

**STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**THE LOUISIANA
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER**

**BULLETIN 1475:
OPERATIONAL
AND
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE
PROCEDURES**

1998

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OPERATIONAL AND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most demanding jobs in a school system is that of the school bus driver. A key member of the educational team, the driver is charged with the responsibility of safely transporting diverse groups of students no matter what the conditions of traffic, roadways or weather may be. Enroute, the driver may be required to assume the role of teacher, counselor, nurse, disciplinarian or even policeman.

Meeting the daily demands of their jobs requires school bus drivers to participate in training before they become certified and throughout their tenure as school bus drivers. They must be familiar with statutes, policies, ordinances and procedures and with changes in regulations that may occur.

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide basic essentials to assist school bus drivers in their job performance. Every school bus driver--full-time, substitute and activity bus driver--should be provided a copy of Bulletin 1475 because it is the primary source of information that describes their duties as they relate to student transportation and related activities.

Additional information is contained in Louisiana Department of Education Bulletins 1191 (*School Transportation Handbook*), 1213 (*Minimum Standards for School Buses in Louisiana*) and 1886 (*Special Education Transportation Guide*); in the Louisiana Commercial Driver's License Program; in various federal and state statutes and regulations, as well as in local policies and directives. These documents should be readily available for reference by driving personnel and bus attendants (aides) who may wish to learn more about various aspects of student transportation.

I. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The transportation of school children to and from school and school-related activities in Louisiana is the responsibility of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), the State Department of Education, the local school board, and the local school superintendent. At the local level, the school board and the school superintendent rely on certain key individuals to accomplish this task in a safe, economical and efficient manner.

Roles of state and local administrators and school bus drivers are enumerated in Bulletin 1191. The roles of key local personnel who handle daily transportation functions and of parents are listed below in this bulletin, also.

A. SUPERVISOR OF TRANSPORTATION

The local supervisor of transportation is responsible to, and acts under the authority of, the local superintendent of schools. The supervisor's duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Recommends employment, suspension and/or termination of bus drivers and bus attendants.
2. Recommends prospective bus routes.
3. Recommends rules and regulations affecting school transportation.
4. Assists local school principals, bus drivers, pupils and parents in resolving transportation issues.
5. Arranges, conducts, supervises and/or monitors pre-service and inservice training of school bus drivers and bus attendants.
6. Keeps records and prepares reports relative to local school bus transportation services.

7. Investigates and reports accidents and other problems associated with pupil transportation programs.
8. Supervises and evaluates all school transportation personnel as authorized by the local system's superintendent.
9. Presents recommendations to the local superintendent on all phases of the pupil transportation program.

B. SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The principal, who has the authority of the local school board at the school level, has the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Handles all disciplinary problems referred to the school.
2. Maintains contact with drivers to handle individual transportation problems and promotes safety instruction.
3. Conducts meetings with teachers to inform them of their role in school transportation services.
4. Develops safe loading and unloading procedures for each school.
5. Provides adequate supervision for pupils whose bus schedules require them to arrive at school before classes begin and/or remain after classes terminate.
6. Collects transportation information from drivers and transmits it to the local supervisor and/or superintendent.
7. Develops and encourages classroom programs promoting safe transportation habits.
8. Conducts emergency evacuation drills as required.

9. Informs students and parents of rules and regulations adopted by the local school system.
10. Maintains verification on file that students and parents have read, understand and agree to abide by the school bus transportation rules and regulations as a condition for services being rendered.

NOTE: If any of these duties are designated to a member of the school staff, the principal is responsible for assuring that all requirements are met.

C. SCHOOL STAFF

The fundamental responsibility of teachers with respect to the school transportation program is to help develop desirable attitudes toward safety among their students, and, thereby, to ensure (to the extent possible) proper behavior when the students are passengers on the school bus. Teachers can help students recognize their own responsibilities within the school transportation program during routine daily rides, special activity trips, or during emergencies that may arise when students are on board school buses.

In order to do this, teachers must:

1. Be thoroughly familiar with local rules and regulations for the students riding the bus with particular emphasis on the school bus stop law and emergency evacuation procedures. (See Department of Education Form T-8.)
2. Provide classroom instruction in safe riding practices as directed by the principal. Such instruction should be given during the first week of each semester and periodically during the school year as needed. (See Department of Education Form T-7.)
3. Encourage their students to obey safety regulations while waiting for, boarding,

riding, unloading and moving away from the bus.

4. Maintain control of the bus loading zones during loading and unloading at their respective schools, as assigned by local school administrators.
5. Help maintain the discipline of students on field trips and while on any extra-curricular activities requiring school bus transportation.
6. Ensure that drivers are provided rosters (names and telephone numbers) of student riders before buses leave on special trips.

D. **SCHOOL BUS DRIVER**

The school bus driver has the most important role in the transportation program: daily transporting children safely to and from school. The bus driver is responsible to the parish school board, the superintendent, the transportation supervisor and the principal for all actions relating to the safe and efficient handling of the bus.

Duties and responsibilities require the bus driver to:

1. Have concern for the **SAFETY** of the children. (Bus drivers are morally, as well as legally, responsible for safely transporting children, using every precaution for maximum protection.)
2. Conduct thorough pre-trip, enroute and post-trip checks on the vehicle and its special equipment.
3. Know the policies of the school board concerning transportation.
4. Know state and local traffic laws and ordinances governing motor vehicle operation.
5. Participate in all required meetings, conferences and training courses to improve transportation skills.

6. Ensure proper care, repair and inspection of the bus.
7. Complete and submit required reports within specified time lines.
8. Be punctual and reliable in the operation of assigned routes.
9. Avoid the use of alcohol, tobacco, obscene language and narcotic drugs at all times when on the bus. (Drug-free school zone regulations must be followed.)
10. Maintain orderly conduct of passengers and ensure to the extent possible that passengers follow all local and state rules and regulations.
11. Maintain good public relations between school and home.
12. Notify the Supervisor of Transportation of all convictions of moving violations, in accordance with Louisiana Commercial Driver's Licensing regulations. (See sample form, Appendix E.)

E. PARENT/GUARDIAN

Parents should understand their responsibility in working with the bus driver and school system personnel for the welfare and safety of their children. Also, emphasis should be placed on the problems involved with safe transportation and the extent of responsibility placed on bus drivers who are transporting their children.

Responsibilities of parents and guardians require them to:

1. Be familiar with and follow local board and school level policies for school bus transportation.
2. Have children ready and at their designated

pickup points along the route.

3. Cooperate with the school and the bus driver in teaching children safety precautions and good manners and habits for school bus passengers.
4. Assist when there are disciplinary problems.
5. Provide supervisory assistance at the home bus stop as necessary to ensure the safety of children.
6. Help to maintain safe passage along roadways by keeping vehicles, debris, etc. out of lanes of traffic or away from loading and unloading zones.

II. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

All school bus drivers must fulfill certification requirements approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Certification requirements fall into three main time categories: initial (or first time), annual and biannual. Requirements in these categories are as follows:

A. INITIAL CERTIFICATION

1. Age: 21 years minimum
2. Criminal record check (fingerprinting) required
3. Driving record check
4. Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
 - a. Issued by state of residence
 - b. Type B recommended
 - c. Passenger endorsement required
 - d. Air brakes authorization (may be required)
5. Physical examination
6. Drug screening
7. Pre-service training--classroom (30 hrs.)
 - a. First aid course
 - b. Defensive driving course
 - c. School bus driver course
 - d. State/local laws, policies and procedures
 - e. Transporting students with special needs
 - f. Passenger management and discipline procedures
 - g. Other topics listed in Bulletin 1191
8. Pre-service training--on bus (10 hrs.)

B. **ANNUAL CERTIFICATION**

1. Driving record check
2. Current Commercial Driver's License with appropriate endorsements and/or authorizations
3. Physical examination
4. Random drug and alcohol testing

C. **BIANNUAL CERTIFICATION**

1. Eight-hour inservice training*

Additional requirements may include psychophysical examination, periodic safety meetings, annual local training and other activities conducted by local school districts.

Detailed information regarding certification requirements is listed in Sections III and IV, Bulletin 1191.

*(Local school districts may elect to hold annual inservice training instead of biannual training.)

