COLORADO
Department of Education

Type A, Multifunction, Small-Capacity Vehicle Route/Activity Operator Guide

2025-2026

CDE School Transportation Unit

201 East Colfax Avenue, Denver, CO 80203

www.cde.state.co.us/transportation

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Introduction

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) School Transportation Unit issues these guidelines to assist public and charter school districts, service providers, and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) with developing policies and procedures for the transportation of students. These guidelines provide interpretations, suggestions, operations, industry standards, best practices, and ideas that are consistent with 1 CCR 301-26, The Colorado Rules for the Operation, Maintenance, and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles; and 1 CCR 301-25 Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles, which promote transportation integrity in school transportation departments. It is our hope that this publication will serve as a resource to assist transportation providers as they work toward compliance with legislation and regulations.

Acknowledgements

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Unit One – Driver Role and Responsibility

Do you remember one of your school bus drivers by name?

It is interesting how many of us can recall their names, isn't it? School bus drivers significantly impacted and influenced many of our lives during our adolescent years, and you may not have recognized it until this very minute.

Learning to drive a vehicle the size of a school bus, even if it is a minibus, is an extremely difficult task. It involves knowledge of related information, visual skills, judgments, decisions, and accurate responses. Competent school transportation vehicle operators and uniformity in the operation of these vehicles throughout the State of Colorado are imperative to provide efficient, economical transportation with the least risk to our students and the public.

School transportation vehicle operators are also some of the most trusted people in our society, noting that parents are placing their children's safety in a stranger's hands. While the children are on the bus or in a school vehicle, their safety is entrusted to you.

School transportation vehicle operators who operate their vehicle(s) on the roadway, obey all traffic laws, exercise extreme caution, follow all district, charter, or service provider policies, and adhere to all state and federal requirements while maintaining good order will be appreciated and respected in their community as people who perform a difficult and necessary service.

Each driver has numerous responsibilities, ranging from insignificant tasks to extremely critical decision-making, which may involve the well-being of a passenger or the liability of the school district, charter, or service provider.

The Transportation Team

Each team member involved in student transportation is essential. Knowing the role and responsibilities of each team member will better equip the driver to become a supporting member. Correctly understanding these other roles is vital to the driver's subsequent action.

US Department of Transportation

Its mission is to "Serve the United States by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation system that meets our vital

national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future." It was established by an act of Congress on October 15, 1966, and began operation on April 1, 1967. The United States Secretary of Transportation governs it.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

Its mission is to "Save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce vehicle-related crashes." It is an agency of the US Department of Transportation. It is charged with writing and enforcing Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), the vehicle identification number (VIN) system, and other safety-related functions.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)

These standards are legislatively mandated to issue U.S. federal regulations specifying design, construction, performance, and durability requirements for motor vehicles and regulated automobile safety-related components.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

Regulates the trucking industry in the United States. The primary mission of the FMCSA is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.

Colorado Department of Education (CDE)

C.R.S. section 42-4-1904 The State Board of Education, by and with the advice of the executive director of the department, shall adopt and enforce regulations not inconsistent with this article to govern the operation of all school buses used for the transportation of school children and to govern the discharge of passengers from such school buses.

Colorado Department of Education – School Transportation Unit

Its mission is to create a supportive, encouraging learning environment for the school districts, charter schools, and service providers serving Colorado public school children through professional, knowledgeable ideas, and utilizing the best resources available to achieve safe transportation programs.

Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)

Agencies that are an extension of the local member school district or charter school. They exist to supply educational services to two or more school districts or charter schools that alone cannot afford the service or find it advantageous and cost-effective to cooperate with another school district or charter school. They also operate as Special Education Administrative Units, in which Colorado Revised Statutes require a minimum number of students or participants to qualify.

Colorado Public School District, Charter School, or Service Provider

Means any public school district, charter school, or service provider organized pursuant to law ***(C.R.S. Section 22, Article 30)*** or a Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES) organized pursuant to law ***(C.R.S. Section 22, Article 5)***. They provide and administer the student transportation system for eligible students living within the school district, charter school, or service provider boundaries.

Superintendent

An administrator or manager in charge of a school district or charter school.

Principals

An educator who has executive authority over a school. The principal may manage problems that arise on the bus involving students from their building.

Teacher

A person who teaches or instructs as a profession. An important person to share open and honest communication regarding student needs.

Transportation Director/Supervisor

Provides direct administration and supervision to all student transportation personnel and operations.

Fleet Director/Supervisor

Directly administers and supervises all student transportation mechanics/technicians and fleet vehicles, including maintenance, purchasing, and inspections.

Mechanic/Technician

Provides maintenance and repair of all machinery, vehicles, and equipment used in the operations of school transportation departments.

Dispatcher

Provides direct communication and relays essential information between school transportation vehicles and operators regarding student transportation.

Driver

An individual operating a school transportation vehicle who is charged with the safety-sensitive function of transporting students.

Paraprofessional

An individual who is charged with assisting the driver in the daily functions of student management while the vehicle is in operation.

Students

The reason we are here! They are the children of the school district or charter school who are learning under the supervision of a teacher. Students should conduct themselves so the bus driver can perform their tasks safely and efficiently.

Parents

Responsible for having students prepared to arrive at the bus stop on time. Provide support to transportation by expecting that each child conducts him/herself in an appropriate manner while on the school transportation vehicle.

Chaperones

Any adult present to maintain order or propriety at a school district or charter school activity.

Coaches

Train athletes or teams of athletes. May drive school transportation vehicles on athletic or activity trips.

Laws, Rules, Regulations, Policies, Procedures, and Recommendations

School bus drivers and small-capacity vehicle drivers need to understand the differences between laws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and recommendations. However, they must develop a positive attitude toward accepting and obeying all laws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and recommendations as a mandatory part of their support as part of the student transportation team.

Law

A law is a requirement that has been passed by a legislative body and signed by the Chief Executive. At the Federal level, the legislative body is Congress. At the State level, it is the state legislature. Laws/statutes are requirements that must be obeyed. The Colorado Revised Statutes are an example of a state statute, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is an example of a federal law.

Rules and Regulations

Synonymous terms for requirements adopted by an executive department with the authority to establish rules for carrying out the program. A definite procedure must be followed when adopting administrative rules. When adopted, the rules have the same effect as if they were laws. They are requirements that must be obeyed. The Colorado Department of Education's Annual Inspection/Operation Rules for School Transportation and the Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles are examples of Rules.

Policy

A course of action, guiding principle, or procedure adopted by any authoritative body that is expedient, prudent, or advantageous. Policies are principles or guidelines one is expected to follow, but are not mandated as a law or rule. School boards may have policies and procedures related to the student transportation program at the local school district, charter, or service provider level. A school, charter, or service provider policy example is a student discipline policy or dress code policy.

Procedure

This is an established method or way of doing things—a manner or method in which a business or action is carried on. Procedures can be departmental or district-wide. Drivers must know the difference between policy and procedure so that it is not misquoted.

Recommendation

A statement giving advice or counsel. Any organization or individual might recommend some type of action. Recommendations are significant because if you fail to follow a manufacturer's recommendation, you may void warranties and cause unnecessary injury. An example of an important manufacturing recommendation is the use, placement, and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS). The manufacturer recommends that students not be seated directly behind a student in a CSRS unless they are also restrained. You may increase your liability risk if you do not follow a recommendation.

Your Personal Pre-Trip

The personal pre-trip is just as important as the vehicle pre-trip. Factors that influence a driver's well-being are physical, emotional, and mental attitudes. Stress in any of these areas can affect driving performance. Under physical, emotional, or mental stress, a driver may have trouble concentrating and experience slowed reaction times.

Be Well Rested

Fatigue is one of the major contributing factors to crashes. A well-rested driver is more alert to emergencies and less likely to misjudge speed and

distance. A driver who gets adequate rest is also less likely to overreact to stress created by traffic and passengers.

Physical Health

Both illness and the medicine to combat it can interfere with concentration, coordination, and decision-making abilities. Medications, such as cold treatments, may cause more problems with driving ability than the illness itself. Behind the wheel of a school transportation vehicle is not the place to combat the flu!

Proper Dress

Clothing contributes to both safety and the driver's professional image. Loose clothing, drawstrings, unsecured long hair, and jewelry may get caught in equipment. Shoes with smooth soles or spiked heels may cause ankle injuries or slipping and falling on uneven or slick surfaces. Clothing and footwear must be appropriate for road and weather conditions.

As a school transportation vehicle operator, your footwear should be firm and stable, with no open toes or heels, and should fit securely to the foot. Remember, clothing that is provocative and advertises drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or sex should not be worn.

Drugs and/or Alcohol

The possession or use of any drugs or alcohol while driving is prohibited, including vaping. The use of any drugs or alcohol prior to driving a school transportation vehicle is also prohibited.

Confidence

Confidence is also a factor. Overconfident drivers may take unnecessary chances, while underconfident drivers may not make critical driving decisions in a timely manner.

Emotional and Personal Problems

Driving is not a place to rehearse arguments or relive family fights. When such strong emotional events dominate drivers' thoughts, they can affect safe driving observations or the ability to make sound decisions.

Mental Health

Generally speaking, the problems that fall into this category do not come suddenly, and while treatable, they usually require time. Mental health is closely related to emotional upsets and/or physical problems. Being depressed over a lengthy period, with or without apparent reason, may be related to physical factors or brain chemical imbalances that characterize a mental condition. Drivers experiencing ongoing mental or emotional problems may need help from a professional. Seeking out available resources is the first step.

Self-Esteem

These factors cannot be changed briefly, but they do affect driving. Studies show that drivers who lack self-esteem have more crashes.

In conclusion, know when you are "fit and ready" to drive the school vehicle. Know and acknowledge when you need help becoming "fit and ready" to safely transport students. Safely transporting students is our business.

Five keys to being a successful school transportation vehicle operator:

1. Competence
2. Positive Attitude
3. Communication
4. Cooperation
5. Safety Awareness

It is important to be professional in our conduct, not only during our workday but also outside of it. How you conduct yourself in public directly impacts your school district, charter school, or service providers, and the public's impression of you.

You are in a fishbowl. Whether you like it or not, when you work with children, the public and their parents have incredibly high expectations of your skills, integrity, and ethics. They expect high-quality, responsible people to care for the safety of their children. Studies show that when students respect leadership, there are significantly fewer incidents of disciplinary issues.

