

# North White School Corporation

## Driver Expectations

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### School Bus Driver Expectations – General Information

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# **North White School Corporation Driver Expectations**

## **General Information**

### **Accident Procedures**

In spite of all precautions, the possibility of accidents cannot be entirely eliminated. If and when accidents occur, the following procedures are expected:

1. Stop and turn off the ignition
2. Keep calm, do not argue or try to fix the blame for the accident
3. Do not allow students to leave the bus unless absolutely necessary for their safety and comfort.
4. Under no conditions shall students be allowed to wander around, or walk home or to school. Have them wait until another bus comes for them.
5. If necessary, send a responsible student for the kind of help needed. Never leave the children unattended.
6. Notify the Transportation Director immediately via two-way radio or cell phone.
7. Get the license plate number and other pertinent information about all vehicles involved.
8. Get the names and addresses of all persons involved and all witnesses (including students on the bus).
9. A report is required no matter how minor the accident.
10. Report to designated testing spot – Post Accident testing is required.

In the case of an accident when any school bus is stopped on the road, a driver shall protect the bus from further accidents. The driver's first responsibility is the safety of the passengers. At no time is the driver to leave the scene of an accident.

### **Arrival Time (Delivery of Students)**

Time of delivery of children to school will be set by the Administration at the latest practical time to avoid children needing to get on the bus earlier than necessary. Respect will be given to the opening bell schedules of schools. As a rule of thumb, buses should not arrive any earlier than fifteen minutes before the tardy bell.

### **Attitude**

Drivers are expected to maintain a professional attitude about their job. When problems arise, they are to be discussed with the Transportation Director immediately. Drivers are to respect one another and work cooperatively with their colleagues to provide quality bus transportation to the students and patrons of the North White School Corporation. Drivers are to refrain from engaging in activities that detract from a positive working environment.

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## **Backing Buses**

No bus shall be backed up on any school ground, playground or loading area unless such backing is properly supervised by an adult.

## **Bus Operation**

No school bus shall be in motion until all children are seated and the doors are closed. No student shall occupy a space forward of the white line. Drivers are to insure that the rear exit of the bus remains unobstructed.

## **Bus Stops**

The stop arm shall be displayed only when the bus is completely stopped on the traveling portion of the highway to load and unload passengers. While off the traveling portion of the highway, the stop arm shall not be used and flashing lights shall not be operated.

Buses shall be stopped off the pavement whenever possible and practicable unless the student must cross the road, before boarding or after leaving the bus. Buses stopping to unload on one-way streets shall pull to the right hand curb or side.

Drivers shall only unload students at regular route stops. Any changes to a regular route stop must first receive approval of the Transportation Director.

## **Cell Phones**

The use of cell phones while the bus is in motion is not permitted. If it is necessary to use a cell phone to contact the school or a parent, the driver should find a safe parking place before placing the call. Use of a personal cell phone during your route time is not allowed. Texting by CDL drivers while operating a Commercial Motor Vehicle is prohibited (see Final Ruling 49 CFR Parts 383, 384, 390, 391 and 392 – in sections #7 of this manual.)

## **Cleaning the Bus**

Drivers are required to maintain a clean bus.

## **Compliance with Indiana Law**

Drivers are to comply with all laws, rules, and regulations governing operation of motor vehicles on the highways of the State of Indiana

## **Discipline**

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Drivers are to maintain discipline on the school bus. Drivers are to address student with respect and should maintain a disposition of being firm, fair, friendly; bus not familiar. Drivers are to record student misconduct on the Bus Conduct Report Form. Bus Conduct Report Forms are to be completed and give to the Transportation Office in a timely manner.

Drivers are to review bus conduct rules with the students at the start of the school year. It is an expectation that drivers will involve parents with discipline problems prior to the issuance of Bus Conduct Report Forms being utilized.

Cell phone usage is permitted by students on all buses; however, privileges may be revoked for inappropriate use.

Drivers need to be consistent in the enforcement of bus rules. While it is appropriate to provide a couple of verbal warnings, drivers should not allow the misconduct of student to escalate, which interferes with the safe operation of the bus or which is a violation of the North White School Corporation student handbooks. Students that receive a Bus Conduct Report Form are subject to the following disciplinary action:

- Assigned bus seat
- Phone call to parent/guardian
- Suspension of all bus riding privileges

Regardless of a student's conduct, drivers will conduct themselves as professionals at all time. Drivers will control their temper, language, and mannerisms while dealing with disruptive students. Drivers are to assure parents that every effort is being made to help the student understand the importance of complying with all bus safety rules.