III. VEHICLE INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

Proper inspection and maintenance of school vehicles is vital for a safe, efficient and economical transportation program. Each local school system shall adhere to the following procedures:

1. All school buses must be maintained in safe operating condition through a systematic preventive maintenance program.
2. All school buses must be inspected during the months of June, July or August and certified as safe by the appropriate authority prior to the beginning of each school session. (Re-inspection or more frequent inspections of buses may be made by the local school system.)
3. All school buses must be inspected by an approved Louisiana Motor Vehicle Inspection Station during December, January or February of each school year.
4. Accurate maintenance records must be kept for each school bus.
5. School bus drivers (including substitutes and activity bus drivers) must conduct pre-trip inspections before beginning each trip, whether morning, mid-day, afternoon or evening. Inspection must include:
 - a. Windshield wipers and washer
 - b. Engine compartment: battery, wiring, fluid levels, belts, hoses, radiator, etc.
 - c. All lights
 - d. Exhaust system and a check for any pools of oil or other fluids under the bus
 - e. Tires and wheels
 - f. Emergency door and buzzer and service door (check for manual locks)
 - g. Mirrors

- h. All gauges
 - i. All emergency equipment: first aid kit, fire extinguisher, reflector kit with three (3) reflectors, spare electrical fuses
 - j. All glass (windows, door panels, etc.)
 - k. Seats
 - l. Brakes
 - m. Stop arms
 - n. All interior lights
 - o. Cleanliness
 - p. Security of fuel filler cap
 - q. Back-up alarms, crossing arms, wheel chair lifts and other special equipment, if applicable
 - r. All other items required by the Louisiana CDL program.
6. Any defects or deficiencies in the areas listed above that may affect the safety of the vehicle's operation or result in mechanical breakdowns must be reported verbally and in writing to the proper authorities (and approval must be granted by the proper authorities if the bus is to continue without appropriate repairs).
7. A written report shall be made at the completion of each trip or tour of duty regarding any defect, deficiency, malfunction or questionable performance of school vehicles.

A sample pre-trip inspection checklist is provided in Appendix A. This, or a checklist designed by the local school district, must be completed by drivers of all school buses (including activity buses and spare buses) and maintained in the vehicle until it is filed with the local Transportation Office.

Included in the pre-trip check should be an inventory of required documents: commercial driver's license, D.O.T. physical verification, proof of vehicle insurance, copy of vehicle registration, student roster, seating chart, route description and stop locations (for daily routes), emergency telephone numbers, accident report forms, etc.

Bus drivers are reminded that, in accordance with the Commercial Driver's License program requirements, inspections

are not limited to pre-trip inspections. Enroute (during the trip) and post-trip (after the trip) inspections are required. (Local school districts may provide reporting forms for these inspections.) One of the most important items in a post-trip check, of course, is to look throughout the bus for **students** who may have remained on board. It is possible that a student may fall asleep on the seat or even be lying on the floor between seats.

The post-trip inspection is also an opportunity for the driver to check for damage to the bus, for weapons, for litter, for personal belongings of students, etc. This inspection can be performed as the driver walks through the bus, securing it before the next run.

IV. VEHICLE OPERATION

Specific procedures have been developed to ensure the highest possible degree of safety for school bus drivers and their passengers. The operational procedures described in this section have proved to be successful not only in Louisiana, but also in other states. No matter how sound they are, however, they will be successful only if each bus driver is focused on the specific operational task at hand.

A. LOADING AND UNLOADING

1. The bus driver assumes a position behind the wheel before the first child boards and remains seated until the last child is discharged, except for approved loading and unloading of students with disabilities.
2. As required in R.S. 32:318, red flashing warning signals must be used for student loading and unloading. **At no other time are these lights to be used.**
3. The bus driver will select a safe stopping point within local school board guidelines, even if this requires children to walk a distance.
4. For buses equipped with a red four-light flashing warning system, drivers must activate the system at least 100 feet but not more than 500 feet before coming to a stop on the roadway. The lights must continue flashing for children to board, alight and/or cross roadways.
5. For buses equipped with an amber and red eight-light flashing warning system, drivers must activate the amber flashing lights at least 100 feet but not more than 500 feet

- before coming to a stop. Red flashing warning lights must be activated when the bus is stopped and must continue flashing while children board, alight and/or cross roadways.
6. The bus must stop in the right traffic lane, or the local school system has the option to permit loading and unloading on the shoulder of the road (when sufficient room exists on the shoulder or on adjacent state property) or on private property, when permission can be obtained from the owner and when no children are required to cross the highway to load or unload. (Off-road loading and unloading negates the effectiveness of flashing lights and stop arm signals. See also R.S. 32:80.)
 7. Buses shall not stop within intersections to pick up or discharge passengers.
 8. The bus driver must activate stop arms after the bus has stopped and before students are permitted to board or alight from the bus. The Louisiana "School Bus Stop Law" (R.S. 32:80) requires drivers of vehicles meeting or overtaking school buses stopped on a highway to load or unload students to stop the vehicle not less than 30 feet from the school bus when flashing warning lights and stop arms have been activated and to remain stopped until the signals have been deactivated and the bus has resumed motion. (Bus drivers must deactivate signals before resuming motion.)
 9. The bus driver must ascertain that traffic has stopped and only then open the door for entrance or exit of pupils.
 10. Before crossing to the opposite side of the road, children must walk 10 to 15 feet in front of the bus on the shoulder of the roadway, checking the traffic and then crossing when it is safe to do so. (See Appendix F.) **AT NO TIME SHOULD CHILDREN CROSS THE ROAD BEHIND THE SCHOOL BUS.** Children who must walk parallel to the bus should walk approximately ten feet from the side of the

bus where space permits. Where space does not permit such a distance, the bus driver must determine that passengers are clear of the bus before setting the bus in motion.

11. The bus driver must allow all passengers to reach their respective seats before placing the bus in motion after passengers have boarded the bus.
12. As the bus approaches a bus stop for passenger unloading, all passengers must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and the bus driver has determined that it is safe for passengers to walk to the front of the bus and to exit.
13. The bus driver should be especially watchful for clothing, book bags, knapsacks or other carry-on items that can be caught in the handrail or the bus door, thereby possibly causing student injury. The bus driver should always scan the area around the bus door before placing the bus in motion at bus stops.
14. Emergency doors shall not be used for routine student loading and unloading.
15. The school bus shall not be operated on school grounds except to pick up and discharge students or during student safety instruction exercises, but then only when students are carefully supervised.

B. RAILROAD CROSSINGS

1. The driver of any school bus, with or without pupils, shall come to a complete stop no closer than 15 feet but within 50 feet of the rail nearest the front of the bus.
2. Drivers making stops for railroad crossings shall observe traffic. Bus speed shall be reduced far enough in advance of the stop to

avoid trapping other motorists in panic stops or rear-end collisions with the bus. On multiple lane roadways, the bus should stop in the right lane whenever possible.

3. Turn signal lights may be operated in their **hazard mode** except when prohibited by state statute or local regulation. Except for hazard lights and brake lights, no other school bus signals will be activated for the railroad crossing.
4. When the bus has stopped, the driver shall fully open the service door, listen and look in both directions along the track or tracks for approaching engines, trains or train cars.
5. For improved vision and hearing, the window at the driver's left and the service door should be opened, and all noisy equipment (radios, fans, etc.) should be turned off and should remain turned off until the bus has safely cleared the crossing.
6. When any school bus must stop for any railroad track at grade, all pupils must be silent until the crossing is completed. Such signal for silence shall be given by the school bus driver.
7. If the view of the tracks is obstructed for 1,000 feet or less in either direction, no portion of the bus may be driven onto the tracks until the driver has made certain that no train is approaching. Although railroad signals may indicate the tracks are clear, the driver must develop and use visual and audible senses to determine whether or not it is safe to proceed.
8. The school bus driver shall always drive across the tracks in an appropriate low gear and not change gears while crossing the tracks.
9. After a train has passed the crossing on

multiple tracks, the bus driver shall not drive the bus onto any track until the driver is certain that no train (possibly hidden by the first train) is approaching on an adjacent track.

10. The driver of a school bus that has stopped at any railroad track or tracks at which any flashing red lights and/or bells have been activated shall not proceed across such tracks unless by authorization from a law enforcement officer or a railroad flagman.
11. At crossings controlled by traffic signals, the bus driver shall obey the traffic signals.
12. No bus driver shall drive the bus through, around or under any crossing gate or barrier at a railroad crossing while such gate or barrier is closed or is being opened or closed.
13. The bus driver must never accept a lack of movement as an indication that the device is working or is out of order. A bus driver must always consider a railroad grade crossing as conclusive warning of danger and shall not cross the track until the bus driver has determined that no train is approaching.
14. During wet, stormy or foggy weather, before placing part of the bus on the tracks, the bus driver must know that the crossing can be made safely. Any use of flares or warning signals must be taken as an additional warning of danger.