How you represent yourself and your school district, charter school, or service provider is very important. Ask yourself these questions daily:

- Am I dressed as a professional driver? (Clean, modest clothing, proper footwear, etc.)
- Is the bus placed in my care properly cleaned and maintained?
- Can my employer and students count on me to arrive at work on time?
- Can my students count on me to be fair and impartial?
- Am I setting an example of respect to my students by exhibiting respect to others?
- Am I conducting myself in a manner that reflects positively on me and my school district, charter school, or service provider?

If you can answer "yes" to all of these questions, you will be well on your way to having a successful experience as a professional school bus driver.

"To be respected, you must first be respectable."

School Transportation Vehicle Operator Requirements

As a school transportation vehicle operator for a school district, charter school, or service provider, you must comply with specific requirements before transporting students. Each component is found in the Driver Qualification File (DQF). Some items in the DQF are listed as "annual file," while others are listed as "permanent file." The items found under the "annual file" are those that need to be completed annually, whereas the "permanent file" pieces are only required per **1 CCR 301-26; Rule 5.2** and **5.3** to be completed once. Operation Rule 5.2 addresses the requirements for all non-CDL operators who transport for ROUTES, and Rule 5.3 includes the requirements for all non-CDL operators who only transport for ACTIVITIES.

1 CCR 301-26, 5.0 School Transportation Vehicle Operator Requirements

5.2 School transportation vehicle route operators (transporting students to and from school or from school to school) driving vehicles with the capacity a of 15 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), including Type A Multifunction Bus and Small Capacity Vehicle, shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

5.02(a) The operator shall possess a valid driver's license. A commercial license is not required for this class of vehicle.

5.02(b) The operator shall be a minimum of 18 years of age.

5.02(c) The operator shall annually complete the CDE Vehicle Operator's Medical Information Form (STU-17). Any yes annotations shall require a doctor's release. **A school district, charter school, or service provider may choose to have an operator complete a DOT physical in lieu of the STU-17.**

5.02(d) School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall obtain a motor vehicle record of each operator prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. Upon review, the reviewer shall initial the motor vehicle record.

5.02(e) The operator shall be given and/or have access to the CDE Type A Multifunction Bus/ Small-Capacity Vehicle Route Driver Guide prior to transporting students. A copy of the Certificate of Receipt, signed by the operator, shall be placed in the driver qualification file.

5.02(f) The operator shall receive a minimum of six hours of in-service training annually. A portion of this annual in-service requirement may occur during the school year.

5.02(g) The operator shall successfully pass a CDE Type A Multifunction Bus/Small-Capacity Vehicle Route Operator written test for the current school year prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.

5.02(h) The operator shall pass a driving performance test, including a pre-trip inspection, prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. This test shall be conducted in a vehicle that is similar in type and size to the vehicle the applicant is assigned to operate. School districts, charter schools, and service providers have the option to re-test at their discretion.

5.02(i) The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter

training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.

5.02(j) The operator shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions, within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the operator holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate, it will meet the requirements of this section. Operators shall receive first aid training and/or recertification training every two years thereafter.

5.02(k) The operator shall receive training regarding the proper use of physical restraint and intervention of students, the proper use and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS), and proper wheelchair securement when the operator is engaged in transportation involving these systems and devices, prior to transporting students.

5.3 School transportation vehicle operators, other than route operators, driving vehicles with a capacity of 15 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), including Type A Multifunction Bus and Small-Capacity Vehicle, shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

5.03(a) The operator shall possess a valid driver's license. A commercial license is not required for this class of vehicle.

5.03(b) The operator shall be a minimum of 18 years of age.

5.03(c) School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall obtain a motor vehicle record of each operator prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. Upon review, the reviewer shall initial the motor vehicle record.

5.03(d) The operator shall be given and/or have access to the CDE Type A Multifunction Bus/ Small-Capacity Vehicle Operator Guide prior to transporting students. A copy of the Certificate of Receipt, signed by the operator, shall be placed in the driver qualification file.

5.03(e) ***The operator shall successfully pass a Type A CDE Multifunction Bus/Small-Capacity Vehicle Operator written test for the current school year prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.***

5.03(f) ***The operator shall annually complete the CDE Vehicle Operator's Medical Information Form (STU-17). Any yes annotation shall require a doctor's release. **A school district, charter school, or service provider may choose to have an operator complete a DOT physical in lieu of the STU-17.*****

5.03(g) ***The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.***

5.03(h) ***The operator shall be given and/or have access to first aid information, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions.***

5.03(i) ***The operator shall pass an initial driving performance test, including a pre-trip inspection, prior to transporting students. This test shall be conducted in a vehicle that is similar in type and size to the vehicle the applicant is assigned to operate. School districts, charter schools, and service providers have the option to re-test at their discretion.***

5.03(j) ***Prior to driving a school transportation vehicle pursuant to 1 CCR 301-26, operators shall receive training or provide verifiable experience of towing a trailer.***

5.03(k) ***The operator shall receive training regarding the proper use of physical restraint and intervention of students, the proper use and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS), and proper wheelchair securement when***

the operator is engaged in transportation involving these systems and devices before transporting students.

Training

Per Operation Rule **1 CCR 301-26; Rules 5.2** and **5.3,** the small-capacity vehicle operator shall be provided with a pre-service training program prior to transporting students. The operator must also successfully pass an initial driving performance evaluation, including a pre-trip. **These are the minimum requirements.** As discussed in the previous section, proper documentation of completing these requirements must be kept on file in the transportation department as part of the DQF. Each person must have a training outline/syllabus that shows what training was accomplished, the date, the topic, the duration, the driver's signature, and the instructor's name.

Operation Rule **1, CCR 301-26, Section 4.0** outlines more requirements and responsibilities for the school district, charter school, or service provider.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall outline job responsibilities and develop job qualification standards for each school transportation vehicle operator and school transportation paraprofessionals, annual inspector, and school transportation entry-level driver instructor, consistent with federal and state regulations. A copy of these requirements shall be provided to each school transportation vehicle operator, annual inspector, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, and paraprofessional upon employment. A signed copy shall also be maintained in the applicable qualification file.

4.2 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain separate files for each school transportation vehicle operator, school transportation paraprofessional, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, and school transportation annual inspector with written documentation evidencing all listed requirements indicated in Rule 5.00, Rule 6.00, Rule 7.00, and Rule 8.00, as applicable. Training documentation shall include the trainer's name, date of the training, description of

the training, duration of each topic covered, and the signature of all attendees.

4.02(a) If a school transportation vehicle operator, school transportation paraprofessional, or school transportation annual inspector works for more than one school district, charter school, service provider, or operator of an inspection site, each employer shall maintain a file with documentation in accordance with this rule.

CDE provides online small-capacity vehicle activity operator training on our website: www.cde.state.co.us/transportation.

What Are My Responsibilities?

Your responsibilities require a tremendous amount of public contact and also public expectations. You are driving a vehicle with the name of your school district, charter school, and service provider name displayed on it. If something goes wrong on the route, your school district, charter school, or service provider will likely receive a phone call before your return. As a school transportation vehicle operator, you offer a transportation service to many different and challenging customers. Who are your customers? The customers riding in your vehicle will include students, who may be very young and may consist of young adults up to the age of 26. Other customers may include supervisors, teachers, parents, and coaches.

Performance Abilities

- Operate varying sizes and types of school transportation vehicles for students.
- Familiarity with the geographic service area of the school district, charter school, or service provider.
- Knowledge of local, state, and federal rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws regarding school transportation operations.
- Alert with the ability to exercise sound judgment concerning emergencies, disabled vehicles, and abnormal driving conditions.

Responsibilities

- Follow established schedules and routes.
- Maintain appropriate fuel level in the vehicle(s).

- Maintain an acceptable standard of cleanliness of the vehicle(s).
- Monitor mechanical condition by performing daily inspections (pre-trips, in-between, and post-trips).
- Report deficiencies to the mechanic or supervisor by using designated inspection reports.
- Always drive safely and defensively.
- Be prepared to conduct emergency evacuations, including evacuation drills.
- Report vehicle crashes and student injuries to the transportation supervisor or his/her designee.
- Administer first aid as necessary.
- Uphold all school district, charter school, or service provider policies and procedures.
- Maintain behavior logs as directed by your transportation supervisor or his/her designee.
- Attend parent meetings as requested by the transportation department supervisor or his/her designee.
- Maintain acceptable communications with your transportation services, staff, and public.
- Exhibit a positive image as a representative of the school district, charter school, or service provider.
- Other responsibilities as directed by the transportation supervisor.

Types of Vehicles

Small Capacity Vehicle - means a motor vehicle, which does not meet the requirements of Type A, B, C, or D school buses, designed for general purpose use. These vehicles (12 passengers including the driver or less) may be used to carry students to and from school, from school to school, or to school-related events, and shall meet or exceed all applicable rules and regulations.

Multifunction School Activity Bus (MFSAB) - is a type of school bus that is required to meet all FMVSS regulations applicable to school buses, except those requiring the installation of traffic control devices.

Type "A" School Bus - is a conversion or body constructed utilizing a cutaway front-section vehicle with a left side driver's door and a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 21,500 pounds or less.

Restrictions Regarding Carry-On Items

As the driver of a school bus, whether on a route or an activity trip, it is your responsibility to ensure that all carry-on items are managed and secured. Keep in mind that in the event of a crash, all items that have not been adequately secured could become airborne, especially if it involves a rollover situation.

We all know that students carry a considerable number of items, especially if they are traveling to a sporting event. The best practice in the school transportation industry is that if students can hold the item(s), they can bring them aboard. However, there may be occasions when a student cannot hold the item being transported. It must be properly secured per **1 CCR 301-26, Rule 17.1 and 17.2**. Items are not permitted to be placed in a seat to the extent that they would extend beyond the height of the seat back. They cannot be placed in the aisle or directly against emergency exits.

1 CCR 301-26, 17.0 Transportation of Miscellaneous Items

17.1 A school transportation vehicle operator shall ensure that all carry-on items are properly handled to minimize the danger to all others.

17.2 All baggage, articles, equipment, or medical supplies (except those held by individual passengers) shall be secured in a manner that assures unrestricted access to all exits by occupants, does not

restrict the driver's ability to operate the bus and/or protects all occupants against injury resulting from falling or displacement of any baggage, article, or equipment. Oxygen cylinders that are medically necessary meet this standard if they are securely attached to a wheelchair, or otherwise secured in the vehicle and do not impede access to any exit. School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall use reasonable care in determining the number of cylinders that may be safely transported at one time.

