

# CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT



## STUDENT SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK (AUGUST 2010)

### I. INTRODUCTION

This manual does not attempt to override any of the State of Alaska, Federal, Juneau School District, or local laws. It is to be used as a supplement manual to address particulars not specified in materials furnished by the agencies mentioned above.

All regulations of the Department of Education & Early Development pertaining to pupil transportation and all Alaska state laws pertaining to school bus driver licensing and school bus operation are applicable to the transportation of school children in the City and Borough of Juneau. In addition, all Juneau School District policies, regulations, and procedures governing bus transportation shall apply.

Throughout this document, the words listed below refer to those stated opposite:

Bus	School Bus
Bus Contractor	School Bus Company
District	Juneau School District
His or Him	His/Her or Him/Her
Manager	School Bus Contract Manager
Parent	Parent/Guardian
State	State of Alaska

### II. DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

The most important responsibility of all school bus drivers is to take all necessary steps, including good, defensive driving practices, to enhance the safety and well-being of their passengers, the students. The following identifies some of the responsibilities of school bus drivers and general policies and rules that are of specific concern to the District.

1. Drivers of school buses are responsible for the safety of pupils while they are on the bus, and while they are leaving the bus and crossing the road.
2. Drivers are required to enforce Board of Education policies, District rules and regulations pertaining to pupil transportation, and all State of Alaska regulations and laws pertaining to drivers.
3. The driver is the key person who generates a good atmosphere on the school bus. The driver is charged with the responsibility of maintaining order through rapport with students and the use of the rules and regulations of the District.

4. Each driver will be thoroughly reliable and of good repute, a person whom the students will respect and whose actions result in constructive influence over the pupils. Drivers must be capable of maintaining order.
5. If a bus is running late, either to or from school, the school bus driver will radio the dispatcher and give them the approximate amount of time it is running behind schedule.  
Dispatch will call the school and relay the information to them. Punctuality is one of the most effective assets in a bus driver's performance.
6. The bus driver will inform his supervisor when a bus is becoming overcrowded. Re-routing to alleviate this situation will be done through the School Bus Manager's Office in cooperation with the District's Director of Administrative Services.
7. Drivers will not leave their bus while students are on board except in an emergency situation after appointing a responsible person to be charge.
8. The speed of a school bus must at no time exceed the posted limits. Speed at all times should be adjusted to the road, weather and operating conditions, and should not exceed the legal rate of speed as may be prescribed for vehicles of similar type and wheel base by law enforcement agencies for the routes being traveled.
9. Backing any portion of the school bus across the road shall be prohibited when students are on board, unless it is the only safe course of action.
10. No driver shall leave the driver's seat without first setting the brakes and shutting off the motor. The ignition key must be removed from the lock and kept in the driver's possession, except when making emergency repairs while transporting students in severe weather.
11. When unloading students, the driver will watch and count the students debarking and make sure they are all well away from the bus before proceeding. If students have to cross the road, the driver will wait until they are gathered in a group 10-15 feet up from the front of the bus and then give them a signal that indicates it is safe to cross.
12. All doors must be kept closed while the bus is in motion.
13. Upon completion of the bus route, the bus driver will ensure that all of the students have gotten off the bus by walking to the rear of the bus while looking under seats.

### III. PUPIL CONTROL

**Disciplinary Procedures:** It is expected that bus contractors, school bus drivers, and school administrators of the District shall work closely together in establishing and maintaining disciplinary control of students who ride school buses. It is the intent of the District to maintain clear and consistent discipline procedures that will command the respect of students and provide a safe means of transportation.

Bus drivers can expect close cooperation with all transportation problems from school officials. The driver is responsible for maintaining order on the bus. Suspension is the responsibility of the principal or assistant principal where the student is enrolled. Bus drivers may not, under any circumstances, involve themselves in a physical confrontation with students, except to restrain a student from doing possible harm to himself or another person.