C. INTERSECTIONS

1. Use only brake lights as signals when coming to a stop.
2. For buses equipped with standard transmissions, place the gearshift in neutral while waiting for the traffic to clear or for the traffic light to change to green.

3. Use the hand ("parking") brake if on a grade to prevent rolling backward or forward. (Being in neutral gear prevents the bad practice of "slipping" the clutch to keep the bus from rolling and, with the hand brake engaged, may prevent the bus from plowing into another vehicle in case of a rear-end collision.)
4. When approaching an intersection not controlled by stop or yield signs or signal lights, and at controlled intersections where the school bus has the right of way, the driver should remove his right foot from the accelerator and allow it to cover the brake pedal until the bus has cleared the intersection or until there is no danger of a collision. (This will reduce the time required to react in case of an emergency.)
5. School buses should not stop within intersections to pick up or to discharge passengers.

D. TURNS

1. Always activate turn signals at least 100 feet before beginning the turning maneuver.
2. Keep the bus as far right as possible for right turns to prevent other vehicles from passing on the right of the bus.
3. For left turns, keep the bus as close to the center line as possible. If two left turn lanes are designated, stay in the outside lane if possible to provide better visibility and a wider turning area.
4. Keep front wheels pointing forward until it is safe to make the turn. This will help to prevent the bus from being knocked into oncoming traffic in the event of a rear-end collision.

E. DRIVING SPEEDS

1. Never drive faster than legal speeds on highways, on city streets, in school zones, etc. R.S. 32:62 sets the maximum speed at 35 miles per hour under conditions that require frequent stops to receive and discharge students when the posted speed is 35 miles per hour or greater. At no time shall a school bus be operated in excess of 55 miles per hour, including interstate highway travel.
2. In curves, on hills, highway entrance and exit ramps, etc., the posted speed is set for automobiles; therefore, school buses should reduce speed below posted speeds.

F. INTERSTATE DRIVING

Interstate driving is particularly dangerous because of the high rate of speed involved. For this reason it is important that school buses use the right lane except for passing, for exiting to the left, or for hazardous conditions. The following procedures will make a safer interstate driver:

1. When changing lanes,
 - a. Check rear and side view mirrors;
 - b. Check blind spots by looking toward the rear over each shoulder;
 - c. Activate the turn signal;
 - d. When conditions are favorable, move smoothly and safely into the next lane, maintaining a safe distance (4 seconds or more) behind the vehicle in front;
 - e. When passing another vehicle, after following the above procedures and when the passed vehicle is visible, signal again and move smoothly into the right lane.
2. Maintain a following distance of 4 seconds or more.

3. Drive at speeds appropriate for traffic conditions but not more than 55 miles per hour.
4. Posted ramp speeds, as indicated previously, apply to automobiles. Reduce school bus speed to accommodate all necessary maneuvers.

G. **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Passengers should be reminded of safe riding practices, especially of remaining seated and keeping hands, arms and heads inside the bus.
2. All standing is prohibited. At no time may a rider stand while the bus is in motion. In compliance with R.S. 32:293, it shall be unlawful for anyone responsible for the transportation of children to permit a number of children exceeding one hundred percent (100%) capacity of a bus to be transported at one time. (School bus capacity is determined by the bus body manufacturer.)
3. Drivers should constantly scan the interior of the bus as well as the areas ahead, to the sides and to the rear of the bus.
4. The bus must never be fueled while passengers are on board or while the engine is running.
5. Drivers are required to wear seat belts and other safety devices provided by the bus manufacturer at all times while the bus is in motion.
6. Drivers shall not leave their buses while passengers are on board unless there is an extreme emergency. If an emergency requires the driver to leave the bus, the engine must be stopped and the ignition key removed by the driver.
7. While the engine is running, the driver shall not leave the bus **at any time when passengers are on board.** When the bus is empty, the

driver should not leave the bus when the engine is running except when inspecting, servicing or repairing the bus requires the driver to do so. (Note: Drivers of special needs buses who must assist in the loading and unloading of passengers in wheel chairs are not considered to have left the bus so long as they remain on or beside the bus to assist with the loading or unloading, itself.)

8. The service (entrance) door and the emergency exit door(s) must remain closed at all times while the bus is in motion.
9. Buses should not be backed except in situations where there is no safer alternative. On school grounds, especially, backing should be avoided. If necessary, re-routing, improving loading/unloading areas or other measures must be taken to eliminate the hazard of backing the bus. If there is no safe alternative to backing, these warnings should be heeded:
 - a. Back while students are on board. If backing is required when students are being picked up, pick them up and THEN back the bus. If students are being dropped off, back the bus and THEN drop them off.
 - b. Arrange for assistance during backing maneuvers. A responsible person should be positioned to the rear of the bus at the passenger's side to signal to the driver. All signals must be agreed upon before backing begins, but the most important signal is STOP!
10. Headlights must be turned on whenever it is necessary to use windshield wipers.

V. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Safety is the key word for school transportation in Louisiana. The most important obligation shared by all persons involved in school transportation is their collective responsibility for the prevention of accidents, especially accidents involving school bus passengers.

Most school bus accidents occurring in Louisiana are related by one or more factors. These are reminders that accidents can happen at any time, even when most conditions appear to be favorable for safe driving:

- A. Most school bus accidents occur while school bus drivers are distracted or inattentive to traffic or roadway conditions. This fact points out the need for each driver to concentrate on driving and, therefore, to maintain discipline on the bus.
- B. Most school bus accidents occur on dry improved roadways. Drivers may have a tendency to relax safety efforts when road conditions are favorable, but they should be just as attentive when driving on dry roads with hard surfaces as they are when driving on muddy gravel or dirt roads.
- C. Most school bus accidents occur during clear weather. Drivers may have a tendency to relax safety efforts also when weather conditions are not adverse; but they should be just as attentive when driving in clear weather as they are when driving in rain, fog or other adverse weather conditions.
- D. Most school bus accidents occur during the afternoon hours, when bus drivers may become tired and tend to be in more of a hurry to reach their destinations. Students, also, may be tired and restless; thus, discipline may be more of a problem than in the morning. Other motorists may be tired and hurrying as well. Bus drivers should be especially attentive and prepared to drive defensively during this time.

Breakdowns may contribute to collisions if disabled school buses are not removed from roadways and secured in safe off-road locations. It is essential for the bus driver to take precautionary action at the scene of a breakdown or a vehicle accident to minimize additional risk and to ensure the safety of uninjured passengers.

These are important procedures to follow and points to remember:

- A. Remain calm.
- B. Secure the bus.
 1. Activate hazard warning lights.
 2. Set the parking brake and shift the transmission into the appropriate gear.
 3. Stop the engine and turn off the ignition switch, unless the ignition switch must be on to operate a two-way radio or public address system, if the bus is so equipped. All other equipment (heater and defroster fans, AM/FM radio, etc.) should be turned off to prevent unnecessary drain on the battery.
- C. Send for help. If a bus attendant (aide) or a chaperon is present, send the attendant or chaperon; otherwise, request a passerby to call for help. In the absence of another party, remain at the scene, and send two responsible student passengers to the nearest telephone to seek assistance.
- D. Decide whether or not to evacuate the bus. Evacuate if any of these conditions exist:
 1. Presence of fire or toxic fumes;
 2. Danger of fire;
 3. Unsafe position of the bus;
 4. Hazardous weather conditions.
- E. If evacuation is ordered, follow these procedures:
 1. Use the exit farthest from danger.
 2. Use the service (front) door when time and conditions permit in order to minimize injury

- during evacuation.
3. Use both the service door and the emergency exit(s) if time is a factor.
 4. If the bus is equipped with emergency exit windows and/or roof-top emergency escape hatches, use them only when the service door and/or the emergency exit door are not adequate to evacuate students safely.
 5. Enlist the assistance of responsible students for the evacuation process.
 6. Remove the first aid kit and keep it with the passengers.
 7. Move passengers to a safe location approximately 100 feet from the danger zone.
- F. Apply first aid if required, and especially if any of these conditions exist:
1. Blocked airway or stoppage of breathing;
 2. Severe bleeding;
 3. Shock;
 4. Fractures.
- G. Secure the area.
1. In the event of a collision, move the bus only if there is a danger of fire or further collision or if ordered to do so by a law enforcement officer or a supervisor.
 2. Place reflective triangles or flares as required if the vehicle is expected to be disabled for more than ten (10) minutes. (Never use flares where fuel or chemical spillage or other conditions may cause a fire.)
 - a. If the bus is stalled in the forward lane of travel or on the shoulder nearest the forward lane of travel on a straight, flat undivided roadway, place one triangle approximately 10 feet to the rear on the traffic side of the bus. Place a second triangle approximately 100 feet to the rear and the third triangle approximately 100 feet ahead of the bus. If the disabled bus is stopped near a

curve, a hill or another hazardous area, extend the second and/or third reflective triangles farther. (If the bus is stopped in the lane opposite the forward lane of travel or on the shoulder of the opposite lane of travel, the reflector marking the location of the bus should be placed approximately 10 feet from the front, instead of the rear, of the bus.)

