A decorative border of black school bus silhouettes surrounds the text. The top and bottom edges feature a row of six buses each. The left and right edges feature a vertical column of seven buses each, with the buses on the left facing right and the buses on the right facing left.

DeKALB COUNTY SCHOOLS

**“ONLY THE BEST
WILL DRIVE”**

Transportation Policies

Reprinted, July 2009

DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOLS
Transportation Polices



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JULY, 2009

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FOREWORD

The DeKalb County Board of Education recognizes the fact that a safe and efficient school bus service for those students who qualify is vital to the educational operation of the system and that this service must be provided at a cost tax payers can afford. Bus service will be provided to all students that live one mile or more from their closest school and all handicapped students regardless of distance lived from school.

In the Transportation Department, three (3) main objectives are considered. All are vital to the success of the program. These are safety, efficiency, and economy with safety being the most important.

To achieve these high standards, much planning and thought is required by those who are charged with the responsibility of operating the Transportation Department. Safety shall always be foremost in the minds of all transportation personnel.

The Transportation supervisor shall administer the pupil transportation program with the aid of his or her staff and individual school bus drivers. He or she shall be responsible for all phases of the program except the handling of transported pupil discipline problems. Pupil discipline is the responsibility of the principal.

The Administration, principals, teachers, bus drivers, shop personnel, pupils, parents and the traveling public must share in the responsibility of school transportation if we are to maintain the type of service that we all want and need.

DISCLAIMER

The policies in this handbook are approved by the DeKalb County Board of Education. Errors and/or omissions in this handbook are subject to clarification by the Superintendent or his designee.

BUS TRANSPORTATION SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY

1. Establish the policies and procedures by which the program functions.
2. Establish pupil regulations governing the behavior and safety of pupils at the bus stop and while boarding, riding and disembarking from the school bus. The rules students are expected to follow should be limited in number and posted in the bus and made available to all riders.
3. Institute and administer an instructional program that teaches pupils proper conduct and safety procedures.
4. Conduct a training program for school bus drivers to ensure that all policies, procedures, regulations and their enforcement are understood. Ensure that parents receive written copies of the bus rules and regulations. Clearly establish their roles and obligations with respect to pupil promptness, attitude and behavior.
5. Initiate procedures to ensure open lines of communication and cooperation between all people involved in pupil transportation including state agencies.
6. Train drivers in specific skills that will enable them to maintain order safety and respect for the rights of others. These skills should include at least the following:
 - a. Specific verbal intervention techniques used to maintain order and safety.
 - b. Communication skills that promote rapport, mutual respect and encourage pupil compliance.
7. Ensure that administrators support and enforce disciplinary procedures, policies and reasonable actions by the driver.

GENERAL POLICIES

1. Students will be the only persons to ride the school bus to and from school and to school related events (field trips/athletic events), with the exception of board employees, and authorized persons, where space is available.
2. The school bus shall not be routed over a road not maintained by the Federal, State, County or City Government, and not open to the public. (No private drives will be served.)
3. A school bus shall not travel over roads or bridges that are hazardous to the lives of students or driver.
4. No teacher, janitor, or other employee will be employed as a permanent school bus driver.
5. The fee for using buses for extra curricular events is to follow the state rate per mile. Mileage is to begin at the home school and end at the driver's home or station.

6. Field Trips/Athletic Events:

Permits for regularly scheduled athletic games do not require the signature of superintendent but must be completed by principal and given to driver, with extra copies retained for files and submitted to the Central Office for payment purposes.

Junior High athletic trips require regular permit from Principal. Forms are furnished to all schools. Proper records must be maintained.

Students must have parents' written permission to make any trip. Principals will provide forms. See Page 15 for further information.

7. Newer buses are recommended for all trips other than regular routes. It is the trip driver's responsibility to pick up and return to the regular driver's home a cleaned and refueled bus for the next school day. Problems with the bus should be reported promptly to the principal/supervisor of transportation.
8. Route Changes: The transportation supervisor shall be authorized to make necessary bus route changes and decisions regarding requests for changes in line with Board policies. The Principal, Transportation Supervisor and the Superintendent should be in agreement before making recommendations for bus route changes and must secure Board approval before implementation. The Transportation Supervisor shall authorize all initial bus stops and approve any stop changes. Drivers are not authorized to swap buses without permission from the transportation supervisor except in an extreme emergency. This does not include spare buses.
9. Duplicate Routes/Special Requests/Stops. A continuous effort shall be made to eliminate existing duplicate routes. This effort will also include combining routes. No bus stop shall be within one mile of the assigned school. Bus stops shall be at least two-tenths mile apart unless otherwise authorized by the Transportation Supervisor. Bus stops shall be located so that traffic shall have a clear view of the bus at least 300 feet in both directions. Bus stops should never be made in curves or below crests of hills unless sufficient sight distance is established. When making bus stops, ALWAYS use the outside lane on any road.
10. Inclement Weather: In the event of a school closing for any reason, the DeKalb County School System's Central Office will notify the media by 6:00 a.m. to broadcast or televise details of the situation. All parents, students and employees of the DeKalb County School System shall listen to reports from area radio and TV stations. If a driver knows it would be hazardous to run their route, he or she should immediately notify the principal and transportation supervisor of the fact.
11. Emergency Evacuation: A school bus may be evacuated when a driver or designee deems it necessary for the safety of all passengers. All passengers must be moved a safe distance from bus and remain there until it has been determined that no danger exists. See pages 16-17.
12. Use of Buses By Individuals or Groups. Liability insurance prohibits the use of school buses by anyone other than the Board of Education.
13. Students who drive cars or ride bicycles or motorscooters to school must park in a designated area and leave vehicles there until school is out. Decals should be required for all motorized vehicles. A fee may be charged. Students MUST possess license to drive as required by law.