Chemicals and Cleaning Supplies

CDE has restricted the quantity and types of items that can be carried in a school transportation vehicle. If you were ever involved in a crash and emergency services were to respond to the scene and find students covered in liquids, they would want to know what that liquid is to treat it appropriately. Again, all of these items must be properly secured to the vehicle.

1 CCR 301-26, 17.0 Transportation of Miscellaneous Items

17.3 All chemicals and cleaning supplies carried on a school transportation vehicle must meet the following precautions:

17.03(a) Container is non-breakable;

17.03(b) Container is labeled with contents;

17.03(c) Pressurized aerosols are prohibited;

17.03(d) Container is secured in a bracket, or in a closed compartment in the driver's area or a compartment on the exterior of the bus; and

17.03(e) Containers and quantities of products are no more than 32 ounces in size.

Decorations

We all know that children like decorations; however, the school transportation vehicle is not the proper place for decorations, particularly if it could potentially block a driver's view or impede an emergency exit.

Decorations on the outside of the vehicle are also prohibited. The Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles 1 CCR 301-25 detail what exterior color, signage, markings, reflective tape, etc., are permitted on the exterior of a school bus or multifunction bus.

1 CCR 301-26, 17.0 Transportation of Miscellaneous Items

17.4 Interior decorations shall not be located within the driver's area (including the space in front of the front barriers, the step-well, dash, walls and ceiling, the windshield, the entry door, the driver's side window, and all windows in front of the front barrier), the first two passenger windows on both sides of the vehicle or all windows on the rear of the vehicle. Other decorations within the passenger compartment shall not:

17.04(a) Cover any required lettering

17.04(b) Impede the aisle or any emergency exit

17.04(c) Hang from the walls and/or ceiling

17.5 Per the effective date of these rules, school transportation vehicles owned or leased by the district, charter school, and service provider that are used for student transportation shall not have the windows obstructed in any way by advertising, decorations, or vehicle wraps.

17.05(a) Exception: Tint applied by the vehicle manufacturer to industry standards.

17.05(b) Exception: Route identification is permitted per 1 CCR 301-26, Rule 17.04 of these rules.

1 CCR 301-25, 6.0 Prohibited Use

6.5 Per the effective date of these rules, school transportation vehicles, per Rule 7.17, of these rules, owned or leased by the school district, charter school, or service providers that are used for student transportation, shall not have the windows obstructed in any way by advertising, decorations, or vehicle wraps.

6.05(a) Exception: Tint applied by the vehicle manufacturer to industry standards.

6.05(b) Exception: Route identification is permitted per 1 CCR 301-26, Rule 17.04.

Maximum Driving Time

When calculating your maximum drive/on-duty time, it is crucial to understand that the total number of hours includes ANY on-duty time for ALL employers. You cannot exceed 10 hours of driving time in one 24-hour period, and you cannot exceed 14 hours of on-duty time in one 24-hour period.

"On-duty" is defined as "all time worked for all employers, including all driving and non-driving duties," when employed by a school, on-duty includes any time the driver is directly responsible for the students. As a teacher or coach who wants to drive and be the sole responsible adult on an activity trip, the hours of service can be a hard line and often is why a director may choose to send a driver instead.

1 CCR 301-26, 18.0 Maximum Driving Time for School Transportation Vehicle Operators

18.1 School transportation vehicle operators, including small-capacity vehicle operators, shall not drive (nor shall the school districts, charter schools, or service providers permit or require operators to drive):

18.01(a) In excess of 10 hours or after being on-duty 14 hours until completing 10 hours off-duty. This would include on-duty time for all employers. Ten hours off-duty may be consecutive or accumulated in two or more periods of off-duty time, with one period having a minimum of six consecutive hours off-duty.

18.01(b) After being on-duty for more than 70 hours in any seven consecutive days.

18.01(c) In case of emergency, an operator may complete the trip without being in violation if such a trip reasonably could have been completed absent the emergency.

18.2 In lieu of section 18.00 of these rules, a school district, charter school, or service provider may comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R. 395.

18.3 Definitions:

18.03(a) Day - Means any 24-consecutive hour period beginning at the time designated by the school district, charter school, or service provider.

18.03(b) On-duty time - Includes all time worked for all employers, including all driving and non-driving duties.

18.03(c) Off-duty time - School transportation vehicle operators may consider waiting time (whether compensated time or not) at special events, meal stops, and school-related events as off-duty if the following criteria are met:

18.03(c)(1) The operator shall be relieved of all duty and responsibility for the care and custody of the vehicle, its accessories, and students, and

18.03(c)(2) The operator shall be at liberty to pursue activities of his/her choice, including leaving the premises on which the bus is located.

18.4 All school transportation vehicle operators shall document that they are in compliance with this section, hours of service.

18.04(a) An operator's daily log, or equivalent, shall be completed for the trip in the operator's own handwriting when the trip requires a scheduled or unscheduled overnight stay away from the work reporting location.

Emergency Evacuations

As a school transportation vehicle driver, you could be the only adult present in an emergency, and all students will look to you for instructions and leadership. Having written documentation that you are conducting evacuations and reading evacuation instructions prior to every activity trip is required per **1 CCR 301-26, 20.0**.

1 CCR 301-26, 20.0 Emergency Evacuation Drills

20.1 Emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted with students by all school transportation vehicle route operators, excluding small-capacity vehicle operators as defined in 1 CCR 301-25, and school transportation paraprofessionals at least twice during each school year.

20.01(a) One drill shall be conducted in the fall, and the second drill conducted in the spring.

20.01(b) Substitute and Multifunction operators shall be trained on how to conduct emergency evacuation drills.

20.2 Students on school-related events shall receive emergency evacuation instructions prior to every initial departure.

20.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain records documenting that the required evacuation drills were conducted and/or evacuation instruction was given.

Emergency Equipment

Small-capacity vehicles must carry emergency equipment that should be properly secured within the vehicle and either within the driver's direct line of sight or labeled to indicate where to find it.

1 CCR 301-25, 20.0 Emergency Equipment

20.2 Small-capacity vehicles shall be equipped with one securely mounted, 2 ½ pound, dry chemical fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 1A10BC.

20.3 First Aid Kit: All school transportation vehicles shall carry one First Aid Kit which shall be securely mounted in full view of the driver or with the location plainly indicated by appropriate signage. Additional kits may be installed. The kit(s) shall be mounted for easy removal.

20.03(a) The kit shall be sealed. The seal verifies the integrity of the contents without opening the kit. The seal shall be designed to allow easy access to the kit's contents. If zip

ties are used to seal the kit, they must be breakaway zip ties.

20.03(b) Consideration should be given to replacing items in the First Aid Kit every 36 months due to the breakdown of materials

Contents of the 24-Unit First Aid Kit	
Item	***Unit(s)***
Adhesive tape	***1***
1-inch bandage compress	***2***
2-inch bandage compress	***1***
3-inch bandage compress	***1***
4-inch bandage compress	***1***
4-inch x 3-inch plain gauze pads	***1***
Gauze roller bandage 2-inch wide	***2***
Plain absorbent gauze – ½ square yard	***4***
Plain absorbent gauze – 24-inch x 72-inches	***3***
Triangular bandages	***4***
Scissors	***1***
Tweezers	***1***
Space rescue blanket	***1***
Non-latex disposable pair of gloves	***1***
CPR mask or mouth-to-mouth airway	***1***
Moisture and dustproof kit of sufficient capacity to store the required items.	

20.4 Emergency Reflectors: All school transportation vehicles shall carry three bidirectional emergency triangle reflectors in compliance with C.R.S. 42-4-230, and with FMVSS 125, contained in a securely mounted case easily accessible to the driver or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate markings.

20.5 Body Fluid Cleanup Kit: All school transportation vehicles shall have a one removable body fluid cleanup kit accessible to the driver, within the cab, or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate signage.

20.05(a) Consideration should be given to replacing items in the Body Fluid Cleanup Kit every 36 months due to the breakdown of materials.

Contents of the Basic Body Fluid Clean-up Kit	
Item	***Unit(s)***
Antiseptic towelette	***1***
Disinfected towelette	***1***
Absorbing powder (capable of ½ gallon absorption)	***1***
Non-latex disposable pair of gloves	***1***
Disposable wiper towels	***2***
Disposable scoop bag with closure mechanism and scraper	
Moisture and dustproof kit of sufficient capacity to store the required items.	

20.6 All school transportation vehicles shall be equipped with one durable webbing cutter having a full-width handgrip and a protected blade. The cutter shall be mounted in a location accessible to the seated driver.

20.06(a) Seat belt cutters shall be replaced after they have been used, or if there is any sign of rust or corrosion on the blade.

20.7 Emergency Equipment shall be securely mounted, clearly visible, or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate signage

Distracted Driving

Approximately 5,500 people are killed each year on U.S. roadways, and an estimated 448,000 are injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted driving (NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts: Distracted Driving).

Effects of distracted driving include slowed perception, which may cause you to be delayed in perceiving or completely failing to perceive a vital traffic event; delayed decision-making and improper action, which can cause you to be delayed in taking the proper action or make incorrect inputs to the steering, accelerator, or brakes.

Evidence suggests that text messaging is even riskier than talking on a cell phone because it requires looking at a small screen and manipulating the keypad with one's hands.

Texting is the most alarming distraction because it simultaneously involves physical and mental distractions.

Research indicates that the burden of talking on a cell phone - even hands-free devices - saps the brain of 39% of the energy it would ordinarily devote to safe driving. Drivers who use a hand-held device are more likely to get into a crash severe enough to cause injury. CRS 42-4-239 is the Colorado statute that makes it a crime for a person 18 years of age or older to text while operating a motor vehicle. A violation of this law is a class 2 traffic misdemeanor punishable by a minimum fine of $300.

The ***Colorado Model Traffic Code, C.R.S. 42-4-239,*** states that

> ***"a person eighteen years of age or older shall not use a wireless telephone for the purposes of engaging in text messaging or other similar forms of manual data entry or transmission while operating a motor vehicle."***

Don't Drive Distracted

- Turn off all communication devices. If you must use a cell phone, ensure it is within close proximity and able to be operated while you are restrained, has an earpiece or speakerphone function, voice-activated dialing, or a hands-free feature. Drivers are not in compliance if they unsafely reach for a cell phone, even if they intend to use the hands-free function. Do not type or read a text message on a cell device while driving.
- Familiarize yourself with your vehicle's features and equipment before you get behind the wheel
- Adjust all vehicle controls and mirrors to your preferences prior to driving.
- Pre-program radio stations and pre-load your favorite CDs.
- Clear the vehicle of any unnecessary objects and secure cargo.
- Review maps, program the GPS, and plan your route before you begin driving.
- Do not attempt to read or write while you drive.