- b. On a divided or one-way roadway, position the first and second reflective triangles as indicated above. Place the third triangle behind the bus, approximately 100 feet beyond the second triangle.

- H. Notify appropriate authorities, including the Supervisor of Transportation, as soon as possible.

- I. In the event of a collision or other accident, be extremely cautious of what you say and to whom. **DO NOT ADMIT FAULT TO ANYONE AT THE SCENE!** State only the facts as you know them to be. Stay out of earshot of others to discuss the situation with the Supervisor of Transportation or another school system official.

- J. Obtain names, addresses and telephone numbers of witnesses and of drivers of other vehicles involved. Write down driver's license numbers (if available) and vehicle license numbers of drivers and vehicles involved in the collision.

- K. Indicate on the school bus seating chart all passengers, where they were seated at the time of the accident and any injuries that were sustained by the passengers.

- L. Follow up as required in meetings with school system officials, filling out records and reports (including SR-10 and the Uniform School Bus Accident Report Form) as required. (**SEE APPENDIX C.**)

Bus drivers should be certain that emergency telephone numbers, a roster with names and telephone numbers of all

student passengers and necessary forms are carried on the bus at all times. Before leaving for "special" trips (field trips, athletic trips, etc.), the bus driver must be provided with a roster of student and adult passengers. Every school principal should clearly explain this requirement to school staff.

VI. STUDENT INSTRUCTION

Because of the increasing number of pupils being transported and the ever increasing number of accidents on the highways, there is a need to instruct pupils on safe riding practices and on proper evacuation of a school bus in case of an emergency. Students in headstart, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and primary grades and students with disabilities, along with students who only occasionally ride school buses (field trips, etc.), require more frequent reinforcement than do more experienced riders.

At least twice during the school session, intensive classroom instruction must be given on safe riding practices. This instruction must be presented once during the first 6 weeks of each semester and coordinated to involve bus drivers, bus attendants, teachers and principals. Once the instruction has been completed, the principal must complete Form T-7, certifying that the instruction has been performed and must submit the form to the local Transportation Supervisor.

Instruction must include, but is not limited to, the following topics:

1. Student behavior at bus stops and while on board the bus;
2. Identifying individuals who have authority over passengers;
3. Passenger loading and unloading procedures;
4. Seat assignments;
5. Acceptable and unacceptable conduct on the bus;
6. Keeping the bus clean;
7. Care of the bus and its equipment;

8. Emergency procedures, including evacuation drills;
9. Meeting the bus, waiting for the bus, leaving the area after unloading;
10. All other local and state rules and regulations.

In an emergency, it is possible for passengers to jam the emergency exit(s) by all trying to get out of the bus at the same time. Exits must be orderly for the safety and well being of all passengers. Emergency evacuation drills are required for ALL students (even occasional riders) who may ride a school bus.

One emergency exit drill must be held during the first six (6) weeks of each school semester. More frequent drills may be necessary for younger students and students with disabilities to help them overcome the fear of an emergency, of jumping from the rear emergency exit of the bus, etc. The evacuation procedure is presented in Appendix B.

These guidelines are offered to assist with conducting safe, efficient drills:

1. Have a written policy covering the drills.
2. Obtain permission in advance from school officials to hold drills. The principal (or designee) should be available to coordinate and assist with the drills.
3. Practice drills on school grounds, during school hours, in a safe place and under supervision.
4. Allow for individual differences in jumping out of the rear emergency exit. Helpers should be instructed to offer a helping hand (palm up) and to avoid grasping the passenger's hand or arm. (Passengers will hold on if they need to.)
5. Time each drill and record the times.
6. Practice exiting the bus through the service (front) door, the rear emergency exit and both simultaneously.

7. Complete Form T-8 and give it to the Principal (or designee) or send it to the Supervisor of Transportation as instructed.

Student helpers can be valuable assistants in times of emergency, especially if the driver is incapacitated and unable to direct emergency procedures at the scene of an emergency and no trained adult is available to assist. If student helpers are included in the emergency plan, they should be responsible, should be regular riders and should live near the end of the bus route. Written parental consent should be obtained by the driver before students are designated for this purpose.

Designated students should be taught these basic procedures:

1. How to turn off the ignition switch;
2. How to set the parking brake;
3. How to summon help;
4. How to direct emergency exits;
5. How to set emergency reflective markers;
6. Under what conditions they are authorized to take action and what action they are to take.

The bus driver should perform all these functions when possible and should use student helpers only to help with orderly evacuations except when the driver is unable to direct the operation personally.

VII. SCHOOL BUS ROUTES

The primary responsibility for establishing and continuing school bus routes rests with the local school board. Local school boards are responsible for maintaining safe, efficient, economical school transportation programs by establishing and continuing only those routes that are needed to assure timely arrivals and departures within the framework of established school hours; by designing routes to achieve maximum utilization of buses and the elimination of unnecessary and duplicated mileage; and by consolidating and eliminating bus routes when they are no longer needed.

School bus routes must be designed so that they begin at the farthest point from the school or schools served and proceed on the shortest charted course. Exceptions may exist when local school officials determine it is more economical to do otherwise and/or when there are hazardous conditions.

School bus routes are measured in terms of "one-way mileage." Paid one-way mileage for contract drivers begins when the first child is picked up and ends when the final destination or school is reached. When one-way mileage differs in the afternoon from that of the morning route, the one-way mileage for the morning and the afternoon routes is totalled and divided by two. The result is the average one-way daily mileage for that particular route.

The term **route** shall apply to the combined total daily trips (or "runs") regularly assigned to the bus driver.

VIII. PASSENGER MANAGEMENT

Driver distraction is a major cause of school bus accidents. More often than not, distraction is caused by student misbehavior on board the school bus or at the bus stop. The school bus is safe only when **all** passengers are conducting themselves properly and the driver is able to concentrate on driving.

These are rules of passenger conduct printed in Bulletin 1191:

1. Cooperate with the driver; your safety depends on it.
2. Be on time; the bus will not wait.
3. Cross the road cautiously when waiting for and leaving the bus.
4. Follow the driver's instructions when loading and unloading.
5. Remain quiet enough not to distract the driver.
6. Have written permission and be authorized by the principal to get off at a stop other than your own.
7. Do not stand when the bus is in motion.
8. Do not extend arms, head or other objects out of windows and doors.
9. Do not throw objects in the bus nor out of windows and doors.
10. Use the emergency exit(s) only in an emergency and when authorized to do so.
11. Do not eat or drink on the bus.

12. Do not use or possess tobacco, matches, cigarette lighters, obscene materials, weapons or other prohibited items on the bus.
13. No objects are allowed on the bus if prohibited by state or federal law or local school board policies.
14. Do not damage the bus in any way.
15. Be courteous and safety-conscious; protect your riding privilege; enjoy your ride.

These rules of conduct should provide a basis for each driver to teach passengers how they must behave in order to enjoy the privilege of riding the school bus. For some students, the number of rules may have to be reduced and the language simplified so that they can understand them. Periodically, every driver should review safe riding practices with passengers.

Passenger management is the direct responsibility of every bus driver. At times it may be necessary for the bus driver to enlist the assistance of parents, school officials or the Supervisor of Transportation. Most successful bus drivers handle most situations before they get out of hand. Their success is attributed to these basic factors:

1. Successful drivers, themselves, follow rules.
2. Successful drivers communicate rules of conduct clearly to passengers.
3. Successful drivers are able to solve most problems that arise on their buses.
4. Successful drivers are flexible but firm.