14. A Duplicate set of bus keys will be kept secure by principal. Driver is not responsible for cost. The Bus Garage will provide keys.
15. Bus Rodeo: Transportation Supervisor will make arrangements, contacts, etc. to provide a driving range for drivers to practice for State competition, preferably at the Bus Garage.
16. Any/all drivers who have an accident involving property damage must submit to a drug test. The transportation supervisor is to be notified immediately if the drug test is needed after normal working hours/nights/weekends.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY

1. Study and observe all laws or regulations and rules relating to the service of transportation. All regular drivers, substitutes, and/or drivers of extra trips must follow DeKalb County transportation policies and procedures.
2. Pass a physical examination every other year, no later than April 1 and meet such requirements, as may be prescribed by law or regulation, which include, drugs or alcohol testing. Medical clearance is needed for driver, including heart, blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, TB, hearing, vision and overall physical condition.
3. To maintain a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and an Alabama Bus Driver's Certificate.
4. To be clean and neat in appearance, to refrain from the use of tobacco while on duty, to use no profane language in the presence of students or parents, and at no time to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
5. To participate in training classes for school bus drivers and to be prepared at anytime to successfully pass a reasonable examination concerning the traffic laws, state and local transportation regulations, driving skills, and other staff development activities required by the Board.
6. To master the principles of first aid and to be prepared to give emergency treatment to anyone injured in or because of a school bus accident.
7. To ensure that transported students know and observe all rules and regulations as set forth by board policy.
8. To maintain order and discipline of every student on the bus.
9. To permit a student to leave the bus only at his or her regular stop, except upon written request from parent that has been approved and signed by the principal or designee.
10. To not use the bus to run errands, do personal business, or to stop at a store, etc., in route to/from official school business.
11. Notify immediately the principal/transportation supervisor in the event of a school bus accident. As soon as possible, the driver will prepare the school bus accident form.
12. Bus route must be operated on a precise time schedule. Begin the route exactly at the same time every day. Stop at every stop and go through the complete operating cycle. When students are not plainly visible at their stop, ensure that the bus stops, open the door fully and look for the student. Do not roll through stops and keep going.

13. To cooperate with duly authorized school officials, mechanics, and other personnel in the mechanical maintenance and repair of the bus in overcoming hazards that threaten the safety and efficiency of service.
14. Do required pre-trip inspection and report any defect found. This is required for the regular route and for any extra trip made with the bus.
15. To keep the bus clean and neat at all times. Bus should be checked after each trip for cut/damaged seats. This should be reported immediately to the principal/transportation supervisor and the responsibility should be determined as soon as possible. After extra trips, the driver should check the bus for any damage/equipment problems and return the bus clean, fueled, and ready for the regular route.
16. Prepare all reports, keep all records required and assist the transportation supervisor in mapping bus routes and in all phases of the transportation services.
17. To report immediately to the school principal/transportation supervisor:
 - a. Misconduct by students on the bus.
 - b. Complaints
 - c. Accidents
 - d. License numbers and description of vehicles passing bus illegally.
 - e. Hazards threatening student safety
 - f. Cause for failure to be on time to maintain route schedule.
18. If no action is taken and student misbehavior continues, driver shall report to Superintendent.
19. Some reasons for which a driver may be terminated:
 - a. Failure to maintain a valid Commercial Driver's License and State School Bus Certificate
 - b. Failing to stop at a railroad grade crossing.
 - c. Arrested or convicted of driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol or drugs.
 - d. Willful failure to report an accident involving property damage or injury.
 - e. Driving a DeKalb County school bus recklessly.
 - f. Continuing inability to control and maintain discipline.
 - g. Not maintaining a reasonably consistent schedule.
 - h. Using profane language in the presence of students
 - i. Deliberate abuse of Board of Education property.
 - j. Being involved in a chargeable accident.
 - k. Any action in direct conflict with Board Policy.
20. Driver should not eat or drink on bus.
21. Although necessary to sometimes raise one's voice, refrain from yelling, etc., and find other, better ways to control misbehavior of students.
22. **Tobacco Use Prohibited.**

Employees of the DeKalb County Board of Education are prohibited from use of tobacco products (cigarettes, snuff, chewing tobacco, etc.) while on school board owned or operated property.

This *ZERO TOLERANCE* mandate includes extra-curricular school activities held after school hours during the time the employee is in charge of supervising students, whether on or off school campus, or in transit with a student group, team or club.

Failure to adhere to this policy will result in the employee receiving the following:

- A. First Offense: Verbal Warning;
- B. Second Offense: Written Warning;
- C. Third Offense: Referral to the DeKalb County Board of Education for possible termination based on insubordination.

23. **Cellular Telephone Use**: Telephone should be for **Emergency Use Only**. No one should be allowed to use the telephone except the driver. Any calls made other than emergency will be the driver's responsibility for charges to cellular number. Exception will be made in dire emergency. The exceptions will be at the discretion of the driver. Example: (If a car wreck victim needs to call someone, one call will be allowed.

Use of Cell Phones

Cell phones provided by the DeKalb County Board of Education for pupil transportation employees are to be used only if the following conditions are met:

1. A cell phone may be used only during times students are in transit for approved Board activities, or upon determining that a state-inspected vehicle, such as a bus, is inoperable. Bus Drivers shall not use personal cell phones while driving a bus.
Driver shall pull over to side of road to use phone when absolutely necessary. County-owned cell phones on buses are to be used for emergencies only.
2. A cell phone may be used only in the event of a true emergency or where a serious situation exists. (Such an event is defined by example: an accident involving an employee and/or students; weather factors; failure to locate a student assigned to a bus; unavoidable delay of a vehicle while in transit; disruption on a bus caused by a student or other individual; serious illness of student or driver; observed traffic violations; or other cause that can be determined by a prudent individual as serious and requiring notification to the first available individual.)

The employee is to attempt to first contact their immediate supervisor(s), or appropriate official, but in the event this is not possible, the prudent discretion of a responsible adult is to be the guiding factor in determining who shall be notified.