- Avoid eating and drinking while you drive. Leave early to allow yourself time to stop to eat.
- Do not engage in complex or emotionally intense conversations with other occupants.

Please check your local school district, charter school, or service provider's policy regarding the use of a cell phone while on duty.

Safety Restraints and Safety Belt Use

The most critical safety device for drivers aboard any school transportation vehicle is the safety belt, as it significantly reduces injuries and saves lives. Failing to use it not only endangers you, your passengers, and other road users but also constitutes a legal violation. According to **1 CCR 301-26, Rule 16.1**, wearing your seatbelt is mandatory. Furthermore, **Rule 16.2** stipulates that all passengers in vehicles with a GVWR of under 10,000 must also buckle up. As the driver, you hold the responsibility of ensuring every passenger is securely fastened before you start driving.

1 CCR 301-26, 16.0 Safety Restraints

16.1 A school transportation vehicle operator shall have the safety belt fastened, worn correctly, and properly adjusted prior to the school transportation vehicle being placed in motion.

16.2 All passengers in a school transportation vehicle under 10,000 lbs. GVWR shall have their safety belts fastened, worn correctly, and properly adjusted prior to the school transportation vehicle being placed in motion.

Other Important Information

C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 Board of Education – Safe School Plan, Employee Screenings

(8) Employee Screenings

Each board of education shall adopt a policy of making inquiries upon good cause to the Department of Education for the purposes of screening licensed employees and non-licensed employees hired on or after January 1, 1991. Licensed employees employed by school districts on or after January 1, 1991, shall be screened

upon good cause to check for any new instances of criminal activity listed in section 22-32- 109.9(1)(a). Non-licensed employees employed by a school district on or after January 1, 1991, shall be screened upon good cause to check for any new instances of criminal activity listed in section 22-32-109.8(2)(a).

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.10 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall conduct background checks pursuant to Section 22-32-122(4) C.R.S. or Section 22-32-109.8, whichever is applicable, on all supervisors, trainers, drivers, paraprofessionals, technicians, and dispatchers. Additionally, backgrounds may be checked through driving records, and employment history as applicable.

C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 Board of Education – Safe School Plan, Immunity

(9) Immunity

(a) A school district board of education or a teacher or any other person acting in good faith in accordance with the provisions of subsection (2) of this section in carrying out the powers or duties authorized by said subsection shall be immune from criminal prosecution or civil liability for such actions; except that a teacher or any other person acting willfully or wantonly in violation of said subsection shall not be immune from criminal prosecution or civil liability pursuant to said subsection. A teacher or any other person claiming immunity from criminal prosecution under this paragraph(a) may file a motion that shall be heard prior to trial. At the hearing, the teacher or other person claiming immunity shall bear the burden of establishing the right to immunity by a preponderance of the evidence.

(b) A teacher or any other person acting in good faith and in compliance with the conduct and discipline code adopted by the board of education pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of this section shall be immune from civil liability; except that a person acting willfully and wantonly

shall not be immune from liability pursuant to this paragraph (b). The court shall dismiss any civil action resulting from actions taken by a teacher or any other person pursuant to the conduct and discipline code adopted by the board of education pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of this section upon a finding by the court that the person acted in good faith and in compliance with such conduct and discipline code and was therefore immune from civil liability pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subsection (9). The court shall award court costs and reasonable attorney fees to the prevailing party in such a civil action.

(c) If a teacher or any other person does not claim or is not granted immunity from criminal prosecution pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subsection (9) and a criminal action is brought against a teacher or any other person for actions taken pursuant to the conduct and discipline code adopted by the board of education pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of this section, it shall be an affirmative defense in the criminal action that the teacher or such other person was acting in good faith and in compliance with the conduct and discipline code and was not acting in a willful or wanton manner in violation of the conduct and discipline code.

(d) An act of a teacher or any other person shall not be considered child abuse pursuant to sections 18-6-401(1) and 19-1-103(1), C.R.S., if:

(I) The act was performed in good faith and in compliance with the conduct and discipline code adopted by the board of education pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of this section; or

(II) The act was an appropriate expression of affection or emotional support, as determined by the board of education.

(e) A teacher or any other person who acts in good faith and in compliance with the conduct and discipline code adopted by

the board of education pursuant to paragraph of subsection (2) of this section shall not have his or her contract nonrenewed or be subject to any disciplinary proceedings, including dismissal, as a result of such lawful actions, nor shall the actions of the teacher or other person be reflected in any written evaluation or other personnel record concerning such teacher or other person. A teacher or any other person aggrieved by an alleged violation of this paragraph (e) may file a civil action in the appropriate district court within two years after the alleged violation.

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Unit Two – School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Requirements

In Unit One, it was briefly mentioned that Operation Rule **1 CCR 301-26; Rule 4.0** outlines the requirements for the School District, Charter School, and Service Provider. This unit will explore some of the employer requirements in greater detail.

School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Requirements

- Develop job descriptions for all transportation positions
    - Supervisor
    - CDL Operator
    - Non-CDL Operator
    - Paraprofessional
    - Mechanic
    - Annual Inspector
    - Other positions as appropriate for your school or service provider
- Maintain separate files for each transportation employee
- Document all in-service training – minimum of six hours annually (ROUTE operators)
- Develop written emergency procedures
- Provide medical and behavioral information about student transportation to all transportation staff with a legitimate educational interest.
- Develop procedures to ensure that students are not left behind on unattended vehicles.
- Ensure all school transportation vehicles that transport students pass the CDE Annual Inspection and have a current Affidavit in the student transportation vehicle.
- If driving routes, maintaining legal bus stops, and ensuring the operator knows how to conduct a student stop.
- Maintain records of evacuation drills conducted and ensure that emergency evacuation instruction is given before every activity trip.

Job Description

Job descriptions serve as essential communication tools that clarify the tasks expected of employees by school districts, charter schools, or service providers. They may also include standards regarding the quality and quantity of performance, as well as specific work rules relevant to a position. In the absence of such clear communication, it may be challenging to meet the job's expectations.

The Colorado Department of Education requires that each driver have a signed copy of their job description in their driver qualification file. It is also required that each employee receive a copy of their signed job description for their records.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall outline job responsibilities and develop job qualification standards for each school transportation vehicle operator and school transportation paraprofessionals, annual inspector, and school transportation entry-level driver instructor, consistent with federal and state regulations. A copy of these requirements shall be provided to each school transportation vehicle operator, annual inspector, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, and paraprofessional upon employment. A signed copy shall also be maintained in the applicable qualification file.

Files and Training Documentation

All school districts, charter schools, and service providers are required to keep separate qualification files for each driver they employ. Additionally, these organizations should implement a driver training program tailored to the vehicles the operator will drive. Following the driver training program schedule is key to preventing work-related vehicle accidents and maintaining student safety. Periodic refresher courses are completed at the discretion of the school district, charter school, or service provider and are beneficial in avoiding driver complacency and reinforcing the importance of safe driving practices.

School districts, charter schools, and service providers must also confirm that all employees possess the appropriate licenses for the vehicles they are tasked to operate. A regular driver's license is sufficient for all vehicles classified as non-CDL vehicles (under 26,001 GVWR or with a manufactured capacity rating of 16 passengers or fewer).

If you drive for more than one school district, charter school, or service provider, a copy of your complete driver's qualification file is required to be present at both locations.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.2 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain separate files for each school transportation vehicle operator, school transportation paraprofessional, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, and school transportation annual inspector with written documentation evidencing all listed requirements indicated in Rule 5.00, Rule 6.00, Rule 7.00, and Rule 8.00, as applicable. Training documentation shall include the trainer's name, date of the training, description of the training, duration of each topic covered, and the signature of all attendees.

4.02(a) If a school transportation vehicle operator, school transportation paraprofessional, or school transportation annual inspector works for more than one school district, charter school, service provider, or operator of an inspection site, each employer shall maintain a file with documentation in accordance with this rule.

1 CCR 301-25, 7.0 Definitions

7.17 School Transportation Vehicle - means every motor vehicle that is owned by a school district, charter school, or service provider and operated, rented, or leased for the transportation of students to and from school, from school to school, or to school- related events, or which is privately owned and operated for compensation provided that such transportation service is sponsored and

approved by the local Board of Education or schools governing body and operating within the State of Colorado.

7.19 Small-Capacity Vehicle - means a motor vehicle, which does not meet the requirements of Type A, B, C, or D school buses, designed for general purpose use. These vehicles (12 passengers including the driver or less) may be used to carry students to and from school, from school to school, or to school-related events, and shall meet or exceed all applicable rules and regulations.

Removing an Operator from Service

As an operator performing safety-sensitive functions in the school transportation industry, you are responsible for providing a safe work environment for your ridership and the general public. Creating a safe work environment involves following established school district, charter school, and service provider policies and procedures and adhering to the CDE's driver requirements.

A school district, charter school, or service provider must promptly remove a driver from any safety-sensitive role if they test positive for drugs or alcohol, refuse to take a test, or if the employer suspects a violation of alcohol or controlled substance regulations. The school district, charter school, and service provider have the authority to suspend an operator if they are impaired in a manner that could endanger the safety of students or the public. Additionally, an operator must be dismissed if their driving history indicates any disqualifying factors, such as a suspended license or breaches of hours of service rules.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall not permit a school transportation vehicle operator to transport students while the operator's ability or alertness is so impaired, through fatigue, illness, or any other cause, as to make it unsafe for the operator to transport students.

Written Emergency Procedures

Having written emergency procedures for bus drivers is essential to ensure the safety of passengers and the driver during unforeseen incidents such as accidents, fires, or security threats. These procedures outline a clear and structured plan, minimizing panic and confusion while helping drivers navigate various situations effectively. Studies indicate that a school bus can be engulfed in flames within just three minutes. Thus, in the event of an emergency, the driver must act swiftly to evacuate the bus safely. This underscores the necessity of implementing emergency evacuation protocols for all buses and routes.

CDE does not mandate specific formats for districts to follow regarding these procedures; instead, it only requires that the information be accessible to all operators.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.5 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have written emergency procedures and/or contingency plans to be followed in the event of a traffic accident, vehicle breakdown, unexpected school closing, unforeseen route change, or relocation of a student stop in an emergency.