The following "do's" and "don'ts" will help you to be a successful driver:

DO'S:

1. Do get to know your passengers and call them by name.
2. Do control your emotions; always be courteous, even under adverse conditions.
3. Do be a friendly authority, a responsible role model.
4. Do keep rules to a minimum, but consistently enforce all rules.
5. Do **teach** passengers proper school bus conduct.
6. Do develop a good relationship with school administrators.
7. Do involve parents, if necessary, to enforce rules of conduct.
8. Do address problems before they get out of hand.
9. Do be enthusiastic and show a sincere interest in students' interests.
10. Do be consistent.

DON'TS:

1. Don't say anything to students you would not say to parents or other adults.
2. Don't humiliate a student, especially in the presence of his peers.
3. Don't make **idle** threats. ("Say what mean and do what you say you're going to do.")
4. Don't dispense group punishment.

5. Don't be a "yeller" or a "screamer."
6. Don't argue with passengers; be assertive.
7. Don't see and hear everything.
8. Don't become overly familiar with students.
9. Don't question the authority of others in front of students. Instead, question authority, if you care to, in the proper setting.
10. Don't be afraid to apologize.

School bus drivers are urged to try to handle problems directly with students involved. The next step is to involve parents and then school officials if necessary. Following these steps helps students to understand that, indeed, the school bus driver is the "Captain of the Ship."

If the school bus driver finds it necessary to report student conduct to a school official for assistance in resolving a behavioral problem, the form provided in Appendix D must be used. Failure to use the Behavior Report form will result in the school official not being able to support the bus driver in handling the problem in a timely, effective manner. This form has been adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for use by all school districts in Louisiana. Copies of the form are available through each local school district office.

IX. BASIC FIRST AID PRINCIPLES

School bus drivers in Louisiana are required to participate in first aid training so that they can be prepared to respond to emergencies that may occur on their bus routes. Knowing how to apply basic first aid techniques to a passenger who becomes ill or is injured can literally save a life.

This section is included in the Bulletin not as a replacement for the comprehensive first aid course, but rather as a ready reference for drivers. Emphasis is placed on a few basic procedures to help the driver to respond to emergencies until trained professionals can take over treatment, either at the scene or after victims have been transferred to a medical facility.

Three steps should be taken initially: (1)**check**, or evaluate, the scene and any victim; (2)**call** for help if appropriate, and (3)**care for the victims**. The first step, "check," is an evaluation...

- ! Of the scene;
- ! Of types of injuries;
- ! Of needs for immediate attention.

A. CHECK, OR EVALUATION OF THE SCENE

Some situations require high priority action. For example, at an accident scene if there is danger of fire, explosion, toxic fumes, collisions or other cause of further injury, the first priority is to move everyone from the threat of danger. This means foregoing first aid treatment initially. Only after all passengers are safe should first aid be administered. (See SECTION V: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.)

When passengers are safely removed (or if no threat of danger exists), the bus driver must initiate treatment. This is done by assessing the victims and setting priorities for treatment.

If assistance is required, the bus driver should summon help by whatever means may be available as soon as possible. (SEE SECTION V: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.)

B. CHECK, OR EVALUATION OF VICTIMS AT THE SCENE

Evaluating victims of illness or injury is a very important step. An initial check will help isolate specific problems: blocked airway or stoppage of breathing, severe bleeding, shock--the three most critical injuries that require prompt attention. If the victim is conscious, ask questions in an effort to determine the extent of injuries or the nature of the illness. If the victim is unconscious, use approved methods of checking for breathing, for bleeding, for fractures or other injuries. During the check, look for medical alert tags that may give a clue as to what might be wrong and the treatment required.

1. Blocked Airways or Stoppage of Breathing

If the victim is conscious, the airway may be open; however, the victim may be choking and can lose consciousness if the obstruction is not removed. Check for breathing difficulties that might need attention. If the victim is unconscious, check for breathing for approximately five seconds: look for the chest to rise and fall, listen for breathing and feel for air coming from the victim's mouth and nose. Check, also, for a pulse. (If necessary to check breathing, turn the victim on his back.

Most victims can be saved if breathing can be resumed (naturally or artificially) within two minutes. If the victim is not breathing but has a pulse, begin rescue breathing procedures. If the victim has no pulse, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is required. (See "TREATMENT OF VICTIMS," this Section.)

2. Severe Bleeding

Victims who are hemorrhaging can be dead in less than two minutes. Look for blood-soaked clothing and for open wounds with profuse bleeding. Try to determine the type of bleeding and the amount of

blood lost. Learn to recognize these types of external bleeding:

- a. Capillary Oozing: a steady ooze of dark-colored blood.
- b. Venous Bleeding: a flow of dark-colored blood.
- c. Arterial Bleeding: bright red blood, flowing swiftly in spurts or jets.

When evaluating the severity of bleeding, remember that blood flowing in a heavy stream or in large spurts indicates a serious condition, and you must attempt to bring it under control immediately.

3. Shock

Shock occurs when the circulatory system does not carry oxygen to all parts of the body. Vital body functions are depressed, and death may result without proper medical treatment. The three most common causes of severe shock are inadequate breathing, excessive bleeding and un-splinted fractures.

Shock is easily recognized. The victim's skin is pale and clammy, with small drops of sweat, particularly around the lips and forehead. The person may complain of nausea and dizziness, the pulse may be fast and weak and the breathing may be shallow and irregular. The eyes may be dull, with enlarged pupils. The victim may be unconscious or unaware of the seriousness of the injury and, then, may suddenly collapse. Restlessness and irritability may be noted.

4. Fractures, strains, sprains

Ask the conscious victim to describe the nature of the injury. Check from head to toe (toe to head for children) and observe swelling, discoloration, limply hanging limbs or other notable indications of injury. Check the unconscious victim (after administering essential emergency aid, such as rescue breathing) by feeling the extremities, from

head to toe. Care should be taken to avoid unnecessary movement of the head, neck and back during this procedure.

The bus driver should wear latex gloves and otherwise protect against the spread of germs during the check and the care activities.

C. CALL FOR HELP, IF NECESSARY

The nature of the emergency will dictate whether or not emergency assistance is required; however, if the emergency is of a medical nature and there is any doubt in the mind of the driver, seek help immediately.

If there is no two-way communication available on the bus, a passer-by may be able to assist by using a portable telephone or an automobile telephone or by going to a nearby telephone to call. It is important for the bus driver to provide concise, clear information for the caller: the nature of the emergency, the location of the school bus, how many passengers are in need of assistance, whether or not the driver needs assistance, whether a tow truck is needed, and any other information that will be of assistance to the responders to the emergency.

If in doubt, don't hesitate; call for help!

D. CARE, OR TREATMENT OF VICTIMS

With the initial check having been completed, action must be taken to attend to any life-threatening situations that may exist. Victims' needs next must be prioritized for treatment as follows:

- " Stoppage of breathing/blockage of airway;
- " Severe bleeding;
- " Shock;
- " Fractures and less urgent injuries (secondary check).

1. MAINTENANCE OF AIRWAY AND RESPIRATION

Airways must be maintained so as to remain open. If the victim is having a breathing problem, rescue breathing must begin as soon as possible after natural breathing has been interrupted, or when natural breathing is so irregular or so shallow as to be ineffective. Rescue breathing is a method of getting air into and out of a victim's lungs until the victim can breathe without assistance.

Rescue breathing is performed in this manner:

- a. If the victim is not lying on his back, turn the victim as one unit so that he is lying on his back.
- b. Open the victim's mouth and remove any obvious obstructions with a finger sweeping motion.
- c. Tilt the victim's head back by lifting on the chin and pressing on the forehead.
- d. Check for breathing for 5 seconds, using the look-listen-feel technique.
- e. Pinch the victim's nostrils, place your mouth over the victim's mouth and give 2 slow breaths. (If mouth-to-nose breathing is required, hold the victim's mouth closed during the procedure.)
- f. Remove your mouth from the victim's mouth, turn your head and listen for the return outflow of air. Check for pulse for 5 seconds.
- g. If a pulse is present but the victim is not breathing, give 1 slow breath every 5 seconds for 1 minute (12 breaths). Recheck pulse. If breathing is not restored, continue this procedure at the rate of approximately 12 breaths per minute, checking for pulse at the end of each cycle. (For a child, the rate should be about 20 shallower breaths per minute.)
- h. If there is no exchange of air, check the position of the head and jaw and check for foreign objects blocking the air passage and repeat the breathing procedure. If rescue

breathing still is not possible because of blockage of the airway, straddle the victim, place the heel of one hand against the middle of the victim's abdomen just above the navel. Give up to five abdominal thrusts, pushing inward and upward. Next, lift the victim's jaw and tongue and sweep out the mouth, retrieving any foreign objects. Tilt the victim's head back again, lift the chin and try to give breaths. If the airway remains blocked, repeat the procedure; if the airway is cleared but the victim cannot breathe on his own, begin rescue breathing.