**Student Responsibility:** Students should be reminded that riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Students must obey rules and driver's instructions. They must sit in specific seats, if assigned.

**Student Misconduct:** Misbehavior on the bus may result in the bus driver issuing the student a "Student Management" form. Verbal warning would precede a citation for a minor infraction of rules.

### 1. **Minor Infractions**

Minor infractions would include loud and unnecessary noises, momentarily standing or quickly changing seats, feet in the aisles, turning around in seats, and similar actions. Certain offenses may result in assigned seating if not already assigned to a seat. If a student continues to be disruptive, and verbal warnings have not been effective, the driver shall file an incident report.

### 2. **Major Infractions**

Major infractions are those behaviors that are life or safety threatening and very disruptive to the bus drive, *i.e.* fighting, smoking or lighting matches, vandalism, use of a weapon, abusive language toward the driver, throwing objects, aggressive anger, repeated minor infractions and other major misbehavior. Major infractions require issuance of a “Student Management” form and could result in student suspension from bus privileges.

### 3. **Reporting Infractions**

Bus incident reports must be completed by the bus driver and submitted to dispatch before the driver leaves at the end of the day. The School Bus Manager will review the form and may refer infractions to the principal or assistant principal.

### 4. **Suspension**

Suspension from riding the bus will be administered by the principal or assistant principal. Length of bus suspension will be determined by the school administrator. Second, third and following offenses may receive progressively longer suspensions and could result in suspension for the remainder of the school year. The principal or assistant principal will notify the bus contractor of all suspensions before they begin.

### 5. **Request for Hearing**

Parents may request a hearing as a result of a suspension. Board Policy 5710, “Student Grievance,” must be followed.

### 6. **Corporal Punishment**

In compliance with Board of Education policy, **no corporal punishment shall be administered to any student.**

### 7. **Vandalism**

It shall be the responsibility of the parents to pay for damage caused to any transportation equipment due to misconduct of their children.

**Video Cameras:** Juneau School District policy authorizes the placement of video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. The policy establishes criteria when they may be used and restricts the viewing of the tapes afterwards.

### **Rules:**

**Posted Rules:** The following basic rules for student behavior will be posted in all buses.

1. Obey the driver at all times
2. Stay in assigned seats.
3. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
4. Classroom voices only.
5. No fighting, spitting, or throwing objects.

**Student Rules:** The following basic rules for student behavior are expected to be obeyed at all times.

1. Obey the school bus driver - his/her primary concern is for your safety.
2. Exercise good manners, caution and consideration for other people.
3. Students may be assigned seats by the driver.
4. Pupils may not have anything in their possession that may cause injury to another.
5. “Hookybobbying” or hanging onto any portion of the school bus from outside the school bus, whether the bus is moving or not, is illegal and dangerous.

6. Only items that can be held in the student's lap may be transported on the bus. Skateboards may not be transported on the bus.
7. Parents are responsible for damages to the school bus due to misconduct of their children.
8. No animals, large or small, of any kind are allowed on the school bus at any time.
9. In general, classroom conduct will be observed. The school bus is not a playground; save horseplay and wrestling for another time and place.
10. Place books or other gear in your lap.
11. Avoid loud talking, confusion or anything else that might distract the driver.
12. Do not sit in the driver's seat or interfere with him/her in any manner at any time.
13. Keep head, arms, and body inside the bus.
14. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus.
15. Do not chew or spit tobacco, smoke, eat, drink, or make use of, or have in your possession, alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances, on the bus.
16. Remain seated while the bus is in motion and get off only at your regular bus stop.
17. Do not open windows without permission. (Maximum opening, if permission is granted, is two (2) notches.)
18. Do not damage the bus and always assist in keeping it clean.
19. Keep feet on the floor where they belong.
20. Fighting with other students and/or attacking other students or driver is prohibited.
21. Use of abusive, vulgar language or directing such language toward other students or adults is prohibited.
22. Keep the aisle and exits clear.
23. The emergency door and exit controls may be used only during supervised drills or actual emergencies.