Violation of this policy shall be subject to review by the immediate supervisor and a written report submitted to the Superintendent. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the Superintendent may recommend to the Board appropriate disciplinary action, including termination for insubordination.

24. Each driver should prepare and observe a daily time schedule. Unloading time in the a.m. will be determined by the principal/supervisor. Drivers must be on time.
25. Bus drivers must act courteously at all times, realizing that people are continually watching and evaluating our schools by the acts of wisdom shown by employees. The bus is transporting their children and they expect the driver to be the best on the road.
26. Buses shall not be driven to a driver's second job (outside of system or private).

Bus Drivers may not work over 40 hours per week.

No employees may be a bus substitute during working hours of their regular job and receive pay for both jobs. The superintendent must give permission if such an emergency occurs. Actual time sheets must be kept for both jobs with arrival and departure times shown for both jobs.

Principal/Teacher Responsibility

1. The principal shall make a provision for teaching public school safety and behavior in the classroom.
2. The principal shall see that buildings are comfortable and open upon proper bus arrival time.
3. To see that each bus making extra trips has at least one teacher or adult employee as a chaperone to each bus. Buses carrying more than twenty students should have three chaperones. Chaperones are in addition to the bus driver.
4. Written permission from the local school administrator or designee shall be required in order for a driver to allow a student to get on or off the bus at any bus stop other than the regularly assigned stop.
5. Written permission from the local school administrator or designee shall be required before a student is allowed to ride any bus other than their regularly assigned bus.
6. Ensure that parents receive written copies of the bus rules and regulations that clearly establish their roles and obligation with respect to pupil promptness, attitude and behavior.
7. The principal shall see that proper records are kept and accurate reports made when due.
8. The principal shall report any problems related to bus stops or bus routing to the Transportation supervisor.
9. The principal shall be responsible for seeing that no bus is taken from the school grounds by anyone without a permit for special purposes. Buses are to remain on the school grounds during the day unless such authorization to remove is granted to the driver.
10. To see that only students ride the bus.
11. Ensure that parents receive written copies of the bus rules and regulations that clearly establish their roles and obligations with respect to pupil promptness, attitude and behavior.
12. No regular bus driver is to subcontract with another person to drive. Regular driver must notify principal of substitute on route.

The Pupil-Parent Responsibility in School Transportation

1. The students are under the authority of the principal. The driver of the bus is responsible for student behavior. Transportation to and from school and related events is a privilege. It shall be the responsibility of the students to conduct themselves like ladies and gentlemen at all times while riding school buses. Rules of conduct established by the DeKalb County School Board are:
 - a. Student shall follow directions of the driver the first time given.
 - b. Student shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus arrives.
 - c. Student shall wait in a safe place, clear of traffic and away from where the bus stops.
 - d. Student shall wait in an orderly line and avoid horseplay.
 - e. Student shall cross the road or street in front of the bus only after the bus has come to a complete stop, the stop arm is extended, and upon the direction of the driver.
 - f. Student shall go directly to an available or assigned seat when entering the bus.
 - g. Student shall remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear.
 - h. Student shall exhibit classroom behavior at all times.
 - i. Student shall refrain from throwing or passing objects on, from, or into the bus.
 - j. Student shall refrain from the use of profane language, obscene gestures, use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or other controlled substance while on the bus.
 - k. Student shall refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.
 - l. Student shall not carry hazardous materials (glass containers included), nuisance items (water guns, whistles etc.), or animals onto the bus.
 - m. Student shall respect the rights and safety of others.
 - n. Student shall not leave or board the bus at locations other than the assigned stops at home or school.
 - o. Student shall refrain from extending head, arms, legs or objects out of the bus windows.
 - p. Student shall refrain from damaging or vandalizing the bus.
 - q. Student shall cooperate with the driver.
 - r. Student shall refrain from any other action not along the lines of good conduct.
2. When necessary, any problem occurring the last day of the school term will be handled the first day of the following term.
3. Unnecessary conversation with driver of the bus shall be avoided.
4. Technical School-Students transported to this school will observe all rules and regulations pertaining to school transportation. Suspension from one school bus applies to the other.
5. Students are prohibited from:
 - a. Sitting in or on parked buses during the day.
 - b. Cleaning the bus unless they are responsible for littering or causing the bus to be unclean.
 - c. Putting fuel into the bus and or any other servicing of bus.
6. The driver shall immediately report any and all violations of the above to principal for action.

7. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to study, inquire, and understand the policies and rules of the Board of Education.
8. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to insure that their children know and obey all rules/regulations and to respect the driver and the rights of the others.
9. Parents or guardians of all students making approved trip shall sign a form giving their permission for the child to ride on the school bus. This releases the Superintendent, members of the County Board of Education and their employees from any liabilities for any injury sustained by the child while participating in the activity, or riding a school bus to and from the said activity (signed forms must be on File in the principal's office), **where proven negligence is not a factor.**
10. Any damage done to a school bus on special trips, beyond normal wear and tear, shall be paid for by the particular school (damages caused by a wreck or driver not included). **The specific amounts to be determined would depend on whether the students from several schools were involved, in the event of an organizational/club trip, etc.**
11. Students shall be ready to board bus at the scheduled time. No bus driver shall repeatedly wait for a student at a stop. A warning shall be given to the student the first time this happens. The second time the driver will advise the student that the bus shall not wait again. A report shall be made to principal. When a student moves during the school year and the bus no longer needs to travel that road, the driver of that school bus has the responsibility to report that fact to the transportation supervisor.
12. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats if necessary. After investigation, the principal can make permanent seating assignments if necessary.
13. Where a bus must turn around, the turning area shall be adequate and free of all obstacles, or the bus will not enter that area.
14. Students shall be transported from an assigned bus stop nearest their home location to their respective school and transported back to the same bus stop.
16. Student shall respect the rights and safety of others.
16. Student shall refrain from leaving or boarding the bus at locations other than the assigned stops at home or school.
17. Student shall refrain from any other action not along the lines of good conduct, including but not limited to exchanging seats while bus is in motion, throwing things, vulgar language or loud noises or shouting. Student shall refrain from extending hands, arms, legs or objects out of the bus windows.
18. Parents or guardians of students are held responsible for damage to the bus. Parents or guardian are responsible for damages. Money for damages to the bus will be collected by the principal and turned into the Central office.
19. If an offense is serious enough to justify immediate action, the driver of the bus has the authority to refuse admittance. The principal will decide if and when the student will again be admitted.