Normal breathing may begin again after 15 minutes of rescue breathing. If it does not, continue the procedure until relieved or until the victim begins to breathe.

If there is no pulse, the victim is in cardiac arrest. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) should begin immediately. CPR is performed in this manner:

- a. Position yourself so that you can give chest compressions and rescue breaths without having to move, if possible. Find the notch where the victim's breastbone and ribs meet, and place the heel of your hand just above this notch. Cover this hand with the other hand, lock your arms in a straight position, and begin giving chest compressions: 15 in about 10 seconds. Next, give two slow breaths.
- b. Repeat the compressions and breaths four times in a cycle. At the end of the cycle, check for a pulse. If there is no pulse, repeat the cycle.
- c. If there is a pulse, check for breathing. If the victim is not breathing, continue with rescue breathing, as described above.

When breathing resumes, monitor the victim and

treat for shock. (See techniques for control of shock below.)

2. CONTROL OF BLEEDING

If possible, wear latex or vinyl gloves or protect hands with plastic wrap, plastic bags or other non-porous materials.

- a. Apply direct pressure over the wound area. Place the cleanest material available (preferably a pad of sterile gauze) against the bleeding point and apply firm pressure. Apply and secure a bandage over the pressure pad. Leave the dressing and bandage in place. If necessary to add more dressing material, place it directly over the other dressing.

- b. Elevate the extremity above the heart level, if possible, while continuing to apply direct pressure if bleeding persists. Gravity will help to reduce blood pressure and slow the flow of blood to aid in clotting. **Do not elevate a broken extremity**, however.

- c. If bleeding continues, pressure should be applied to pressure points on an artery between the wound and the heart. These are the pressure points:
 - (1) Temporal artery: located in the hollow just in front of the ear;
 - (2) Facial artery: located in the small crevice about one inch from the angle of the jaw;
 - (3) Carotid artery: located deep and back on each side of the Adam's apple;
 - (4) Subclavian artery: located deep and down in the hollow near the collarbone;
 - (5) Brachial artery: located on the inner side of the upper arm, about three inches below the armpit;
 - (6) Femoral artery: located midway in the groin, between the crotch and the hip.

- d. A tourniquet is dangerous to apply, dangerous to leave on and dangerous to remove. It can cause gangrene and, subsequently, could cause loss of a limb. A tourniquet is rarely required and should be used only for severe, life-threatening hemorrhage that can not be controlled with direct or arterial pressure. Once applied, the tourniquet must not be removed except by professional medical personnel. Use only wide, flat materials and never string, wire, rope and other narrow materials.

Monitor victims and treat for shock. (See techniques for control of shock in this section.)

3. TREATMENT FOR SHOCK

When administering to a victim of shock, follow these steps:

- a. Have the victim lie down.
- b. Elevate the victim's feet and legs 12 inches or more, unless there is a possibility of head, neck or back injuries or broken bones in the hip or leg region.
- c. Control any external bleeding.
- d. Keep the victim warm but not hot.
- e. Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink, even though he is thirsty.
- f. Keep the victim quiet.
- g. Seek medical attention immediately, especially if the suspected cause of shock is reaction to an insect bite or sting.

After caring for victims with life-threatening injuries, check all victims to identify other injuries that require attention. Follow procedures learned in the first aid course. Some of the procedures most likely to be required for school bus passengers are described below.

4. MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

Be reminded that the procedures are summarized in this publication. School bus drivers must continually update training in proper first aid procedures to maintain first

aid skills.

FRACTURES, STRAINS AND SPRAINS

If the victim's head, neck or back is injured and it is not necessary to move the victim for protection from further injury, it is advisable to await professional assistance. Under any circumstance, if the victim is to be moved, the injured part must be immobilized. This most commonly is done by splinting the injured area and the area above and below it. Anatomic splints (use of a part of the body), soft splints (towels, shirts, blankets, materials found in the school bus first aid kit) or rigid splints (workbooks, magazines, boards, etc.) may be used for this purpose. Remember to check for blood circulation after splinting to ensure that the splint is not too tight.

For strains and sprains, get the victim to school or to the home bus stop as quickly as possible so that ice can be applied to the injured area and further medical assistance can be obtained.

INSECT BITES AND STINGS

Remove the stinger (scrape away or use tweezers, but avoid squeezing more venom into the wound), wash the wound if possible, apply a cold pack if available, watch for signals of medical reaction (possible shock) and seek medical attention.

ANIMAL BITES

Wash the wound if bleeding is minor, control bleeding, apply antibiotic ointment if available, cover the wound and seek medical attention.

SUDDEN ILLNESSES

Sudden illness may result from diabetic emergencies, seizures, onset of influenza or other causes. The victim may experience confusion, light-headedness, dizziness or weakness, diarrhea, chills or sweats, nausea, blurred vision, severe headache, breathing difficulty or even

unconsciousness. If the cause is not known, first aid should follow the usual pattern: check the scene and the victim, call for help and begin caring for the victim.

Care for life-threatening conditions first. Help the victim to rest comfortably, reassuring the conscious victim. Keep the victim from getting over-heated or chilled. Monitor the victim for changes in breathing or consciousness. Do not give anything to eat or drink unless the victim is fully conscious. If the victim vomits, place the victim on his side. If the illness is a diabetic emergency, give him candy, soft drink or other available source of sugar. If the victim faints and no head or back injury is suspected, elevate the victim's legs 8 to 10 inches.

If the victim has a seizure, do not hold or restrain the victim or place anything between the victim's teeth. Cushion the victim's head and body with clothing, books or whatever else may be available and remove nearby objects to prevent injury. Allow the victim to rest after the seizure. Get medical help.

NOSEBLEED

Give the victim gauze from the first aid kit, have him lean forward and pinch the nostrils together until the bleeding stops.

TOOTH KNOCKED OUT

Have the victim place a piece of sterile dressing directly in the space where the tooth is missing and bite down to maintain pressure to control bleeding. If the tooth can be found, preserve it by placing it in a closed container of cool milk or water (if available) for possible reinsertion. Seek medical assistance.

BURNS

Remove the victim from the source of the burn. Cool the burn, using large amounts of cool water. (Ice or ice water may be used on small superficial burns but should not be used on severe burns.) Cover the burn loosely with dry, sterile dressing or a clean cloth. Do not puncture blisters and do not put ointment on severe

burns. Monitor the victim closely and get additional medical help.

X. TIPS FROM THE PROFESSIONALS

Pre-service training and inservice training stress the importance of the school bus driver in the daily educational routine. The driver helps set the mood--good or bad--for passengers by the way they are treated on the ride to and from school each day. Nobody ever said the job was easy, but it can be made easier if the bus driver is a good manager of passengers and sets a positive example by performing the duties expected of a professional school bus driver.

Here are some tips from outstanding school bus drivers who pride themselves as being **PROFESSIONALS**:

1. Read your handbooks, bulletins, newsletters, etc. and learn as much about the job as possible.
2. Always conduct pre-trip, enroute and post-trip inspections.
3. Maintain a clean bus, even if it is the property of someone else.
4. Follow the rules set down for bus drivers in Louisiana.
5. Drive as smoothly as conditions permit, avoiding jerky motions and slowing down for bumps and rough places.
6. Always use lights and signals in accordance with laws.
7. Transport only passengers assigned to you, including those who are temporarily assigned to you by school authorities.
8. Do not allow pets on board. Do not transport objects that cannot be safely stowed beneath a seat or safely held by the student during the bus ride.

9. Be clean and neatly dressed at all times.

10. Be courteous to passengers, their parents and to the motoring public.
11. Be prompt and accurate when filing reports with schools or the central office.
12. Be proud that you are a professional school bus driver, the safest of any group of professional drivers in America!

XI. REFERENCE SOURCES FOR SPECIFIC TOPICS

The topics listed herein after are not intended to be all-inclusive, covering every facet of student transportation services in Louisiana. The list is intended to provide Louisiana sources of reference for information regarding some of the topics most frequently questioned and discussed. It is recommended that every school bus driver consult with the local Supervisor of Transportation if additional information or further clarification is required.

