits-all. Of course, every child has a unique personality, but each age and developmental level share certain broad characteristics. Different behavior management strategies are needed for each group. The following are general characteristics and concerns by grade level.

### **Preschool Children**

- Cognitive level varies widely for the same-age children. Some four-year-olds are remarkably mature and can converse fluently with adults; others are still in the early toddler stage.
- Separation anxiety from parents and guardians.
- Often fall asleep on the bus ride.
- May have trouble negotiating bus steps, getting into the bus seat, and fastening safety restraints.
- Our most vulnerable population for transporting.
- Inability to see outside the bus may lead to boredom-inspired misbehaviors.
- Communication with preschoolers must be very simple and clear. Repeating safety instructions numerous times usually will be necessary.
- They can be slow—adults need to be patient.
- Try to go to the child's level when speaking—bend down so you're face-to-face.

### **Kindergartners**

- Like preschoolers, kindergartners display a wide variation in abilities and maturity; for example, on the first few days of school, some kindergartners will be fully adjusted to the school routine, and some will seem like toddlers.
- Five-year-olds have short attention spans and are easily distracted, creating danger especially when loading or unloading. Kindergartners are most susceptible to a "by-own-bus" tragedy.
- May bolt impulsively across the road when they see their parents waiting for them—be careful!
- Physiological development (vision and hearing) is limited, increasing the risk when they must interact with roadway traffic. Ability to judge vehicle speed and distance is very limited.
- Kindergartners who have been exposed to immature adults may demonstrate a distressing command of obscene language.
- Often love their bus drivers and are usually receptive to clear, well-designed safety instruction and positive reinforcement techniques.
- A warm hello and a smile mean a great deal to them!

### **Grades 1–3**

- May be overly stimulated in the bus environment; clear, simple behavior expectations are essential.
- Still enjoy school buses—still a key time to teach them safety fundamentals.
- Often still want to be liked by adults.
- Often demonstrate concrete thinking—right or wrong, no in-between.
- Some exclusion and even bullying of different, delayed, or timid peers may occur.

### **Grade 4–8**

- Becoming independent individuals.
- Great concern with peer relations—while adults' opinions still matter, they don't matter nearly as much as those of their peers. Direct challenges in front of the entire bus will often lead to face-saving and increased defiance.
- Self-conscious, awkward, unsure of themselves.
- May shun or belittle those outside the "in group." Bullying and harassment are prevalent unless adults monitor group interactions.
- Prone to illogical or even self-destructive decisions. May purposely ignore safety rules for peer attention.

### **Grade 9–12**

- Some continuation of middle school issues as they grow into adulthood.
- Further growing sense of self-identity—positive or negative.
- Badly want to be treated like adults, and behavior management is most effective when they are treated in that fashion.
- Still appreciate adult friendliness and connection in spite of outward "coolness."

Visit <http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=9&eid=436>.





# Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses

## **Module 1: Handout 4**

### **Techniques for De-escalating Student Behavior\***

Verbal de-escalation techniques are appropriate when no weapon is present. Reasoning with an enraged person is not possible. The first and only objective in de-escalation is to reduce the level of arousal so that discussion becomes possible.

It is important to appear centered and calm even when we do not feel that way. It will help to practice these techniques before they are needed so they become "second nature."

### **Maintain Control of Yourself and Your Emotions**

1. Appear calm, centered, and self-assured. This will help everyone stay calmer, too.
2. Use a modulated, low tone of voice.
3. Do not be defensive—even if the comments or insults are directed at you, they are not about you. Do not defend yourself or anyone else from insults, curses, or misconceptions about their roles.
4. Call the school, your supervisor, security, or the police if you need more help.
5. Be very respectful even when firmly setting limits or calling for help. The agitated student is very sensitive to feeling shamed and disrespected. We want him or her to know that it is not necessary to show us that they should be respected. We automatically treat them with dignity and respect.

### **Communicate Effectively Nonverbally**

1. Allow extra physical space between you and the student—about four times your usual distance. Anger and agitation can fill the extra space between you and the student.
2. Get at the same eye level and maintain constant eye contact. Allow the student to break his or her gaze and look away if they need to.
3. Do not point or shake your finger.
4. Do not touch the student—even if some touching is generally culturally appropriate and usual in your setting. It could be easy for physical contact to be misinterpreted as hostile or threatening.
5. Keep hands out of your pockets and up and available to protect yourself, and stand at an angle to the student.