20. Students who drive and parents who come for students shall not enter bus loading zone at school.
21. Students must have a regular place to meet the bus.
22. Parents are advised to check on established bus routes prior to moving into a new territory. Additional buses will not be routed over an existing route. The Transportation Department will not change bus routes to accommodate baby sitters or transport to alternate locations if not on the regular route.

Minimum Administrative Actions

When students do not follow the rules of the DeKalb County Board of Education's Student Code of Conduct while being transported by a school bus, the following action shall be used but is not limited to:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. First Offense | -Student/Administrator conference with bus conduct report sent to parents. |
| 2. Second Offense | -Student/Parent/Administrator conference. |
| 3. Third Offense | -Suspension from school bus. |
| 4. Other | -In keeping with Student Code of Conduct |

Suspensions from the bus vary in time lengths:

1. First suspension -3 days
2. Second suspension -5 days
3. Third suspension -10 days

Students suspended from the bus three times will receive a long-term suspension if a discipline referral is turned in after that. Follow due process. Also, follow procedures for students with disabilities as furnished by Special Education Department.

Some serious violations of bus rules will result in automatic suspension of bus privileges by principal. These violations are:

1. Fighting
2. Weapons on the bus
3. Damage to the bus. (Parents are responsible for cost of the damage to the bus.)
4. Use or possession of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or any other controlled substance.
5. Any offense which principal may deem reasonable to fall within the category of acts of misconduct. Continued violation of bus regulations could result in principal's recommendation of expulsion.

School Bus Driver/Substitutes Job Qualifications and Duties

Qualifications: Responsible to: Principal/Transportation Supervisor

1. The qualifications for a school bus driver shall be in compliance with regulations established by the Federal Government, State Department of Education and the DeKalb County Board of Education.

2. Each applicant shall fill out in detail and in his or her own handwriting a driver's application form as prescribed by the DeKalb County Board of Education.
3. Each applicant shall possess a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
4. Each applicant shall possess a valid Alabama School Bus Driver's Certificate.
5. Pass a medical examination upon initial employment and every other year as prescribed by the DeKalb County Board of Education, no later than April 1, and meet such requirements as may be prescribed by law or regulation, which include drugs and alcohol testing. Medical clearance is needed for driver, including condition of heart, blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, TB, hearing, vision and overall physical condition.
6. Pass a drug test.
7. Good moral character.
8. Dependable and reliable.
9. Exercise good judgment.
10. Agree to attend instructional meetings, workshops and participate in staff development, as required by the Board of Education.
11. Dress Code - follow same policy as teachers.
 - a. Set a good example for students.
 - b. Be a good role model.
 - c. Always be clean, neat, and dressed appropriately for the position of bus driver.
 - d. Do not violate any dress requirement set for high school students.

II. Duties:

1. Obey all traffic laws.
2. Observe all mandatory safety regulations for school buses.
3. Maintain discipline when students are on the bus.
4. Report undisciplined students to the proper authority.
5. Keep assigned bus clean.
6. Adhere to assigned schedule.
7. Check bus before each operation for mechanical defects.
8. Notify the proper authority in case of mechanical failure or lateness.
9. Discharge students only at authorized stops.
10. Exercise reasonable leadership when on extra school trips.

11. Report all accidents and complete required reports.
12. Enforce regulations and policies against use of tobacco, drugs and alcohol.
13. Report to his or her principal any violent disruptive incidents (physical violence with or without a weapon, vandalism and property damage) on the day the incident occurs.
14. Subcontracting position is prohibited. All absences and substitutes must be reported.
15. The cost of repairing buses may be deducted from driver's salary if damage was caused by negligence of driver.
16. Perform reasonable job and related duties and tasks as requested by the Superintendent of Education and the appropriate supervisory personnel.
17. Act courteously at all times.

Weather Conditions

1. **Be alert for sudden changes in the weather.**
2. **A Tornado Watch** means that the weather conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes. But no tornadoes have been reported by the general public or indicated by the National Weather Service radar. Bus drivers need to review their responsibilities regarding severe weather procedures and the safety of the school children.
3. **A Tornado Warning** means that a tornado has been reported on the weather radar or reported as being seen by an individual. If you spot a tornado funnel or if you hear a tornado warning, take immediate emergency action. School buses may **NOT** run during a tornado warning. Some suggested emergency procedures are:
 - a. If you are at school, escort the children back to shelter in the school immediately.
 - b. If you are driving when you hear a tornado warning or spot a funnel cloud, stop the bus. Escort the children to the nearest ravine, ditch, underpass or a low spot in the terrain (but far enough away from the bus so that high wind will not roll it over onto the students). Have the student assume the protective position (drop onto their elbows and knees, and cover the backs of their heads with their hands, coats or jackets).
 - c. If you are driving when you hear a tornado warning or spot a funnel cloud and there is no time to move the children when you stop the bus, have the students assume the protective position with their heads below the school bus window level.
4. In case of extremely foggy conditions, you should be able to see at least the distance of your headlights beams. If this is not possible, bring the bus to a safe location and call the transportation supervisor for guidance.