Louisiana Department of Education Bulletins referenced below are as follows: Bulletin 1191: *School Transportation Handbook* (rev. 1998), Bulletin 1213: *Minimum Standards for School Buses in Louisiana* (rev. 1998), Bulletin 1475: *The Louisiana School Bus Driver Operational and Vehicle Maintenance Procedures* (rev. 1998), and Bulletin 1886: *Special Education Transportation Guide* (rev. 1998).

ELIGIBLE (FOR SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION) STUDENTS

1. ONE MILE OR MORE FROM SCHOOL
RS 17:158
RS 17:2003
RS 17:3381
Bulletin 1191, Section XI
Bulletin 1886, Section II
2. LESS THAN ONE MILE FROM SCHOOL
RS 17:158
Bulletin 1191, Section XI
3. POST-SECONDARY VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL FACILITIES
RS 17:2003
4. COLLEGE STUDENTS
RS 17:3381

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

RS 9:2793
RS 32:398
RS 37:1732 ("Good Samaritan Law")
Bulletin 1191, Section VII, Appendix C

Bulletin 1475, Section V, Appendix B
Bulletin 1886, Sections II, III
Louisiana CDL Manual, pp. 2.13-2.16

FIRST AID PROCEDURES

Bulletin 1475, Section IX
Bulletin 1886, Section V

GUARANTEED ("FROZEN") MILEAGE

RS 17:497
Bulletin 1191, Section X
Bulletin 1213, Section I, Appendix B

HABITUAL OFFENDER DEFINED

RS 32:1472

INSURANCE AGAINST INJURY TO STUDENTS TRANSPORTED TO SCHOOL

RS 17:159
RS 17:159.1
RS 17:159.2
RS 32:601
RS 32:604

MINIMUM INSURANCE COVERAGE

RS 45:162 (17)(18)

PASSENGER MANAGEMENT/DISCIPLINE

RS 14:95.2 (Illegal Weapons)
RS 17:223
RS 17:240 (Smoking)
RS 17:416
Bulletin 1191, Sections II, IV, VII, Appendix D
Bulletin 1475, Sections VI, VIII, Appendix D
Bulletin 1886, Sections II, IV
Louisiana CDL Manual, pp. 4.2-4.3

PUBLIC INTIMIDATION (OF SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS)

RS 14:122

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. OVERVIEW

RS 17:24 (State Department of Education)
RS 17:41 (Attorney General and State Superintendent
of Education)
Bulletin 1191, Sections I, II, XII

- Bulletin 1475, Section I
- Bulletin 1886, Section I
- 2. PARISH AND CITY SCHOOL BOARDS
 - RS 17:51
 - RS 17:81
 - RS 17:104
 - RS 17:105
 - RS 17:111
 - RS 17:491 (Payment for Physical Examinations)
 - RS 23:897 (Payment for Physical Examinations)
 - Bulletin 1191, Section II
 - Bulletin 1475, Section VII
- 3. BUS DRIVERS
 - RS 17:168 (Extra Duties)
 - RS 17:491 (Definition of "School Bus Operator")
 - RS 32:52
 - RS 32:53
 - RS 32:58
 - RS 32:80
 - RS 32:171 (Railroad Crossing)
 - RS 32:173 (Railroad Crossing)
 - RS 32:281 (Backing the School Bus)
 - RS 32:282
 - RS 32:328
 - RS 32:398
 - RS 32:402
 - RS 32:404
 - RS 32:1301
 - Bulletin 1191, Sections II, VI
 - Bulletin 1475 (All)
 - Louisiana CDL Manual, Sections 1-4 and 5 (if appropriate)
- 4. SPECIAL NEEDS DRIVERS AND BUS ATTENDANTS (AIDES)
 - Bulletin 1191, Section XII
 - Bulletin 1886 (All)

RULES AND REGULATIONS: REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORITY

- RS 17:164
- RS 17:165
- RS 17:166
- RS 17:494

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

- 1. COMPENSATION
 - RS 17:495
 - RS 17:496

RS 17:496.1
RS 17:497
RS 17:497.1
RS 17:497.2
RS 17:498
RS 17:499
RS 17:500.1
RS 17:500.2

2. DRIVER SELECTION REQUIREMENTS
 - RS 15:587.1 (See Also RS 17:578)
 - RS 17:15
 - RS 17:491
 - RS 17:491.1
 - RS 17:493.1
 - RS 17:691
 - RS 32:52
 - RS 32:402
 - RS 32:408
 - RS 32:417
 - Bulletin 1191, Section III
 - Bulletin 1475, Section II
3. PROBATION/TENURE FOR BUS DRIVERS
 - RS 17:432
4. REMOVAL FROM DUTY
 - RS 17:493
5. SICK LEAVE
 - RS 17:500
 - RS 17:500.1
 - RS 17:500.2

SCHOOL BUS ROUTES

1. DEFINITION
 - Bulletin 1191, Section X
 - Bulletin 1475, Section VII
2. DESIGN/MEASUREMENT/ASSIGNMENT
 - RS 17:493.1
 - RS 17:1747(E)
 - Bulletin 1191, Section X, Appendix B
 - Bulletin 1475, Section VII
 - Bulletin 1886, Section II, Appendix C
3. DISCONTINUANCE FOR ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIABLE REASONS
 - RS 17:158
 - RS 17:492

4. FILLING VACANCIES

- RS 17:493.1
- RS 17:493.1(D)
- RS 17:500

SCHOOL BUSES

1. CAPACITIES

- RS 17:158.4
- RS 17:32:293 ("Standee Law")
- Bulletin 1213, Sections III, VII
- Bulletin 1475, Section IV

2. DEFINITION/TYPES

- Bulletin 1213, Section II, Appendix A
- Bulletin 1475, Appendix C

3. INSPECTION

- RS 32:53
- RS 32:1301
- RS 32:1302
- Bulletin 1191, Sections II, VI
- Bulletin 1475, Section III, Appendix A
- Louisiana CDL Manual, pp. 2.1-2.12, 4.1-4.2, 4.5

4. MAXIMUM SPEED LIMITS

- RS 32:62
- Bulletin 1475, Section IV

5. PURCHASES

- RS 17:158.1
- RS 17:158.2
- RS 17:158.3
- RS 17:158.4
- RS 17:158.5
- RS 17:162 (Private Use)
- RS 17:163
- RS 17:493
- RS 17:497
- RS 47:301 (Sales Tax Exemption for Certain School Buses)

6. SPECIFICATIONS

- RS 17:158.5
- RS 17:161 (See RS 17:163)
- RS 17:164
- RS 17:164.1 (Crossing Control Device)
- RS 30:751 (Alternative Fuels Requirement)
- RS 30:752 (Alternative Fuels Requirement)
- RS 32:53
- RS 32:282
- RS 32:308

RS 32:318
RS 32:375
RS 32:378(D) (Audible Backing Alarm)
RS 32:1301
RS 39:362.1 (Alternative Fuels Requirement)
Bulletin 1213 (All)
Federal Guide 17
Federal Motor Vehicle Standards for School Buses

SPECIAL FUELS (LPG AND CNG) TAX REDUCTION

RS 47:802(F)
RS 47:803

**SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS WHO CANNOT
BE TRANSPORTED BY SCHOOL BUS**

Bulletin 1191, Section XII
Bulletin 1886, Appendix D

TOLL-FREE FERRY AND BRIDGE PASSAGE FOR STUDENTS

RS 17:157

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

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Bulletin 1191, Section IV
Bulletin 1475, Section II
Bulletin 1886, Section II
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RS 47:468

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RS 32:80

APPENDIX

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APPENDIX A:
SCHOOL BUS PRE-TRIP INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Each local school district is required to maintain records for every school bus operated in its fleet. One such record is the pre-trip inspection checklist, which indicates that whoever drives a particular school bus on the date(s) indicated has performed the pre-trip inspection, as required by various federal and state regulations.

The checklist included in this Appendix is designed to meet requirements of documenting pre-trip inspections. It may be used by the local school district, or another form may be developed for this purpose. Whatever inspection form is adopted for local use, **IT MUST BE VALIDATED BY THE PERSON WHO INSPECTS THE BUS**, whether by a full-time driver, by a substitute driver or by an activity bus driver.

**APPENDIX B:
CONDUCTING EMERGENCY EXIT DRILLS**

The ever increasing number of accidents on the highways necessitates that pupils be instructed on how to properly evacuate a school bus in case of an emergency. Schools should organize and conduct emergency drills for all students who may ride school buses. This includes those students who ride only when attending school-related activities.