Child Safety Restraint System Training

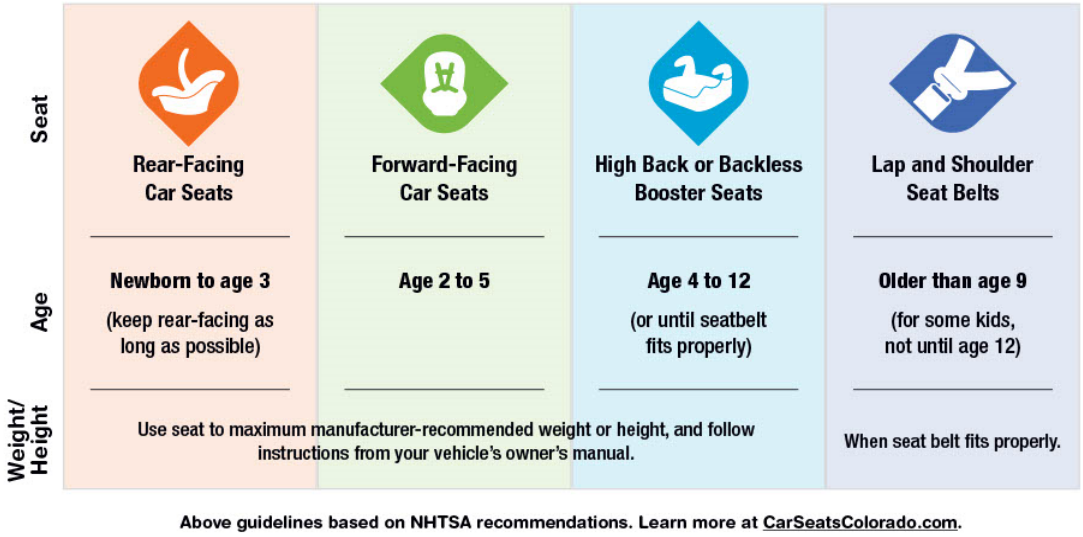
We must never put a child in equipment that we're not properly trained to use or from which we can't safely remove them in an emergency. Training for bus drivers on child safety restraints generally covers the correct installation and usage of different types of child safety restraint systems (CSRS) on school buses, such as rear-facing car seats, forward-facing car seats, and safety vests.

In small-capacity vehicles, the Colorado Child Passenger Safety Law shall be followed.

Colorado's child passenger safety laws, effective Jan. 1, 2025:

- Child passenger safety laws are a primary violation in Colorado.

- The “proper use” clause for all stages requires the child restraint or seat belt to be adjusted and installed according to the car seat and vehicle manufacturer’s instructions.
- Children must meet the height, weight, and age requirements for the child restraint.
- Child restraints must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.



Above guidelines based on NHTSA recommendations. Learn more at CarSeatsColorado.com.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.6 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that documentation outlining transportation-related services and requirements, including required use of Child Safety Restraint Systems and medical and behavioral information as it relates to student transportation, is available to applicable school transportation vehicle operators and paraprofessionals prior to providing transportation services.

Students Left in Unattended Vehicles

Training should concentrate on pre-trip and post-trip inspections and active supervision practices to prevent students from being left in an unattended school vehicle. Drivers and all transportation personnel must be educated on the critical need to thoroughly check the vehicle for students, even following rides that appear empty. Please check with your school district, charter

school, or service provider for the correct procedure to follow for this instruction.

1 CCR 301-26, 10.0 Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Vehicle Inspections

10.1 Each school transportation vehicle shall have a daily pre-trip and post-trip inspection performed and documented by the school transportation vehicle operator or other transportation employee authorized by the school district, charter school, or service provider. A daily pre-trip inspection shall be completed prior to a vehicle being placed in service. A daily post-trip inspection shall be completed at the end of the daily operation of each vehicle.

10.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have a procedure in place to verify that students are not left on an unattended school transportation vehicle.

Maintenance and Repair

Safe and dependable transportation is vital for any school's operations. Conducting pre- and post-trip inspections on school vehicles is essential to ensure the safety of students and the operational readiness of the vehicles. Consistent maintenance enhances safety and reduces costs, necessitating regular inspections and upkeep to ensure your fleet's safety, efficiency, and durability. Regular inspections and maintenance assist in identifying potential issues before they escalate, minimizing downtime, boosting reliability, and leading to cost savings. Maintenance complements inspections; while inspections uncover immediate concerns, maintenance works to prevent these problems from arising. Regular servicing of your buses can prolong their lifespan and prevent unforeseen breakdowns. Ignoring maintenance can create larger issues that could have easily been avoided. For instance, routinely changing the oil can prevent engine failure and expensive repairs.

In Colorado, school transportation vehicles must undergo preventative maintenance every 6,000 miles and receive an annual inspection by a CDE Annual Inspector. Additionally, school transportation departments are required to implement a system for documenting and reporting vehicle deficiencies. The items required to be listed on that documentation are listed in **1 CCR 301-26; Rule 13.0.**

1 CCR 301-26, 10.0 Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Vehicle Inspections

10.2 The pre-trip and post-trip inspection requirements for school transportation vehicles, other than small-capacity vehicles, shall include, at a minimum, all items listed on the CDE School Transportation Vehicle (School Bus/Multifunction Bus/Motor Coach Bus) – Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Requirements Form (STU-9).

10.3 The pre-trip and post-trip inspection requirements for school transportation small-capacity vehicles shall include, at a minimum, all items listed on the CDE School Transportation Vehicle (Small-Capacity Vehicle) - Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Requirements Form (STU-8).

1 CCR 301-26, 12.0 Annual Inspections

12.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure all school transportation vehicles and trailers, pursuant to 1 CCR 301-26 have a CDE annual inspection conducted by a CDE-certified annual inspector prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.

12.01(a) Recently purchased school transportation vehicles shall successfully pass a CDE annual inspection prior to transporting students, and then annually thereafter.

12.2 Annual inspection results shall be documented on the CDE Affidavit of Annual Inspection for School Transportation Vehicles Form (STU-25).

12.02(a) A copy of the current Affidavit must be maintained inside the vehicle, and a copy must be placed in the vehicle file.

1 CCR 301-26, 13.0 Maintenance and Repair

13.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers must ensure all school transportation vehicles are systematically inspected, maintained, and repaired by a qualified mechanic to ensure that school transportation vehicles are in safe and proper operating condition.

13.2 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have a system to document preventative maintenance, reported defects, and repairs made to school transportation vehicles.

13.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain separate files for each school transportation vehicle with documentation of all annual inspections, all preventative maintenance, and all reported damage, defects, or deficiencies and the corresponding repair and maintenance performed.

13.4 Any identified damage, defect, or deficiency of a school transportation vehicle must be reported to the school district, charter schools, or service provider if it:

13.04(a) Could affect the safety of operation of the school transportation vehicle;

13.04(b) Could result in a mechanical breakdown of the school transportation vehicle;

13.04(c) Results in noncompliance with Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles (1 CCR 301-25) and/or manufacturer's specifications.

13.5 Documentation for reported defects must include all the following:

13.05(a) The name of the school district, charter school, or service provider;

13.05(b) Date and time the report was submitted;

13.05(c) All damage, defects, or deficiencies of the school transportation vehicle;

13.05(d) The name of the individual who prepared the report.

13.6 Following a reported damage, defect, or deficiency of a school transportation vehicle, school districts, charter schools, and service providers or a representative agent must repair the reported damage, defects, or deficiencies or document that no repair is necessary, ensuring that the vehicle is in safe and proper operating condition prior to transporting students.

13.7 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall not transport students in a school transportation vehicle that is not in safe and proper operating condition. A school transportation vehicle shall be designated as "out-of-service" by a school district, charter schools or service provider, a school transportation annual inspector, or the CDE School Transportation Unit.

13.07(a) Any school transportation vehicle discovered to be in an unsafe condition while being operated on the highway, roadway, or private road may be continued in operation only to the nearest place where repairs can safely be affected. Such operation shall be conducted only if it is less hazardous to the public than to permit the vehicle to remain on the highway, roadway, or private road.

Route Planning: Student Loading and Discharge

When using a small-capacity vehicle or a Type A multifunction bus (Type A white bus), school routes appear somewhat different since these vehicles lack the eight-way student light system and the stop arm on the side. Sufficient planning and preparation are necessary for making a student stop with a small-capacity vehicle or a Type A multifunction bus.

1 CCR 301-26, 19.0 Route Planning – Student Loading and Discharge

19.1 School transportation small-capacity vehicles, Type A Multifunction Buses, and School Buses (Types A, B, C, and D) may be used to transport students. Multifunction Buses Type B, C, D, and Motor Coach Buses shall not be used to transport students to and from school.

19.2 The location of student stops shall consider factors including:

19.02(a) Ages of the students;

19.02(b) Visibility;

19.02(c) Lateral clearance;

19.02(d) Student access; and

19.02(e) Control of other motorists

19.02(e)(1) Student stops for Type A Multifunction Buses and school transportation small-capacity vehicles should be located off the roadway whenever possible.

19.3 School transportation vehicle operators shall stop at least 10 feet away from students at each designated stop. The school transportation vehicle operator shall apply the parking brake and shift the vehicle into neutral or park prior to opening the service door of a bus or the passenger door(s) of a small-capacity vehicle.

19.4 The school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right of the roadway, highway, or private road as possible before discharging or loading passengers - allowing sufficient area to the right and front of the vehicle but close enough to the right to prevent traffic from passing on the right - so that students may clear the vehicle safely while in sight of the operator.

19.04(a) Exception: The school transportation vehicle operator may block the lane of traffic when passengers being received or discharged are required to cross the roadway.

19.5 Student stops shall not be located on the side of any major thoroughfare whenever access to the destination of the passenger is possible by a road or street which is adjacent to the major thoroughfare.

19.6 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that if students are required to cross a roadway, highway, or private road on which a student stop is being performed, they are prohibited from crossing a roadway, highway, or private road constructed or designed to permit three or more separate lanes of vehicular traffic in either direction or with a median separating multiple lanes of traffic.

19.9 Routes shall be planned as to:

19.09(a) Eliminate, when practical, railroad crossings; and

19.09(b) Have stops be a minimum of 200 feet apart (since alternating flashing amber warning signal lamps must be

activated a minimum of 200 feet in advance of the stop on the roadway on which the bus stop will be performed).

19.09(b)(1) Exception: In areas where wildlife may create a high risk of threat to students' safety while they are waiting and/or walking to a student stop, designated stops may be less than 200 feet apart upon detailed written approval by the school district board of education or governing body of a charter school (or the board's designee). A copy of the written approval shall be kept in the school transportation office, and route operators shall be given written notice of the exception and have it indicated on route sheets.