5. Should the bus become entangled in a power line, driver and all students are to remain in the bus. Anyone getting out will become grounded and suffer electrical shock. Stay in the bus and summon help.
6. **DO NOT DRIVE ACROSS FLOODWATER ON ROADS.**

Field Trips and Athletic Events

The DeKalb County Board of Education has authorized the use of school buses for field trips and athletic events under the conditions outlined below:

1. For approved trips inside the state, buses may be used after a trip permit has been approved and signed by the superintendent. Requests must be made several days in advance of trip, including short trips. Requests should come from the principal and proper records kept of mileage for payment purposes.
2. Permits for regularly scheduled athletic games do not require the signature of the superintendent but must be completed by the principal and given to the bus driver, with extra copies retained for files and submitted to the Central Office for payment purposes. Junior high athletic trips require a regular permit from the principal. Forms are furnished to all schools. Proper records must be maintained. A request for approval of an out-of-state trip requires ten days' notice.
3. Students must have parents' written permission to make any trip. Principals will provide forms.
4. Use of bus for trip shall not prevent regular transportation of children to and from school on established routes.
5. One or more teachers, principals or designee shall ride the bus on its entire trip and shall ensure that school bus conduct rules are abided by.
6. All students who ride on special trips shall be enrolled in the school as a participating member of the group named in the request and must comply with approved rules of conduct and responsibilities of students. School officials, employees and an adequate number of official chaperons (**at least one must be an adult employee of the board**), designated by the principal, may accompany students on the bus.
7. Parents or guardians of all students making approved trip shall sign a form giving their permission for the child to ride on the school bus. This releases the Superintendent, members of the County Board of Education, and their employees from any liabilities for any injury sustained by the child while participating in the activity, or riding a school bus to and from the said activity (signed forms must be on file in the principal's office), **where proven negligence is not a factor.**
8. Any damage done to a school bus on special trips, beyond normal wear and tear, shall be paid for by the particular school (damages caused by a wreck or driver not included). **The specific amounts to be determined would depend on whether the students from several schools were involved, in the event of an organizational/club trip, etc.**

9. Payment of state rate per mile (beginning and ending at the home school of the bus used) will be paid to the DeKalb County Board of Education. The Board will prepare monthly bills for all trips and send to the schools. All payments made to the Board of Education shall be in the form of a check drawn from the local school account and made payable to the DeKalb County Board of Education. Cash will not be accepted.
10. The use of regular drivers is encouraged when the trip does not interfere with their regular duties.
11. Use of Private Vehicles -A van with a capacity of more than 10 requires regular state inspections and a CDL licensed driver. When transporting students to school related events, it is not recommended that anyone use private vehicles that carry more than 7 passengers. Seat belts must be provided.
12. **Monthly Report of Extra Trips**
Monthly report for bus drivers must be made to the school principal's office and turned in with the monthly payroll. Drivers may then check with the school secretary, if necessary, to determine which trips are included in paycheck.
13. Drivers will be paid for extra trips in accordance to federal minimum wage per hour. Hourly rates will apply from the time of departure from the home school, until the bus returns to the home school.

Overnight or extended trips will be subject to principal/supervisor/driver agreement to prearranged terms.

Regular drivers at the school will be given an opportunity to drive extra trips as long as it does not interfere with the regular route. Volunteer drivers, club sponsors, or coaches (with appropriate CDL and approved by the transportation supervisor) may drive buses to school sponsored activities.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

1. Reasons for Emergency Evacuation of School Bus.
 - A. Fire or danger of fire - If you suspect fire anywhere on your school bus, the bus should be stopped and evacuated immediately. All passengers should move away from the bus as indicated in the instructions and remain there until the driver has determined that no danger exists. If the school bus is unable to move and is close to existing fire or highly combustible materials, the "danger of fire" should be assumed and all passengers evacuated.
 - B. Unsafe location - If the school bus is stopped in an unsafe location or is unable to proceed, the driver should determine if the students would be safer outside the bus or remaining inside.
 - C. The bus **MUST BE EVACUATED** in the following circumstances.
 1. Should the bus become disabled in the path of any train or near any railroad tracks, evacuate the bus immediately and notify the police and Transportation Department.
 2. If your bus should come to rest near a body of water or over a bluff where it might shift, it must be evacuated.
 3. A disabled bus should be visible for approximately 300 feet in normal traffic conditions. This may not be true for a position over a hill or around a curve where the visibility does not meet recommended distances. That should be considered a requirement for immediate evacuation.

2. PRELIMINARY PLANNING

- A. Driver is the one to decide WHAT TO DO OR NOT TO DO, WHEN TO DO AND HOW TO DO. The decisions must be made calmly and quickly.
- B. There will be excitement; however the driver is in command and cannot show nervousness or lack of self-confidence. Remain calm.
- C. Among the first decision to be made is whether to evacuate the students. Will they be safer inside or outside the Bus?

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

The DeKalb County Public School System requires each school bus to be equipped with the following emergency equipment:

- 1. Fire Extinguisher.
- 2. First Aid Kit, including latex gloves.
- 3. Fluid Clean-up Kit.
- 4. Emergency Reflectors/Flares.
- 6. Copy of Communicable Disease Handbook — or driver be knowledgeable of..

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILL

- 1. Instructions and Pupil Training
 - a. Purpose: Prepare everyone to meet highly irregular and dangerous circumstances in as calm and rational a manner as possible.
 - b. In all drills: NO ONE DOES ANYTHING WITHOUT THE DRIVER'S COMMAND.
 - c. Students must know that in real life situations, they would have to use some initiative if driver and student leaders were unable to give directions.
 - d. If students must leave the bus, they must be calm and quiet.
 - e. Explain that rushing will not save time; it will only cause more problems.
 - f. Noise may keep them from hearing instructions.
 - g. Passengers help one another, but no one is to pull or grab another.
 - h. A helper may extend a hand for the other person to take at exits.
 - i. Children are to stay together at a location at least 100 feet outside the bus, out of any danger.
 - j. Explain to the students that emergency procedures are important to them and, in the event of real trouble, they will know what is expected and what to do.
- 2. Steps to take in Emergency Evacuation Drills
 - A. Objective: Get students off the bus in a SAFE and ORDERLY manner and in the shortest time necessary to assure safety and order.