Three exit drill methods are required:

1. All passengers exit through the service (front) door.
2. All passengers exit through the rear emergency exit.
3. Passengers in the front half of the bus exit through the service door; passengers in the rear half exit through the rear emergency exit.

If an additional emergency exit door is installed on the bus, passengers should be taught how to exit through this door. It is not necessary to require exiting through emergency exit windows and roof-top hatches during drills, but evacuation procedures using these exits should be explained to passengers.

Students should be thoroughly instructed on proper evacuation procedures:

1. Remain seated until otherwise instructed.
2. Leave all personal items on the bus.
3. Move orderly and quickly to the designated exit(s).
4. After exiting the bus, move immediately to the area designated by the driver or by the driver's assistant. (If passengers are instructed to line up in the same or reverse order of their bus seating arrangement, they should do this before moving to a safe location approximately 100 feet from the bus.)
5. Passengers should remain quietly in the designated area until instructed to return to the school bus.

The driver should remain with the bus until all passengers have been moved safely away and the area has been secured.

Evacuation drills should be timed and critiqued so that corrections can be made if necessary. It is important that very young passengers and passengers with disabilities be given assistance if

necessary, and that they be given more frequent drills as a means of reassuring them of their ability to evacuate the bus when the need arises.

APPENDIX C:
UNIFORM SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

All school bus accidents, no matter how minor, must be reported by the bus driver to the Supervisor of Transportation, who must ensure that all appropriate reporting procedures are followed. This reporting requirement applies to students who are injured while on board the bus, even if the bus is not in a collision or a near-collision. (Such accidents are called "on-board" accidents.) It applies whether or not bus passengers are injured or the bus is damaged as a result of the accident.

The Uniform School Bus Accident Report Form (adopted by the Louisiana Department of Education in July, 1985) must be completed whether passengers are on board or not if the accident involves property damage, personal injury or fatality to :

1. Occupants in the bus (driver, students, other passengers);
2. Occupants of any other vehicle(s) involved in the accident;
3. Non-occupants of the school bus or other vehicle (e.g., student in the loading/unloading zone, pedestrian, bystander, etc.).

If requested, the report must be sent to the Louisiana Department of Education's representative. A sample of the form, with instructions for filling it out, is included in this appendix.

The purpose of the form is to provide for the compilation of accurate, uniform and reliable information about school bus accidents so that problems and trends can be identified and needed safety programs can be developed. Information submitted by individual school districts may be compiled and provided to national organizations and federal government agencies whose mission, at least in part, is to help ensure the highest of safety for school bus passengers.

The bus driver is responsible for filling out and turning in the form, unless otherwise instructed by the Supervisor of Transportation, who then assumes responsibility for the procedure. All applicable items must be indicated on the form. If information required to complete a blank or blanks is not available, "unknown" should be entered in the blank(s).

DEFINITIONS

Accident: That occurrence in a sequence of events which usually produces unintended injury, death or

property damage.

Loading &

Unloading Zone: Any place the school bus stops to load or unload student passengers.

Driver: The person driving the school bus or other motor vehicle involved in the accident.

Bus: A motor vehicle with motive power designed for carrying more than 10 persons.

School Bus: Every motor vehicle that complies with the color, equipment and identification requirements set forth in Title 32, Louisiana Revised Statutes, and which is used to transport children to and from school or school-related activities, but not including buses operated by common carriers in urban transportation of school children.

There are four types of school buses:

Type A: A conversion or body constructed and installed upon a van-type compact truck or front-section vehicle, with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, designed for carrying more than 10 persons.

Type B: A conversion or body constructed and installed upon a van or front-section chassis, or stripped chassis, with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 10,000 pounds, designed for carrying more than 10 persons. Part of the engine is beneath and/or behind the windshield and beside the driver's seat. The entrance door is behind the front wheels.

Type C: A body installed upon a flat back cowl chassis with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 10,000 pounds designed for carrying more than 10 persons. All of the engine is in front of the windshield and the entrance door is behind the front wheels.

Type D: A body installed upon a chassis with the engine mounted in the front, midships, or rear, with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 10,000 pounds, designed for carrying more than 10 persons. The engine may be behind the windshield

and beside the driver's seat; it may be at the rear of the bus, behind the rear wheels, or midships between the front and rear axles. The entrance door is ahead of the front wheels.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE REPORT FORM

A. FRONT SIDE--TOP OF REPORT

1. Fill in the parish or city school system for which you drive.
2. Fill in the date, day and time of the accident. Be sure to circle A.M. or P.M.
3. Give the location where the accident occurred as to parish, street, road or highway and the city or town.
4. Give the driver's name and commercial driver's license number.
5. Fill in the name of the bus owner, chassis make, body make and model year.
6. Fill in the police report number (if known) and indicate whether or not the school bus driver was cited.

B. FRONT SIDE--NUMBERED SECTION OF REPORT

1. Indicate type of accident. (Check only one response.)
2. Complete if "fixed object" accident. (Check only one response.)
3. If known, place a check beside the approximate dollar value for damage sustained. (This information can be supplied later, if available.) If the amount cannot be determined, write "unknown." For "off bus loading/unloading accidents" only, check only one response each for a, b, c.
4. Indicate manner of collision between vehicles or objects.
5. Check only one response for the entire item.
6. In the box marked "enter," write only one letter to designate the first point of impact.
7. Check as many responses as may be applicable to describe circumstances contributing to the accident. These responses apply to all drivers, objects, roadway conditions, etc.
8. Write in the total number of lanes on the roadway.
9. Indicate whether or not the roadway was divided.
10. Write the posted speed limit on the roadway where the accident occurred.

11. Indicate the approximate speed of the school bus (if applicable) at the time of the accident. If the school bus was stopped, write "0."

C. REVERSE SIDE OF REPORT

Check or write in all information required. All information in the Driver Profile section must be checked by the Supervisor of Transportation (or designee).

"Type of Bus" refers to Types A, B, C and D. Consult descriptions under the heading "DEFINITION" in this appendix. Indicate rated capacity (66, 60, 54, etc., passenger) and how many students (pupils) were actually on board at the time of the accident.

To describe the accident, explain in your own words what occurred, and to the extent possible, why it occurred. Remember to state only facts. Refer to each vehicle by number, with the school bus being #1. If passengers were on board, describe their behavior at the time of the accident.

If the accident involved one or more students at the bus loading/unloading zone, describe the behavior of all students present as the bus arrived and stopped.

Fill the diagram, placing as nearly as possible, drawings of all vehicles involved.

If the bus driver signs the report, the Supervisor of Transportation (or designee) should sign the report, also.

"Information Required by Local School System" is additional space for use by the local school system. It may be left blank, if appropriate.

The Supervisor of Transportation should consult the Department of Education to ask whether or not the Uniform School Bus Accident Report Form should be forwarded to the Department of Education.

IN THE EVENT OF A FATALITY, the Supervisor of Transportation contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation and complete the Fatal School Bus Accident Notification Form. (See Appendix F, Bulletin 1191.)

APPENDIX D
SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR REPORT

Act 305 of the 1993 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature required the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a form to be used by all school bus drivers employed by Louisiana school districts to report student behavior problems on the school bus. A copy of the form is provided on the following page in this bulletin. Copies for use by bus drivers are available from each local school district.

Bus drivers, supervisors, principals and all other personnel involved in school bus passenger management must understand that this is not a suggested form--it is **the** form to be used for reporting inappropriate student behavior on board Louisiana's school buses.

APPENDIX E
NOTIFICATION OF MOVING VIOLATIONS CONVICTIONS

The form provided in Appendix E is not a mandatory form; however, providing notification of moving violations convictions to the employing school board office within thirty (30) days of a conviction is required by law. The form explains the requirement and may be used by the school district for recording information relative to moving violations convictions.

APPENDIX F
ROAD CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

The diagrams provided in Appendix F illustrate the recommended procedure for students to follow when crossing the street in order to enter the bus or after exiting from the bus. These illustrations are published in the 1995 National Standards for School Transportation, Appendix E.

Bus drivers are reminded of the importance of establishing communications systems with passengers to signal them when it is safe to cross the roadway to enter or exit the bus. Passengers who are crossing to enter the bus may be distracted or may not be able to see other vehicles who do not obey the stop arm law. Passengers who are crossing in front of the bus cannot see around the bus. Passengers should, therefore, wait for the driver's signal before proceeding across the roadway.

APPENDIX G
CALCULATING THE AGE OF SCHOOL BUSES

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