Drivers are encouraged to assign seats shortly after the first day of school.

At no times are drivers to touch or grab a student in a hostile fashion. Striking a child is strictly prohibited. Drivers should never make threats that they cannot follow through on. A driver that loses their temper has lost the upper hand in dealing with disruptive students.

When a driver has sought the principal's involvement, the bus driver must understand that they have relinquished control of student discipline to the principal. The driver is to uphold any corrective discipline measures the principal may impose that go beyond the scope of those consequences discussed in this section.

Damage to the bus that is caused by a student should be reported to the Transportation Director immediately. Damages will be assessed and a bill will be presented to the student's parent/guardian.

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### Dress

Drivers are to maintain a clean appearance at all times. Dress should be modest. Short shorts and tight-fitted clothing are not permitted. Drivers are to wear shoes when operating the bus.

### Emergency Evacuation

Accidents may involve the bus rolling onto its side or a fire may make the front entrance door inaccessible. In this event, windows, windshield, or rear emergency exit are the only avenues of escape.

Coupled with any accident is the high probability that the passengers will panic and actually increase the possibility of injury or death to some of the occupants. A panic reaction is normally associated with the unknown and fear for one's personal safety.

It is a proven fact that practiced emergency procedures result in fewer injuries, less confusion and a more controlled reaction when an actual emergency does occur. Knowing what to do and how to do it decreases an individual's fear for their own safety and permits an orderly and valuable reaction that can benefit others in their immediate area.

The below listed procedures must be implemented:

1. Brief the students on the following:
  - a. First Aid Kit – show them where the kit is located. Open it and briefly describe some of the contents.
  - b. Fire Extinguisher – show them its location. Remove it from the bracket and verbally describe how to use it. Assign one of the older, more responsible children to serve as bus fire marshal. Brief him/her on how to take the fire extinguisher and use it should you be disabled or involved with injuries.
  - c. Remind the students that the prime concern is the safety of all passengers. Each of their actions should be to get all passengers off the bus in a safe manner.

In the event that power lines are in contact with a bus, students should not be evacuated unless the bus is on fire. In this circumstance, students are to exit the bus by hopping with feet together off the bus without assistance and should continue hopping away from the bus until safe.

2. Do the following:

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- a. Each driver is required to conduct an emergency evacuation drill one each semester. The first drill is to occur within the first four weeks of school. This is primarily to instill in the students a need for patience and orderly sequence in moving off the bus. Evacuation drills are to be reported one a semester to the Transportation Office.
- b. Students are to be escorted a safe distance from the bus. Attendance should be immediately taken and be ready to provide this information to emergency medical personnel upon their arrival.

### **Emergency Telephone Numbers**

Dean Cook, Director of Transportation  
219-869-0580

Marianne Rowlands, Secretary  
574-242-1267

Teresa Gremaux, Superintendent  
260-466-7789

Drivers are expected to notify the Director of Transportation of any emergencies at all times.

### **Equipment**

The School Corporation will provide all equipment associated with the safe operation of a school bus to drivers.

### **Fueling Bus**

Drivers are never to fill a school bus with fuel when students are present. Never leave the fuel pump unattended while fueling. Smoking is prohibited at all fuel pumps. North White School Grounds are Tobacco Free.

### **Good Moral Character**

Bus drivers are expected to possess a good moral character. Profanity is strictly prohibited while drivers are performing their duties. Use of tobacco is prohibited on a school bus. North White Schools and Grounds are Tobacco Free. Bus drivers found to be consuming intoxicating liquors or utilizing controlled substances will be terminated from employment immediately.

### **Keys**

Drivers are not to leave their keys in the bus ignition. Drivers are responsible to secure their driving key in an easily retrievable location at all times.

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### **Observing an Emergency**

When drivers observe an accident or any form of an emergency, the bus driver shall contact the School Corporation by two-way radio to request emergency services. No assistance shall be given by a bus driver to other vehicles on the road, except in an emergency situation.

### **Parking**

Drivers may be required to park off streets for periods of time longer than one hour. Drivers may be required to leave buses at a designated place during the school day, at night, over the weekend, etc.

### **Personal Bus Use**

At no time are drivers permitted to use a school bus for personal business. All exceptions to this directive must first be approved by the Director of Transportation.

### **Physicals/Drivers License**

It is the bus driver's responsibility to give a copy of your current Physical and Driver's license to the Transportation Office.

### **Physical Fitness Certificates**

Drivers are required to furnish certificate of health and physical fitness as required by the law and by the Transportation Director.