- B. Select regular student leaders and instruct them as follows:
1. Turn off the ignition switch.
 2. Set the emergency brake.
 3. Get help and know how to do so.
 4. Open emergency doors and windows.
 5. Set flares and reflectors.
 6. Open and close doors and account for all pupils passing their stations.
 7. Help small children off the bus.
 8. Follow all instructions promptly and correctly.
 9. **IMPORTANT:** ALL DRIVERS SHOULD HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM A PARENT FOR THE CHILD TO BE ASSIGNED AS A STUDENT LEADER.
 10. **DRIVER STAYS ON THE BUS THROUGHOUT THE DRILL.**

Note: Special training, preparation, and drills shall be arranged, as necessary, to assist students with disabilities.

SAFETY STICKERS

Checking to make sure all students have exited the bus.

After unloading bus in the morning, driver shall check bus to make sure no child has been left on the bus. Upon determining that all children have exited, a sticker shall be placed in the rear door window of bus. This sticker shall be removed upon departure in the after- noon and the procedure repeated at the end of the day to make sure no child is left on the bus.

PRECAUTIONARY PROCEDURES FOR DRIVERS

A. ACCIDENTS:

MAJOR CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS

- a. Backing.
- b. Following too closely.
- c. Failure to yield right of way.
- d. Turns.

If your bus is involved in an accident, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. Secure your bus - Plan your course of action.
2. Check for injured students on your bus and, if practical, check passengers in the vehicle.

3. Always have local law enforcement agency dispatched to the scene of the accident. If there are injuries, report it when calling police. To protect the System as well as you as an individual, the police shall be notified. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU TO LEAVE THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT WITHOUT IT BEING PROPERLY INVESTIGATED BY THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.**
4. Do not move your vehicle until the police arrive.
6. Notify the Transportation Supervisor/Department or have someone phone for you with all necessary information - bus number, school, accident location, injuries, condition of bus, need for wrecker, etc.
6. Notify your school(s) or have someone phone for you.
7. Police should give you a form with information on others involved. If not, ask for this information to be provided in order for you to report to Transportation supervisor.
8. **AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU ADMIT FAULT FOR THE ACCIDENT.** Do not discuss an accident with anyone except police officer, Transportation Supervisor or school administrator. The system insurance carrier could possibly contact you for a statement concerning your accident. Before giving any information to anyone, you should verify with the Transportation Supervisor or other designated personnel. This is for your protection as well as that of the system.
9. You are required to come to the Transportation office as soon as possible (no later than the next working day) to file a written accident report on the form provided (TR-III). All information shall be included on the form, along with your signature. All other necessary paperwork shall be handled through the Transportation Office.

B. HIGHWAY DRIVING SPEEDS

Drivers should obey posted speed limits and observe road condition at all times.

C. BACKING THE BUS

Back-ups should be avoided if at all possible, however many routes require this maneuver.

If you must back up, remember these steps:

1. Carefully observe the back up area as you approach.
2. **HELP** -Ask a **RESPONSIBLE STUDENT** to assist you from inside the rear of the bus by watching for any objects behind the bus.
3. **HAZARD LIGHTS**-Activate them before you start to back.
4. **HORN**-Gently tap your horn before you start back.
5. Back up slowly
6. Use your outside flat mirrors to back.
7. If you are unsure of your position, pull up and begin backup maneuver again.
8. Buses are not to be backed up on school grounds when possible.
9. Always back with students on board bus. At a stop requiring you to back your bus, load your students **FIRST** and **THEN** back your bus. During the unloading procedure, make your back up maneuver **FIRST** and **THEN** unload your students. **NEVER BACK YOUR BUS WITH STUDENTS ON THE GROUND.**

D. BREAKDOWNS:

1. Mechanical problems on the bus route or while on educational excursions during regular hours (6:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) shall require the driver to notify the Transportation Department at 845-3711 for assistance. Assistance after hours (and on week ends and holidays) shall be provided by calling the transportation supervisor.
2. Your school(s) shall be notified if you expect to be late for loading or unloading students. If you need the Transportation Department to contact the school(s) involved, the driver must make this request known.
3. The bus shall always remain at the breakdown location as reported to the Transportation Department. If a mechanic has not corrected the problem, the bus will probably break down somewhere else along your route. It is impossible to make timely repairs if the mechanic is searching for the bus.
4. You are responsible for the safety of your passengers. The following procedures may prove helpful during this time:
 - a. The bus shall be secured in a safe location. Reflectors shall be used if necessary.
 - b. Students shall be evacuated ONLY if bus is in an unsafe place, there is fire or threat of fire and they would be safer away from the bus.
 - c. The driver shall not leave the bus unattended.

E. BRIDGES:

All bridges on bus routes shall be of sufficient tonnage to assure safety for the bus to cross. If uncertain about specific bridge on bus route, driver is to contact the transportation supervisor who will work with the DeKalb County Commission in determining the condition of the bridge. (NOTE: Check on your bus for the GVWR, located in the driver's area on a metal plate. This is the weight of your bus).

DRIVER'S INSTRUCTIONS LOADING OR UNLOADING

Statistics indicate more children are injured or killed during loading or unloading. The following steps should be followed in order to safeguard your precious cargo while they are outside the bus.

1. Use rapid eye movements to constantly monitor the traffic around you during the entire loading or unloading process. You **MUST** be aware of the actions of the traffic in the vicinity of your bus stop.
2. Activate your overhead amber warning lights approximately 300 feet from your bus stop. This warns traffic around you that the bus will make a stop very soon.
3. Bring your bus to a complete stop. Open the passenger door slightly in order to activate the red lights and stop arms. Traffic should now be stopped.
4. The bus should be stopped approximately 6 - 8 feet from the actual stop. You should NEVER anticipate a child's movements. By stopping away from the children, it is less likely that a child may fall or be pushed under the front wheels.