## **The De-escalation Discussion**

1. Remember that there is no content except trying to calmly bring the level of arousal down to a safer place.
2. Do not get loud or try to yell over a screaming person. Wait until he or she takes a breath; then talk. Speak calmly at an average volume.
3. Respond selectively; answer only informational questions no matter how rudely asked (e.g., "Why do I have to sit here?"). Do not answer abusive questions (e.g., "Why are all bus drivers jerks?"). This question should get no response whatsoever.
4. Explain limits and rules in an authoritative, firm, but always respectful tone. Give choices where possible in which both alternatives are safe ones (e.g., "Would you like to continue our meeting calmly or would you prefer to stop now and come back tomorrow when things can be more relaxed?").
5. Empathize with feelings but not with the behavior (e.g., "I understand that you have every right to feel angry, but it is not okay for you to threaten me or other students on the bus.>").
6. Do not solicit how a person is feeling or interpret feelings in an analytical way.
7. Do not argue or try to convince.
8. Suggest alternative behaviors where appropriate (e.g., "Would you like to change seats on the bus?").
9. Give the consequences of inappropriate behavior without threats or anger.
10. Represent external controls as institutional rather than personal.

Trust your instincts. There is nothing magical about talking someone down. You are transferring your sense of calm, respectfulness, and clear limit-setting to the agitated student in the hope that he or she actually wishes to respond positively to your respectful attention. Do not be a hero and do not try de-escalation when a person has a weapon. In that case, simply cooperate.

Visit <http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=9&eid=436>.

\*Used by permission. Adapted from Skolnik-Acker, E. (2008). Verbal De-Escalation Techniques for Defusing or Talking Down an Explosive Situation. Boston: National Association of Social Workers, Massachusetts Chapter, Committee for the Study and Prevention of Violence Against Social Workers. (13)



# Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment on Our Nation's School Buses

## **Module 1: Handout 5**

### **After the Bus Run: Follow-up and Reporting**

Your responsibility does not stop when you drop a child off. As a caring professional, you may have concerns about students when a bullying incident does occur on the bus. Some questions you might ask yourself after a bullying incident could include:

- Does the young person who was bullied need attention?
- If so, should he or she be handed off to a school counselor, parent or caregiver, or other caring adult?
- Do I need to tell a waiting parent or caregiver, sibling, or other concerned adult if something has happened?
- Does the child who did the bullying need to be handed off or connected to school personnel, parent or caregiver, or other caring adult?
- How do I feel about what happened and my response to it?
- Do local district policies require filing a written report?

Your local school district's policies may require you to file discipline referrals or reports on any bullying incidences that occur on your bus. Use referrals wisely and properly (4) and follow these guidelines:

- Fill them out completely and legibly.
- Use referrals judiciously—never write up the whole bus!—and only after you have given appropriate verbal warning to the student.
- Report only what you are certain occurred.
- Avoid editorial comments ("Suzy is just like her brother! In fact, the whole family is a problem!").
- Report what you observed as accurately and specifically as possible.
- Briefly explain how the student's behavior was dangerous to himself or herself, or other students—stress the "S-word" (safety).
- Unless school policy expressly forbids it, it is best to write down the actual curse words a student said so that the principal and the parent understand exactly what happened.

You also may have a system for documenting issues to help manage student behavior or use in preparing for letters or meetings with parents, students, and school administrators. However you choose to document issues, focus on behaviors that need to change by identifying (16a):

- Patterns of behavior.

- Problem areas with individuals.
- Problem areas with groups.

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**IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS SHEET**

**Michigan School Bus Driver Training Evaluation Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Type: Beginning \_\_\_\_ Continuing Ed \_\_\_\_

Your answers to the following statements will help us improve other sessions which we are planning. Your comments are welcomed and encouraged.

.....

*Please circle the letter which best represents your assessment of this session.*

<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Key:</b>	<b>A = Agree</b>	<b>S = Sometimes</b>	<b>D =</b>
Course objectives were clear		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
Information provided was valuable		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
I understood the information presented		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
Handouts and visual aids were helpful		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
Instructor was well organized		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
Instructor was able to communicate effectively		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
Instructor showed concern and respect for me		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
The instructor's examples were helpful		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>
This course will positively impact my skills and knowledge as a school bus driver		<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>D</b>

.....  
**Comments for the instructor:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What do you consider the most useful/valuable part(s) of this training?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**What do you consider the least useful?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What other topics would you like to see included in future trainings?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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