19.10 In determining the length of routes, school districts, charter schools, and service providers must make an effort to minimize student ride times while considering student educational needs, geographic boundaries, terrain, traffic congestion, and financial resources within the district. A local board of education, or the governing body of a charter school, may establish a maximum student ride time.

19.11 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1903(2), school transportation vehicle operators are not required to actuate the alternating flashing red warning signal lamps on a school bus:

19.11(a) When the student stop is at a location where the local traffic regulatory authority has by prior written designation declared such actuation unnecessary and no passenger is required to cross the roadway; or

19.11(b) When discharging or loading passengers who require the assistance of a lift device and no passenger is required to cross the roadway.

19.11(c) Further, Type A Multifunction Buses and school transportation small-capacity vehicles do not have the functionality to control traffic. In these instances, the

school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right off the roadway as possible to reduce obstruction to traffic, activate the four-way hazard warning lamps a minimum of 200 feet prior to the student stop, continue to display the four-way hazard warning lamps until the process of discharging or loading passengers has been completed, and deactivate the four-way hazard lamps before resuming motion. Students are prohibited from crossing any lanes of traffic to access the student stop or after disembarking.

19.12 School transportation vehicle operators shall not relocate a student stop without the approval of the school district, charter school, or service provider.

1 CCR 301-26, 20.0 Emergency Evacuation Drills

20.1 Emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted with students by all school transportation vehicle route operators, excluding small-capacity vehicle operators as defined in 1 CCR 301-25, and school transportation paraprofessionals at least twice during each school year.

20.01(a) One drill shall be conducted in the fall, and the second drill conducted in the spring.

20.01(b) Substitute and Multifunction operators shall be trained on how to conduct emergency evacuation drills.

20.2 Students on school-related events shall receive emergency evacuation instructions prior to every initial departure.

20.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain records documenting that the required evacuation drills were conducted and/or evacuation instruction was given.

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Unit Three – Vehicle Familiarization

School transportation vehicles are available in various shapes, sizes, and colors. These can include buses, minibuses, or small-capacity vehicles. Their engine placements may be at the front, rear, or in the middle, and they can use different types of fuel, such as gasoline, diesel, biodiesel, natural gas, propane, or electricity. Now, let's examine the legal description of each category of school transportation vehicle per the CDE Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles, **1 CCR 301-25**.

1 CCR 301-25, 7.0 Definitions

7.6 Fifteen Passenger Van - is a van, not a Type A school bus, that has the capacity of transporting more than 12 passengers, not including the driver.

7.9 Motorcoach - is a bus that has a high elevated floor, with a full row of luggage bays found below the main cabin. It also has premium features such as restrooms, reclining seats, power outlets, television, etc.

7.10 Multifunction School Activity Bus (MFSAB) - is a type of school bus that is required to meet all FMVSS regulations applicable to school buses, except those requiring the installation of traffic control devices. Pursuant to Rule 6.3, of these rules, Type B, C, and D multifunction buses should not be used for transporting students to and from home to school for route purposes.

7.10(a) Exception: Per 1CCR 301-26, 19.1, Type A multifunction buses may be used to transport students to and from school, school to school for route purposes and activities. See Section 19.11(c).

7.15 School Bus - means a passenger vehicle that is designed and used to carry more than 12 passengers in addition to the driver, and which the Secretary of Transportation determines is likely to be significantly used for the purpose of transporting pre-primary, primary, or secondary school students to or from school or an event related to school. School buses are specifically designed for maximum safety.

7.17 School Transportation Vehicle - means every motor vehicle that is owned by a school district, charter school, or service provider and operated, rented, or leased for the transportation of students to and from school, from school to school, or to school- related events, or which is privately owned and operated for compensation provided that such transportation service is sponsored and approved by the local Board of Education or schools governing body and operating within the State of Colorado.

7.19 Small-Capacity Vehicle - means a motor vehicle, which does not meet the requirements of Type A, B, C, or D school buses, designed for general purpose use. These vehicles (12 passengers including the driver or less) may be used to carry students to and from school, from school to school, or to school-related events, and shall meet or exceed all applicable rules and regulations.

7.20 Specially Equipped Bus - any bus that is designed, equipped, and/or modified to accommodate students with special transportation needs.

7.22 Type A School Bus - is a conversion or body constructed utilizing a cutaway front-section vehicle with a left-side driver's door and a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 21,500 pounds or less.

7.23 Type B School Bus - is a body constructed and installed upon a stripped chassis. Part of the engine is beneath and/or behind the windshield and beside the driver's seat. The service door is behind the front wheels.

7.24 Type C School Bus - is constructed utilizing a chassis with a hood and fender assembly. This includes the cutaway truck chassis, including the cab, with or without a left-side driver door, and with a GVWR greater than 21,500 pounds. The service door is behind the front wheels.

7.25 Type D School Bus - is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis, the engine may be behind the windshield and beside the driver's seat; or it may be at the rear of the bus, behind the rear wheels. The service door is ahead of the front wheels.

Blind Spots and Danger Zones

Several spots in front, behind, and beside school buses pose significant dangers as they are not visible from the driver's direct line of sight. It's crucial for drivers to recognize these areas and understand how to properly adjust and utilize their mirrors to avoid potential hazards lurking in these blind spots.

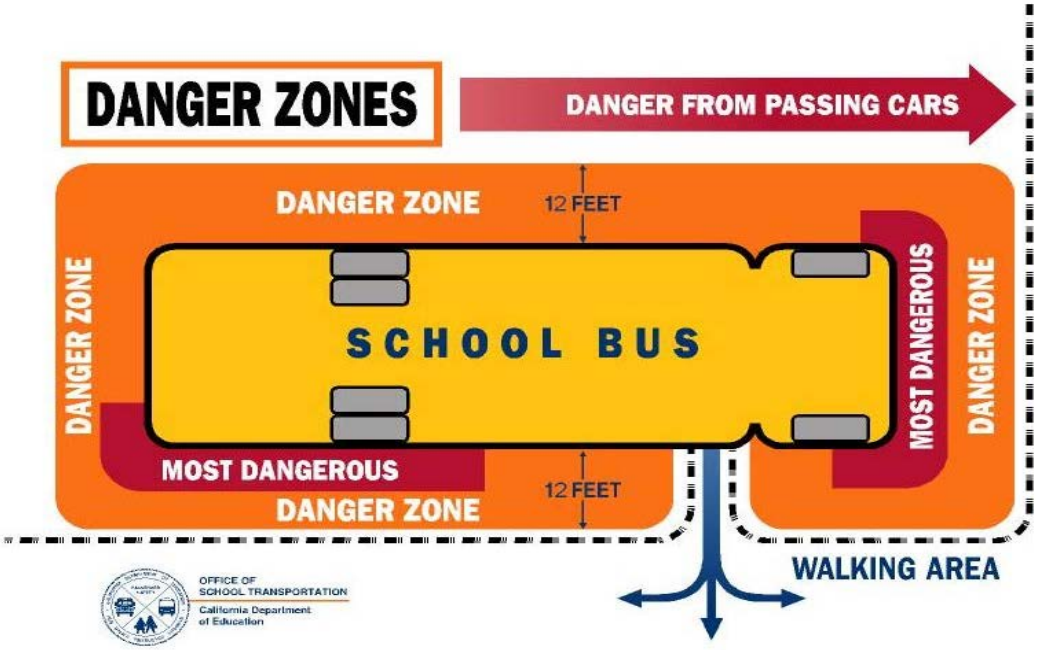
One danger zone is immediately in front of the bus. The blind spot in front of a conventional vehicle is significantly larger than that of a transit vehicle due to the higher hood of the former, which extends several feet in front of the driver. Nevertheless, both vehicle types have a blind spot directly in front of them.

In both vehicle types, the blind spot's length varies based on the driver's eye level in the seat; the lower the eye level, the more pronounced the blind spot. Objects that fall below the driver's line of sight are not directly visible.

A second danger zone is directly behind the vehicle. The purpose of the inside mirror is to allow the driver to see the passengers in the rear, rather than traffic directly behind the car. Consequently, there exists a blind spot immediately behind the vehicle that is not visible using either of the outside mirrors.

A third danger zone is on the driver's side of the vehicle. The blind spot on the driver's side occurs because the driver cannot see directly beneath the window. The length of this blind spot varies with the driver's eye level when seated. Objects lower than this angle remain unseen by the driver.

The final danger zone is on the passenger side of the vehicle. This blind spot arises from the driver's inability to see directly beneath the window level. Conversely, the passenger side blind spot extends further from the side of the vehicle than the driver's side, due to the driver's seating position being farther from the window. The most dangerous area on this side is directly in front of the front and rear wheels, where pedestrians may be at risk of being hit by the vehicle. Additionally, the extent of the blind spot varies based on the driver's eye level in the seat; any object positioned below this sightline will be invisible to the driver.



Mirror Laws

1 CCR 301-25, 32.0 Mirrors

32.1 Exterior mirrors shall meet FMVSS 111.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 111, more commonly known as FMVSS 111, specifies requirements for rear visibility in motor vehicles. Its main goal is to provide drivers with an unobstructed view of the area behind their vehicle to minimize back-over accidents. This standard applies to various vehicles, such as passenger cars, trucks, buses, and school buses.

Guidelines for Mirror Adjustments

When your mirrors are correctly adjusted to FMVSS 111 standards, the following areas should be visible in the following mirrors.

The Front Crossover Mirror

- The entire area in front of the bus from the front bumper at ground level to a point where direct vision is possible. Direct vision and mirror view should overlap.
- The right and left front tires touching the ground.
- The area from the front of the bus to the service door.

The Convex Mirrors

- The entire side of the bus up to the mirror mounts.
- The front of the rear tires touching the ground.
- At least one traffic lane on either side of the bus.

The Side Flat Mirrors (West Coast)

- The inner 1-inch area of the bus's side mirror should feature the entire side of the bus. The mirror adjustment towards the driver should show the window pillars, but not so much so that the windowpanes are visible in between them.
- Parallel to the sides of the bus, at least one traffic lane
- The ground within approximately 6 inches of the rear dual wheel
- Approximately four bus lengths behind the bus

Keep in mind that your side, flat mirrors (West Coast) provide a broader view, but they may also result in blind spots that could conceal larger vehicles like semi-trucks. When you near an intersection, exercise caution and lean toward the steering wheel to look around the mirrors and check if the traffic is clear.