6. When all traffic has stopped, open the door to allow the students to enter bus.
6. If your students live on the opposite side of the street, require them to wait there until they can cross with the protection of the red lights and stop arms. A special “hand signal” or “head movement” can be used as a signal to your students when the “coast is clear” and ALL TRAFFIC has stopped. Only at this time should they attempt to cross the street.
7. Once your students have entered the bus in an orderly manner, make sure all passengers are seated before the bus is placed into motion.
8. Check traffic adjacent to the stop. Release parking brakes and close the passenger door.
9. In unloading your students, basic operating procedures are the same. However, there are several additional key points to remember. You should count your students as they unload, making sure all students are clear of the bus and other traffic. The students should be in a safe location off the roadway before the bus is placed in motion.
10. All students should cross in front of the bus upon signal from driver.

UNLOADING FROM FRONT OF BUS

1. Stop the bus in a pre-selected location on the school grounds away from traffic. Note: Be sure that ample adult supervision is at the location before drill is held.
2. Shut off the engine and secure the parking brake.
3. Place the transmission in first or reverse gear for manual transmission; in park for automatic.
4. Remove the ignition key.
5. Stand, open the front door, face the children and get their attention.
6. Give the command; “Front Door Emergency Evacuation Drill-Remain Seated.”
7. Direct the two helpers to their place beside the front door.
8. Stand between the first occupied seats, facing the front of the bus.
9. Starting with the right-hand seat, ask the leader to lead all students 100 feet or 40 paces from the bus and instruct the other occupants of the right seats to follow.
10. Hold your hand before the occupants of the left-hand seat in a restraining gesture.
11. When the pupils in the right-hand seats have moved forward in the aisle, dismiss the occupants of the left-hand seats.
12. Continue the evacuation procedure as described, right and left seats alternately, until the bus is empty.

13. When the last seat is empty, walk to the front of the bus and chock to ensure that everyone is out.

When the driver leaves the bus, he should take his two helpers and join the others.

The driver should evaluate the evacuation performance, pointing out improvements needed and commending the students on those activities well done.

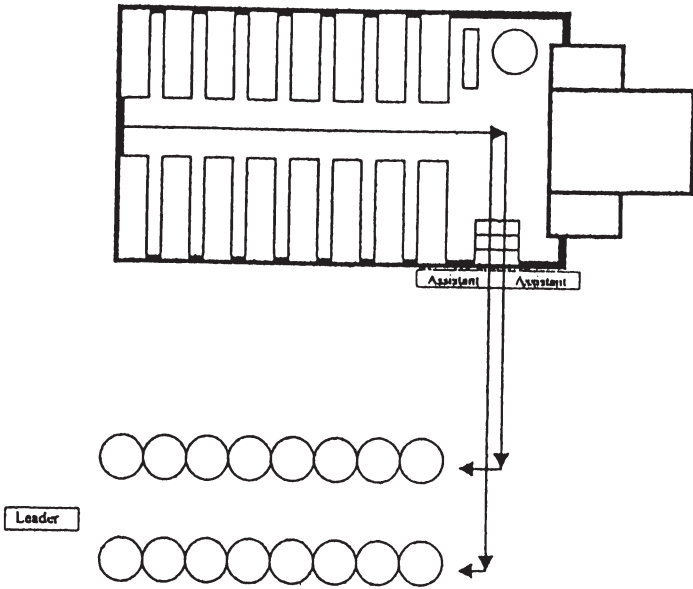
The purpose of this exercise is not to see how fast the drill can be done; the purpose is to train students to leave the bus safely and in an orderly manner.

UNLOADING FROM REAR OF BUS

1. Stop the bus in a pre-selected location on the school grounds away from traffic. Note: Be sure that ample adult supervision is at the location before drill is held.
2. Shut off the engine and secure the parking brake.
3. Place the transmission in first or reverse gear for manual transmission; in park for automatic.
4. Remove the ignition key.
5. Stand, face the children and get their attention.
6. Give the command; "Rear Door Emergency Evacuation Drill-Remain Seated."
7. Walk to the rear of the bus and face the rear door.
8. Use the left-hand to restrain occupants of the right rear seat.
9. Ask the first assistant to open the emergency door, drop the safety chain, jump out, and take his or her position.
10. Have the second assistant jump out and take his or her position.
11. Have the leader stand in the doorway to lead the rest of the students off the bus to a position 100 feet or 40 paces from the bus.
12. Before the leader jumps, turn around, face the front of the bus, and explain in what rotation (starting with the right rear seat then left rear, right, and so on) the students are to leave their seats, reminding them to remain seated until it is their turn to move.
13. Face the doorway and move between the left rear seats to clear the aisle. Command the leader to assume a semi-squat position, reach out and place his hand on top of the assistant's hands and hop out; then go to his position away from the bus.
14. Tell the students seated in the right rear seat to leave the bus, then call for the students in the next left seat to leave; then the call for the students in the next right seat, until the bus is empty.

TYPES OF EVACUATIONS

1. FRONT DOOR EVACUATION



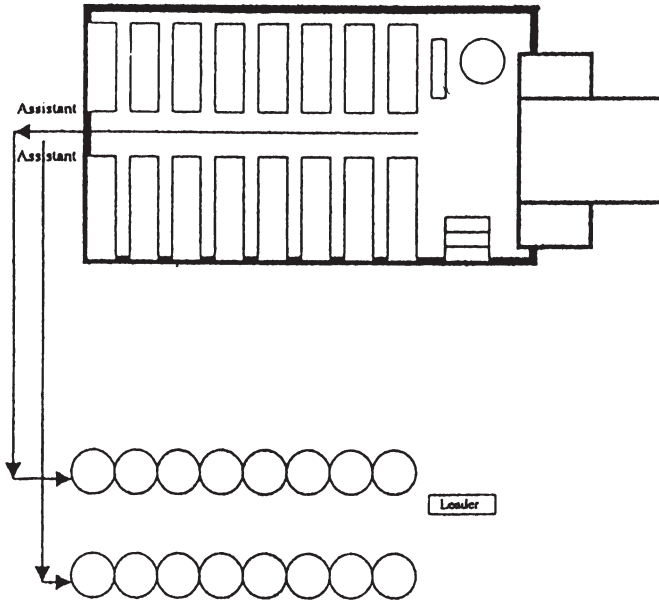
PERSONNEL NEEDED - Three (one leader and two assistants).
STUDENT PARTICIPATION - All students.