Any illegal substance, or suspected illegal substances, found aboard the school bus which cannot be traced back to a student or any other individual will be given to the Alaska State Troopers with a written report detailing the circumstances under which the substances were found.

While the law permits the Juneau School District to furnish transportation, it does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the day. Once a child boards the bus, and only at that time, does he/she become the responsibility of the District. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day.

**Mandatory Suspension:** The following behavior will be considered infractions of the student rules that fall under mandatory suspension of bus riding privileges.

1. Hitting or striking other students or the drivers. A "push" is not considered a fight.
2. Smoking or lighting matches/lighters.
3. Vandalism to a bus or bus equipment.
4. Abusive language towards the driver.
5. Hookybobbying.
6. Use of weapon or object that threatens safety of others.
7. Failure to remain seated, defined as leaving the seat and moving into the aisle while the bus is in motion.
8. Throwing objects that endanger the health or safety of students.
9. Under the influence or in the possession of illegal or purported controlled substances.

#### IV. TRANSPORTATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Students receiving transportation on Special Education buses will be treated according to their special needs, if any. The bus contractor should work with the Director of Student Services in determining individual needs. The driver will keep an up-to-date route listing for each student transported. The bus management will keep a copy of the route sheet on file. **Parents should notify the District of any changes in medications or other specific needs.**

Changing pick-up and drop-off locations affects all children on that bus route. If parents request a different drop-off for their child without sufficient notice, their child might have to be one of the last passengers to be dropped off. Please give as much advance notice as possible regarding proposed pick-up and drop-off location changes.

For the safety and well-being of all its students, the District uses the following criteria for determining if a special education student can ride a regular school bus without adult supervision.

1. The student will be able to demonstrate that he/she can find places within the school building such as the library and cafeteria without supervision, follow a schedule which includes a routine movement from place to place, *et cetera*.
2. The student will be able to demonstrate the ability to leave and enter school from the bus independently.
3. The student will be able to demonstrate safety skills during drills independently with no more assistance than required by other students without handicapping conditions at an age appropriate level.
4. The student is ambulatory.
5. The student does not demonstrate any seizure nor administered by medication for seizure activity.
6. The student does not demonstrate any behavioral concerns which would interfere with the safety and/or well being of other students while riding the transportation system.

Bus drivers, on buses with aides, will remain seated on the bus while the aide assists the students in boarding and disembarking unless driver assistance is necessary. Student assistance along the route will be performed by the aide. The aide should sit in a position most strategic to the safety and well-being of the students.

The bus may wait for students up to two (2) minutes depending on the circumstances or handicap. Aides and drivers are not expected to, and indeed may not, dress students, feed them, or perform any of the functions that are expected of the parent prior to the student boarding the bus. Neglect of these types should be reported to the principal or assistance principal.

Special needs students will receive curb-to-curb service when specified by the District. Drivers are to inform bus management of hazardous road conditions on private property. The bus contractor will contact the parent and request that he/she take steps to alleviate the hazard. Transportation may be temporarily suspended due to poor road maintenance. It is the bus driver's responsibility to decide if a road is too hazardous to traverse. If this should happen, the dispatcher will be notified who, in turn, will notify the parent and alternate arrangements may be made.

**The District requires that a responsible adult be visibly present at the drop-off point, usually the home, before a special education student is dropped off.** This is especially important for students with intensive needs, mental or emotional disorders, or physical challenges. If a responsible adult is not visibly present at the drop-off point, the dispatcher will be notified. The dispatcher will call a parent's work number or alternate phone number and make arrangements to transport the child to a specified point at the end of, or during, the route, whichever is most appropriate. If there is no contact made with the parents or the person specified by the parents as the alternate drop, the student will be transported back to school, if there is available supervision at the school, or to a "safe center," usually the Office of

Children's Services, as a last resort. The bus contractor will notify the Special Education Department if parents are repetitively unavailable to the scheduled time.