The Inside Rear-View Mirror

- The top of the rear-view mirror should align with the visibility of the top of the rear window.
- All the students, including the heads of the students who are directly behind you.

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Unit Four – Vehicle Inspections

Vehicle Inspection refers to the recommended, systematic procedure for assessing a vehicle's condition for transporting passengers. During the inspection, drivers attempt to identify potential mechanical, electrical, or other issues by feeling, touching, looking, listening, and smelling, which could lead to service interruptions or collisions. Although many school districts, charter, and service providers conduct inspections differently, the basic procedures remain the same. Conducting the inspection is an implied duty of the driver.

NEVER attempt to operate a defective vehicle!

Why Should I Perform Inspections?

The transportation of students is a sensitive job, requiring higher levels of concern for safety and liability.

Safety

Safety is the most important reason to inspect your vehicle. Thorough inspections provide safety for you and other road users. Discovering a vehicle defect during an inspection could prevent future problems. You might experience a breakdown on the road that costs time and money or, even worse, cause a crash due to the defect. School officials and parents trust us to ensure the safety of their children while they are in our care. If you did not perform your pre-trip inspection and a child was injured due to a malfunction of your vehicle that you might have identified during the pre-trip, how would you explain to that parent why you did not fulfill your duties as required?

Prevent Breakdowns

A vehicle inspection, if done properly, can prevent breakdowns. You aim to avoid a breakdown by keeping your bus in optimal condition. Using a prepared checklist allows you to verify many items to ensure the bus is safe and ready to drive.

Preventing breakdowns can eliminate frustration. For instance, checking the fan belt can reduce the likelihood of it breaking while on a route. This will

prevent the frustration of having to wait for repairs or a bus replacement during the bus run.

Every breakdown, regardless of severity, puts you and your students in potentially unsafe situations. Whenever a vehicle is on the edge of a roadway, it creates a hazard for other motorists. Additionally, a school bus on the shoulder will attract more than the usual number of people stopping to ask if you need assistance, thus creating an even larger hazard.

When a school vehicle breaks down, it creates significant anxiety for some of our younger students, and for medically fragile students, it can be life-threatening. For example, consider a student with severe diabetes who requires medication at specific times; a delay caused by a preventable breakdown due to insufficient pre-trip checks could have serious consequences.

Reduce Delays

Repairing worn and broken parts not only eliminates frustrations for you but also prevents delays for your passengers. When students do not arrive on time at their destination, it causes problems for the students, teachers, and parents.

When students fail to arrive on time, the phones in the transportation department begin ringing incessantly! Numerous families rely on their children to get to school within a set timeframe because of work commitments and after-school activities. A delayed bus in the morning can result in parents being late for work, leading to added stress and conflict, or even worse, placing students at risk from wildlife, environmental hazards, and potential predators.

Prolong Vehicle Life

The daily inspection will help keep the bus in good working order. This, in turn, will prolong the life of the bus and reduce transportation costs.

1 CCR 301-26, 10.0 Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Vehicle Inspections

10.1 Each school transportation vehicle shall have a daily pre-trip and post-trip inspection performed and documented by the school transportation vehicle operator or other transportation employee

authorized by the school district, charter school, or service provider. A daily pre-trip inspection shall be completed prior to a vehicle being placed in service. A daily post-trip inspection shall be completed at the end of the daily operation of each vehicle.

10.2 The pre-trip and post-trip inspection requirements for school transportation vehicles, other than small-capacity vehicles, shall include, at a minimum, all items listed on the CDE School Transportation Vehicle (School Bus/Multifunction Bus/Motor Coach Bus) – Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Requirements Form (STU-9).

10.3 The pre-trip and post-trip inspection requirements for school transportation small-capacity vehicles shall include, at a minimum, all items listed on the CDE School Transportation Vehicle (Small-Capacity Vehicle) - Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Requirements Form (STU-8).

10.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have a procedure in place to verify that students are not left on an unattended school transportation vehicle.

C.R.S. Model Traffic Code for Colorado 2024

202. Unsafe vehicles – penalty – identification plates

(1) It is unlawful for any person to drive or move or for the owner to cause or knowingly permit to be driven or moved on any highway any vehicle or combination of vehicles which is in such unsafe condition as to endanger any person, or which does not contain those parts or is not at all times equipped with such lamps and other equipment in proper condition and adjustment as required in this section and sections 204 to 231 and part 3 of this Code, or which is equipped in any manner in violation of said sections and part 3 or for any person to do any act forbidden or fail to perform any act required under said sections and part 3.

203. Unsafe vehicles – spot inspections

(1) Uniformed police officers, at any time upon reasonable cause, may require the driver of a vehicle to stop and submit such vehicle and its equipment to an inspection and such test with

reference thereto as may be appropriate. The fact that a vehicle is an older model vehicle shall not alone constitute reasonable cause. In the event such vehicle is found to be in an unsafe condition or the required equipment is not present or is not in proper repair and adjustment, the officer may give a written notice and issue a summons to the driver. Said notice shall require that such vehicle be placed in safe condition and properly equipped or that its equipment be placed in proper repair and adjustment, the particulars of which shall be specified on said notice.

(2) In the event any such vehicle is, in the reasonable judgment of such police officer, in such condition that further operation would be hazardous, the officer may require, in addition to the instructions set forth in subsection (1) of this section, that the vehicle be moved at the operator's expense and not operated under its own power or that it be driven to the nearest garage or other place of safety.

Pre-Trip Inspections

One of the most important inspections is the one performed by a school transportation vehicle driver. During this inspection, every component listed on your pre-trip inspection form will be checked to determine if the vehicle is ready for operation.

Not only are these inspections legally required per Colorado Revised Statutes and the CDE Operation Rules, but these vehicle inspections are also required by the school district, charter school, or service provider.

You must report defects immediately upon becoming aware of them. You have a responsibility to operate the bus safely. Mechanics cannot perform necessary repairs and do not know that something needs fixing unless they receive appropriate feedback from you.

Your school district, charter school, or service provider must retain pre-trip inspection forms for a minimum of six months. The forms must be completed thoroughly and carefully, and each form should include a full driver's signature.

You may want to consider keeping a copy of your pre-trip inspections to verify that you have completed the pre-trip inspection in the event it is ever questioned by supervision.

Your school district, charter school, or service provider will review the pre-trip inspection's specific items, what should be checked, how it is checked, and how to determine if it is defective.

Between Trip Inspections

After you complete one leg of your activity journey, or have released your students at an event and have some layover time, you should perform a Between Trip Inspection. Several items should be checked. Check for students remaining on the bus. The possibility of leaving a child on the bus is unacceptable and has potentially serious safety ramifications. This preventable problem can be addressed with an effective policy that requires drivers to check their vehicles before they exit it at the end of their route. **1 CCR 301.26, 10.4.**

Things to look for during Between Trip Inspections

- Check for adequate fuel
- Check for any vandalism of seats, walls, windows, etc., that may have occurred during the trip.
- Check for anything that should not be on the bus, such as a bag or package that may look suspicious.
- Check for materials that students may have left behind.
- Pick up trash on the floor, sweep if needed
- Secure the vehicle if you are not leaving immediately.

Post Trip Inspections

When you complete your final run for the day, a few things should be checked to secure the vehicle and prepare for the next day. In addition to items listed on the STU-8 and STU-9, the Post Trip Inspections may include:

- Check for students remaining in the vehicle
- Refuel the vehicle
- Record the mileage and refuel the vehicle, and record how much fuel was added.
- Check for any needed supplies.

- Clean the vehicle interior.

The largest amounts of dirt accumulate in your vehicle during the morning when students are waiting outside to get on. If you sweep your vehicle after the morning shift, you'll only need to pick up any litter and do a quick clean in the afternoon, keeping your vehicle looking tidy all day. Research suggests that when school buses are kept clean, it signals to students that the driver cares about the vehicle, which encourages them to take better care of it in return. Additionally, well-maintained buses tend to have fewer disciplinary issues with drivers.

- Park the vehicle in a designated area.
- Secure the vehicle
- Close all windows and doors
- Remove the key – follow your school district, charter school, or service provider procedures.
- Remove other equipment
- Turn in items left in the vehicle.
- Turn in all necessary paperwork and records.

CDE School Transportation Advisory Review (STAR)

The CDE School Transportation Unit conducts on-site reviews of all school district, charter school, and service provider driver, paraprofessional, and trainer qualification files, vehicle inspections, and garage operations. During the fleet portion of this review, CDE will randomly perform a visual inspection of school transportation vehicles to identify any potential non-compliance issues with the vehicles and required documentation. It will also address any non-compliance concerns regarding annual inspections conducted for the school district, charter school, or service provider, whether by in-house technicians or external CDE-approved inspection sites. If, during the visual inspection, CDE finds that a vehicle has defects listed in the CDE Out of Service Criteria or other potentially hazardous defects, the vehicle will be placed out of service until all necessary repairs are completed.

Some of the most common items found during STAR reviews:

- First Aid Kit – Missing and/or missing items
- Seats – Padding broke down, seat bottoms not secured
- Bodily Fluid Clean-Up Kit – Missing and/or missing items

- Instructional stickers by emergency exits are peeling or missing
- Lack of vehicle documentation (STU-25 or STU-26)
- Unsecured items in the passenger compartment
- Cleaning supplies are unmarked or unsecured – These are not permitted to "hang" on the rim of the waste basket
- Electrical systems/Lights – Headlights, taillights, hazard lights are inoperative or have broken lenses
- Emergency exits – Hard to open due to a lack of inspection, and/or the buzzers are not working.

The school transportation vehicle operator should discover ALL of the items listed above by performing a thorough pre-trip, between-trip, and post-trip inspection.

1 CCR 301-26, 13.0 Maintenance and Repair

13.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers must ensure all school transportation vehicles are systematically inspected, maintained, and repaired by a qualified mechanic to ensure that school transportation vehicles are in safe and proper operating condition.

13.2 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have a system to document preventative maintenance, reported defects, and repairs made to school transportation vehicles.

13.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain separate files for each school transportation vehicle with documentation of all annual inspections, all preventative maintenance, and all reported damage, defects, or deficiencies and the corresponding repair and maintenance performed.

13.4 Any identified damage, defect, or deficiency of a school transportation vehicle must be reported to the school district, charter schools, or service provider if it:

13.04(a) Could affect the safety of operation of the school transportation vehicle;

13.04(b) Could result in a mechanical breakdown of the school transportation vehicle;

13.04(c) Results in noncompliance with Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles (1 CCR 301-25) and/or manufacturer's specifications.