Appoint two assistants, one for each side of the door. These assistants will count students and assist them in getting off the bus.

Appoint one student to lead the other students to a point 100 feet or 40 paces from the bus.

TYPES OF EVACUATIONS

1. REAR FLOOR-LEVEL EVACUATION



PERSONNEL NEEDED - Three (one leader and two assistants).

STUDENT PARTICIPATION - All students.

Appoint two assistants, one for each side (outside) of the emergency door. These assistants will stand on each side of the exit door with one hand held at shoulder height, palms up.

Students leaving the bus place their hands on those of the assistants for support in jumping to the ground. Assistants DO NOT grasp the jumper's hand.

Appoint one student to lead the other students to a point 100 feet or 40 paces from the bus.

These three students are to be seated in the left rear seat.

VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEM POLICY

The Video camera shall be placed on school buses to be used only as an aid to monitor student and driver behavior. It shall not replace the discipline policy, the authority of the driver, or the responsibility of the school official. The basic safe riding and driving rules shall prevail and the consequences of misconduct shall be carried out.

1. Notify students and bus drivers that they are subject to being videotaped on the school bus at any time. Notices will be posted on each bus.
2. Misconduct showing on the videotape shall result in appropriate consequences.
3. Parents shall be notified by the school district of the policy concerning videotaping on the school bus.
4. Cameras shall be scheduled on a rotation basis so as not to select only certain buses. Based on the number of incidents of misconduct and the seriousness of these reports, video monitoring on a certain bus route may be done more frequently.
5. The bus driver may request more frequent monitoring.
6. The bus driver actions will be observed on all videotaping.
7. The principal/designee or the transportation supervisor/designee shall install and remove the cameras in the boxes on the buses. No one, not even the driver of the bus, is to know on which bus the camera is located. Keys to the boxes are to be given only to these designated people.
8. After videotaping has been conducted, the tapes are to be stored in a secure place at the school for five days. If no incidents are reported within 5 days the tapes will be recycled. If incidents are reported, or if incidents are reviewed during random selection, the videotapes are to be kept until final resolution and time for any appeals.
9. Random selection of videotapes will be viewed by the principal, designee or transportation supervisor/designee.
10. Principal/designee shall date the tapes and have the bus number and driver's name to ensure proper identification.
11. A log shall be maintained on the use of the video camera by the principal.
12. Information obtained from or gathered by videotape may be used to achieve a resolution to a problem or for disciplinary actions. Tapes may be viewed upon written request only from those directly involved in actions.
13. The school board members, superintendent/designee, transportation supervisor/designee, principal/designee, bus driver, students and parent or guardians shall be allowed to see or review the tape.

PERSONNEL POLICIES

Leaves of Absence, Sick Leave, Payroll, Insurance, Retirement, General Policies

See Personnel Handbook.

DEKALB COUNTY PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

1. Front of Vehicle

Leaks
Lens Covers
Mirrors
Cleanliness

Engine Compartment

Brake Fluid Levels
Coolant Level
Oil Level
Power Steering Level
Transmission Level
Windshield Washer Level
Belts - 1/2. inch
Hoses / Wires

Steering

Box
Linkage

Front Suspension

Springs
Spring Mount
Shock Absorber

Front Brakes

Hoses / Lines
Chamber
Slack Adjuster - 1 inch
Drum

Front Wheels

Tires 4/32" New Only
Rims
Hub Oil Seal
Lug Nuts
Valve Stem Caps

2. Driver Entrance

Door Secure
Stepwell
Handrail

Emergency Equipment

Fire Extinguisher
Spare Fuses
Triangular Reflectors
First Aid Kit
Cleaning Kit

Lights

Head Bright / Dim
Hazard
Yellow Warning
Red Flashing
Stop Sign
Stop Sign Lights
Stepwell
Turn Signals
Indicators
Clearance Lights
Strobe Light
Brake Lights
Dome Lights
Backup Lights
Backup Alarm

Emergency Exits / Seat

Seats
Emergency Door & Buzzers
Emergency Windows & Buzzers
Emergency Hatches & Buzzers

3. Driver Side

Battery
Windows
Reflector

Rear Brakes

Hoses / Lines
Chamber
Slack Adjuster - 1 inch
Drums

Rear Wheels

Tires 2/32 - may be recaps
Rims
Axle Seals
Lug Nuts
Spacers
Valve Stem Caps

Rear Suspension

Springs
Springs Mount
Shock Absorber

Rear Of Bus

Exhaust System
Emergency Door & Holder
Door Gasket
Cleanliness (Inside)
Lens Covers

Fuel Area

Fuel Tank Cap
Fuel Tank Leaks
Fuel Tank Gage

4. Engine Starts

Voltage
Fuel
Oil Pressure
Gearshift
Horn
Steering Play - 2 inches
Windshield
Mirrors (Adjust)
Windshield Washer
Windshield Wipers
Heater
Defroster

Air Brake Check

1. Build air pressure to approximately 125 psi.
2. Turn motor off-turn ignition on-release parking brakes.
3. With foot off brake, air pressure should not fall more than 2 psi in 1 min.
4. Apply foot to brake after the initial drop-the air should not fall more than 3 psi in 1 min.
5. Pump / Bleed Brake and by 60 psi the low air warning buzzer and light should come on.
6. Keep pumping and bleeding the brake and between 20-40 psi-the emergency brake should pop out.
7. Start engine-put in drive and check parking brake- bus should not move.

Before leaving Bus, the following two procedures shall be done,

1. Pump / Bleed the air down until emergency brake pops on.
2. Go to the back of the bus to make sure that no one is left on bus.