### **Pre-Trip & Post-Trip Inspections**

Drivers are required to complete a Pre-Trip Inspection of their bus before beginning their morning and afternoon routes. Pre-Trip Inspections are also required prior to the driver utilizing the bus to transport students to athletic and/or field trip events.

As required by Indiana Code, all drivers shall inspect their bus at the conclusion of each trip during which students were transported to determine that no passengers remain on the bus. This visual inspection must occur before the driver exits the school bus. For normal school routes, this inspection will be conducted at the school building following the morning route and will be conducted at the first moment a driver is able to safely conduct the inspection following the afternoon route.

Drivers who are transporting student on field trips or ECA trip will conduct the inspection upon arrival at their destination and upon return.

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Special purpose bus drivers will also conduct each inspection prior to leaving their destination and also upon return to the North White School Corporation Bus Pen.

Drivers are to report to the Transportation Director any instance of a student or passenger being left on the bus immediately after the incident occurs. A violation of this Indiana Code citation is a Class C infraction.

In addition, the driver should conduct a post-trip inspection of the bus by walking around the bus. Special attention should be given to these areas:

- Operation of doors and windows
- Mechanical/operational problems with the bus, with special attention to mirror systems, flashing warning lamps and stop arms.
- Damage or vandalism

Any problems or special situations should be reported immediately to the Director of Transportation.

## **Procedures/Written Memorandums**

The Director of Transportation may at any time develop written procedures that assist in the daily operation of transportation services. Procedures provided to the driver during the course of the school year will be considered an addendum to the driver handbook. All written memorandums from the Director of Transportation should be maintained in the driver handbook and treated as a directive.

## **Radio Procedures**

Drivers should use a normal tone of voice any time they transmit over the two-way radio. Drivers should hold the two-way radio microphone about an inch from their mouth. Drivers are to speak clearly and slowly.

Be business like and courteous. In emergencies be calm and confident. Avoid unnecessary transmissions and unnecessary long messages. Before transmitting, **THINK!** Keep it brief and to the point. Avoid repeats caused by poor microphone techniques.

When the driver has radioed in an accident or emergency, other drivers should stay off the radio unless they too are experiencing an emergency. Drivers are to leave the frequency open for the driver and dispatcher to communicate emergency information.

All units will clear the channel at the end of each contact. This is done by identifying the station and following with the word, "Clear" For example, "Bus 11 Clear". This indicates that the unit has completed its contact and the channel is available for use.



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Respect the confidentiality of students. Drivers should never use a student's name over the airwaves except in cases of an emergency. Student discipline issues should not be broadcasted over the two-way radio. The driver can radio the principal and ask that he/she meet the bus upon arrival to the school.

Personal messages are not to be broadcasted over the two-way radio.

The Transportation Director will conduct regular radio checks and advise drivers of any special announcements. Drivers will respond to the Transportation Director when their unit number is called. At the beginning of your morning route each driver must radio into the Transportation Director acknowledging that you have begun your route.

## **Reporting Times**

Drivers are to report to their school building ready for passengers at least ten minutes before time of dismissal of student or prior to any scheduled athletic or field trip event. Drivers that experience delay are to radio the Transportation Director to report their estimated time of arrival.

## **Residential Telephone**

Each driver shall have a residential telephone, whether it is a land line or cell phone. Drivers are to report changes in their telephone number to the Transportation Office.

## **Route Assignment**

The decision as to which route a driver is assigned is to be made by the Transportation Director. Children may be transferred from one route to another or added to an existing route without extra compensation. Routes will be reviewed annually to insure that buses are not overcrowded. The actual mileage of a bus route may vary from year to year as students move in and out of the school corporation. The Transportation Director will make the decision as to the driver's bus assignment to insure that buses accrue mileage in an equitable manner.

## **Route Maps, Start/Stop Tables, Other Forms**

Drivers will complete all forms associated with their routes as directed by the Transportation Director. This includes the completion of route maps and verification of start/stop times. Drivers are to complete all forms with attention given to the accuracy of student addresses and driving hazards associated with their routes. All forms are to be completed in a timely manner as assigned by the Transportation Director.

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### **Routine Bus Maintenance**

The Transportation Director will establish a routine maintenance schedule for all buses. Drivers are responsible for complying with the request of the mechanic to deliver buses to the bus garage for routine maintenance. Drivers are to report all bus maintenance concerns to the Transportation Director/Mechanic immediately.

### **Scheduled Meetings**

Drivers are required to attend all scheduled meetings with the Transportation Director, in addition to completing the requirement for the Annual Safety Meeting.