#### **V. BUS STOPS**

Bus stops are authorized by the District's Director of Administrative Services after careful consideration of the safety of the students, the number of students served, police department requirements, other nearby bus stops, and other federal, state, and local guidelines. On highways where the speed limit is forty (40) miles per hour or more, no bus stop will be located on a curve or hill where the visibility is not at least 500 feet. Three hundred (300) feet minimum visibility is necessary on all other roads and highways. Students are expected to board and disembark at their nearest appropriate bus stop.

#### **VI. STUDENT RELEASE AT ALTERNATE STOP**

An elementary or middle school student must have written permission from the parents and school administration before disembarking the bus at a stop other than his/her own. (There is an authorization form for this type of action/request.) Note: There must be seats available before a student can ride a bus other than his/her usual bus after school.

The practice of a student leaving the bus at school to ride in a private vehicle, without permission, is strictly forbidden. If, however, a parent attempts to board the bus to take his/her child off, the bus driver will explain the policy, but not attempt to physically stop the parent. This type of incident must be immediately reported to dispatch and the school notified. Parents may pick up their children at their designated bus stop.

#### **VII. TRANSPORTATION OF "LOST" STUDENTS**

If a student is aboard the wrong bus or failed to get off the bus in route home, he/she may be considered a "lost" student. If possible, the student should be dropped off at the normal stop after the driver finishes the route, or as soon as possible. Drivers shall notify the dispatcher as soon as it is apparent that there is a "lost" student on board. The dispatcher shall contact the parent and/or school to relay the information.

Parents will be instructed to pick the student up at the bus facility if it is not practical to take him/her to his/her normal stop. If the parents cannot be reached the designated school official(s) and/or District official(s) will be informed of the situation and what assistance is being requested.

#### **VIII. GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS**

School bus drivers should treat all students in a firm, fair, and consistent manner. Drivers are the first link that students have with their school in the morning and the last in the afternoon, making them a vital part of the school day. Drivers should know each student by name.

A school bus driver should be exceptionally considerate and courteous when driving the school bus. In actual school bus operation, the driver can create good public feelings toward the school by obeying all rules and regulations, by being timely and acting responsibly. If the driver finds that several vehicles are being help up behind him on the road due to student stops, he should locate a safe place to pull off the road until all vehicles have passed. If road conditions permit, several safe pull-offs should be located and used regularly.

Parents and students appreciate a timely bus driver. If a driver is running slightly ahead of schedule, the route should be slowed up, or paused, to make it timelier. If a bus is running behind schedule due to inclement road and/or weather conditions, or mechanical problems, it is the responsibility of the bus driver to inform the dispatcher of the delay and approximate minutes students can expect him/her to be late; in turn, the dispatcher will inform schools.

**IX. EVACUATION DRILLS**

Three (3) emergency evacuation drills are required each school year. The bus company contract manager will coordinate the drills with the schools. Each drill will resemble a real emergency as much as possible. No emergency window exits will be used during the drills. The driver will explain the drills to the students to make sure the drill is orderly and students are not hurt. Evacuation drills may cause the bus to run late for other students that day.

**X. CHANGE OF ROUTE**

Any changes in regular bus routes must be approved by the District’s Director of Administrative Services. Requests for extensions of a route or change of route that are received from parents will need to be referred to the Director of Administrative Services.

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**10014 Crazy Horse Drive**  
**Juneau, Alaska 99801**  
**Phone: (907) 523-1700**  
**Facsimile: (907) 523-1772**  
**Web Site: [juneauschools.org](http://juneauschools.org)**

**FIRST STUDENT, INC.**  
**P. O. Box 210248**  
**Auke Bay, Alaska 99821**  
**Phone: (907) 789-7352**  
**Facsimile: (907) 789-7386**