### **Shared Responsibilities**

Unless otherwise specified, drivers are to deliver children to any school or school in the town and pick them up at any school or schools in the town. Where drivers, by sharing responsibilities, can save others extra time and mileage in performing this duty, such shared delivery of students will be encouraged. However, drivers must notify the Transportation Director to obtain approval before changing the normal delivery and pick-up of any bus route.

### **Speed Limits**

Drivers will respect the speed limits as prescribed by Indiana State Law. The following change effective July 1, 2007: The maximum speed limit on a state or federal highway for a school bus or special purpose bus is **60** mph. The previous limit was **55** mph.

There are several important aspects of this change to remember:

1. When the posted speed limit is lower than the absolute limits (60 mph on a state federal highway) the maximum lawful speed of a bus is the posted speed limit.
2. The maximum speed limit on all other roadways, streets, and county/township roads remain at 40 mph.
3. The violation for speeding in a school bus or special purpose bus also remains the same – a Class “C” misdemeanor. A person who commits a Class “C” misdemeanor shall be imprisoned for a fixed term of not more than sixty days; in addition, they may be fined not more that \$500.00.

### **Students Crossing in Front of the Bus**

When students must cross in front of the bus, drivers shall instruct students to keep to the right of the bus and walk ten feet forward. The driver shall provide a hand signal to the student indicating that it is safe for the student to cross. The driver shall not start the bus in motion until all students have crossed the road safely. This applies to all roads except when dual lane highways are separated by a parkway or dividing strip which is greater

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than 20 feet wide and unimproved for travels. Take the bus out of gear when students are walking in front of the bus.

### **Student Supervision**

Drivers shall not leave the bus for any reason or at any time when students are present. Moreover, drivers are never to leave their bus with the engine running when students are present, except in an emergency.

### **Substitute Drivers**

In the event a bus driver is unable to perform their duties, the driver must schedule a substitute driver to cover their route and notify the transportation office immediately.

### **Trip Assignments**

All regular route and substitute bus drivers are welcome to request consideration for assignment to Athletic and Extra-Curricular Events at the beginning of each school year. When filling trip requests, the transportation secretary will follow these guidelines:

1. Both regular route and substitute bus drivers must notify the transportation secretary of their willingness to drive for either athletic or Extra-Curricular Events or both by the deadline stated.
2. Drivers' names will be compiled into a Call List, with drivers listed in alphabetical order by last name.
3. Athletic and Extra-Curricular trips will be assigned by season. When filling these assignments attempts will be made to equalize the number of trips among the drivers requesting trips.
4. The Transportation Office reserves the right to give consideration to the requests of coaches and teachers requesting a specific driver. Under no circumstance are drivers to solicit trips from coaches or teachers. Drivers that solicit trips will be removed from the call list.
5. Drivers will not be penalized for turning down trips.
6. Final decisions on driver assignments exist entirely with the Transportation Director.
7. Drivers will be paid a minimum of 2 hours at a rate set by North White School Corporation. Drivers are responsible for completing pre-trip and post-trip inspections and insuring that buses are clean.

### **Unauthorized Drivers**

No driver shall permit any other person to drive his bus, occupy his seat, tamper with the engine or any controls, except such persons approved by the Transportation Director.

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## **Unauthorized Riders**

No unauthorized persons shall be permitted to ride a school bus at any time, except in an emergency situation. Drivers who question the legitimacy of a rider shall not transport such an individual until receiving clearance from the Transportation Director.

## **Weather**

You will be contacted via phone or text with any weather related closings and delays. Drivers should be accessible to answer any calls/texts.

Drivers are not to contact the Sheriff's Department or County Highway Department. The Transportation Director will be in contact with these agencies in making determinations regarding the safe operation of school buses. The Transportation Director will rely on these individuals in assessing any hazardous conditions that may affect the safe operation of the school buses.

During periods of bus operation when hazardous road conditions exist, drivers are expected to use extra caution. Contacting parents and designating alternative pick-up or drop off points is acceptable behavior. Moreover, using extra care by reducing speed is also considered acceptable. If your bus will be delayed in arriving at school, please contact the Transportation Director or Transportation office by two-way radio immediately.

## **Written/Verbal Complaints**

Any complaint or notice, written or verbal, received by the School Corporation regarding an infraction of the driver's conduct while performing his/her duties shall be deemed sufficient grounds for an investigation, suspension and/or termination.

## **Yellow Safety Card**

The Transportation Department will provide the bus driver with their Yellow Card unless the driver completed their ASM within a different School Corporation; those drivers must provide North White School Corporation with a copy of their Yellow Card. It is the responsibility of the bus driver to follow procedures for the purpose of renewing their Yellow Safety Card issued by the Indiana Department of Education.