13.5 Documentation for reported defects must include all the following:

13.05(a) The name of the school district, charter school, or service provider;

13.05(b) Date and time the report was submitted;

13.05(c) All damage, defects, or deficiencies of the school transportation vehicle;

13.05(d) The name of the individual who prepared the report.

13.6 Following a reported damage, defect, or deficiency of a school transportation vehicle, school districts, charter schools, and service providers or a representative agent must repair the reported damage, defects, or deficiencies or document that no repair is necessary, ensuring that the vehicle is in safe and proper operating condition prior to transporting students.

13.7 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall not transport students in a school transportation vehicle that is not in safe and proper operating condition. A school transportation vehicle shall be designated as "out-of-service" by a school district, charter schools or service provider, a school transportation annual inspector, or the CDE School Transportation Unit.

13.07(a) Any school transportation vehicle discovered to be in an unsafe condition while being operated on the highway, roadway, or private road may be continued in operation only to the nearest place where repairs can safely be affected. Such operation shall be conducted only if it is less hazardous to the public than to permit the vehicle to remain on the highway, roadway, or private road.

13.8 Following a school transportation vehicle being placed "out-of-service," a school district, charter school, service provider, or a representative agent must make required repairs, ensuring that the

vehicle is in safe and proper operating condition prior to transporting students. In the event of being placed "out-of-service" during an annual inspection, the school transportation vehicle must successfully pass a CDE annual inspection prior to transporting students.

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Unit Five – Vehicle Operations

Operating a school transportation vehicle demands considerable skill and a thorough understanding of vehicle procedures and relevant laws, commonly known as the "Rules of the Road." The public holds us to exceptionally high standards, expecting us to be the best drivers since we are responsible for their family members' safety. It is vital to adhere to ALL traffic laws while driving both a school transportation vehicle and your personal vehicle. Your driving behavior in your personal vehicle often reflects how you will operate a school transportation vehicle.

Defensive Driving

Defensive driving encompasses various techniques to reduce the likelihood of accidents and improve road safety. It requires constant awareness of your surroundings, early identification of potential hazards, and sensible choices to safeguard yourself, your passengers, and others while driving. Mistakes behind the wheel are common, as we are all human. This is why defensive driving is essential for everyone's safety. However, driving defensively extends beyond merely minimizing risks; it also leads to cost-saving benefits in vehicle repairs and fuel, while facilitating a more seamless and enjoyable driving experience. You can decrease the potential for road rage by keeping a consistent speed and steering clear of sudden acceleration or hard braking.

Five Characteristics of Defensive Driving

A defensive driver has these five characteristics.

- Knowledge – Understands traffic laws, identifies hazards, prevents collisions, and responds appropriately and promptly.
- Alertness – Stay mindful of physical and mental conditions that could impact your driving skills.
- Foresight – Anticipating and preparing for hazards, assessing traffic situations from a distance, and recognizing changes in the driving environment that could jeopardize your safety.
- Judgment – Stay aware of any traffic situation, pass when it is safe, avoid risky maneuvers, and manage your behavior.
- Skill – The ability to operate a vehicle safely and effectively, including making turns, changing gears, and passing legally.

Basic Rules of Defensive Driving

- Always wear your seatbelt
- See it, predict it, act upon it
- Evaluate the "Big Picture" (12-15 seconds ahead)
- Scan your mirrors every 5-8 seconds, keep your eyes moving!
- Use the "4-second rule" when following other vehicles
- Always allow yourself an "out"
- Signal all turns and lane changes
- The aim is to achieve a 360° view—utilize your mirrors to help monitor blind spots.

The Three A's of Defensive Driving

- Attitude
- Awareness
- Actions

Attitude – Your First Defense

A positive driving attitude is essential for safety, impacting how drivers react to various situations, handle risks, and stay focused on driving. It includes courtesy, consideration for others, vigilance, and sound judgment. Coupled with defensive driving techniques, a positive attitude enables drivers to remain composed and reduces the likelihood of errors, particularly in high-pressure or difficult driving conditions.

Your attitude affects the following:

- Your driving performance
- Your reaction time
- How your passengers behave
- Your level of alertness

Make sure that your first defense is a positive attitude! Before you even start your day and get behind the wheel, adjust your attitude.

- Leave personal baggage at home.
- If you are running late, just breathe, relax, and reframe your attitude; safety is paramount.

What do you do when a reckless driver cuts you off, follows you too closely, or drives wildly toward you? How should you respond if the situation intensifies and the other person raises a fist or a weapon? Aggressive driving occurs when a driver puts people or property at risk or is likely to do so. On the other hand, road rage is an aggressive response towards other drivers, pedestrians, or cyclists that often increases angry behavior. While aggressive driving and road rage can occur together, they are not necessarily linked.

Examples of Aggressive Driving

- Speeding, especially in heavy traffic
- Weaving in and out of traffic
- Passing on the right
- Running stop signs or red lights
- Tailgating – can also be road rage
- Ignoring the right-of-way
- Cutting in front of another driver and then slowing down
- Changing lanes without signaling
- Blocking others from changing lanes

Road Rage! Steer Clear of it!

Remember that you cannot control another person's attitude—only your own. Never take a driver's behavior personally, as you do not know what is happening in their life that might cause them to act in a certain way.

- Avoid direct eye contact
- Stay within the posted speed limit
- Keep a safe distance from other vehicles
- Use your horn sparingly
- If necessary and safe, pull off (if the other driver follows suit, do not stop!)
- Take deep breaths and count to ten.
- Get your students to their destination safely.

Awareness – Expect the Unexpected

Once you've driven a route for some time, you become accustomed to the road conditions and traffic patterns. However, never allow yourself to become too comfortable or complacent. Stay vigilant; anticipate the

unexpected. Be prepared for situations that can change suddenly; there often isn't much time to process them.

Daily situations a driver may encounter include changes in driving conditions, shifts in traffic patterns, unpredictable student behavior, unexpected vehicle problems, and varying travel times between point A and point B.

Stay alert, be aware, and be prepared for anything.

Before leaving the lot:

- Find out about road conditions
- Listen to the morning and afternoon weather and traffic reports
- Talk to the supervisor and other drivers about known road hazards
- If you are a substitute driver or a new driver, ask about safety hazards before you pick up students.
- If you are new to the area, study local maps and become familiar with the geographic regions.
- Do a proper pre-trip inspection of the vehicle.

Awareness reminds you that children can do the craziest things at the worst possible times.

Actions – Do Not React

Defensive drivers act; they do not react. Take action to ensure your safety and that of your passengers. Remember, you are responsible for the most precious cargo there is.

When you act, you control your actions. When you react, you respond impulsively to others' behavior.

Five Keys to Driving Safely

- Aim high – Look ahead 12-15 seconds
- Get the Big Picture – See what is going on around you
- Keep your eyes moving – Mirrors, mirrors, mirrors
- Leave yourself an "out" – Plan ahead and have a cushion
- Make sure that they see you – Lights, horn, brakes

Standard Operating Procedures

Please follow your school district, charter school, or service provider vehicle operating procedures.

Getting Ready to Drive

After completing the pre-trip inspection, it is time to position yourself for driving.

- Familiarize yourself with all the controls and lights on the vehicle.
- Adjust the setting to enable you to reach and operate the panels and floor controls easily and comfortably.
- Inspect all mirrors to ensure optimal rear visibility of traffic behind the vehicle, along with clear views to both sides and the front vehicle.
- Adjust the seat belt so that it is correctly positioned.
- If the vehicle is equipped with a manual transmission, review the shift pattern.

Safety Restraints and Safety Belt Use

The safety belt is the greatest lifesaving and injury-reducing safety device drivers have on the school transportation vehicle for their protection. However, if you do not use it, you are not only exposing yourself, your passengers, and other motorists to danger, but you are also violating the law. You are required to wear your seat belt. As the school transportation vehicle operator, you are responsible for ensuring that your passengers are properly secured in their safety belts and/or safety restraint devices.

1 CCR 301-26, 5.0 School Transportation Vehicle Operator Requirements

5.01(j) The operator shall receive training regarding the proper use of physical restraints and intervention of students, the proper use and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS), and proper wheelchair securement when the operator is engaged in transportation involving these systems and devices, prior to transporting students.

1 CCR 301-26, 16.0 Safety Restraints

16.1 A school transportation vehicle operator shall have the safety belt fastened, worn correctly, and properly adjusted prior to the school transportation vehicle being placed in motion.

16.2 All passengers in a school transportation vehicle under 10,000 lbs. GVWR shall have their safety belts fastened, worn correctly, and properly adjusted prior to the school transportation vehicle being placed in motion.

National Association of State Director of Student Transportation School Bus Seat Capacity Position Paper 1999

The National Highway Traffic Safety Association recommends that all passengers be seated entirely within the confines of the school bus seats while the bus is in motion. Federal motor vehicle safety standard No. 222, "School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection" requires that the interior of large buses provide occupant protection so that children are protected without the need to buckle-up. Occupant crash protection is provided by a protective envelope consisting of strong, closely spaced seats that have energy-absorbing seat backs.

Persons not sitting or sitting partially outside of the school bus seats will not be afforded the occupant protection provided by the school bus seats.

A manufacturer's seating capacity in school buses can vary depending on the vehicle. They normally set the capacity limits based on three students per seat. So, for three students to fit in each seat, they would have to be elementary students who are quite small.

Attempting to put three secondary or high school students in one seat would make it extremely uncomfortable for the students and more than likely cause one of them to have their feet in the aisle, producing a trip hazard and reducing the use of compartmentalization. If you believe that your bus is overloaded, check with your supervisor to see what can be

done to reduce your student count. Also, check your school district, charter school, and service provider policy regarding "in-use" capacity.

Basic Driving

Starting the Engine

How you start your vehicle will depend on its make and model. Check the vehicle owner's manual for instructions on how to start the vehicle, or discuss with your school district, charter school, or service provider mechanic. Whatever your make and model, your right foot should be on the brake before starting the vehicle. Check the indicator lights and gauges to be sure your vehicle does not need maintenance.

Activate your headlights; relying solely on daytime running lights is not sufficient, as mandated by **1 CCR 301-26**.

1 CCR 301-26, 14.0 Operation of a School Transportation Vehicle

14.3 A school transportation vehicle's headlights shall be activated while the vehicle is in operation.

Moving the Vehicle

Look for a safe path and check for traffic or pedestrians to the sides and behind. Signal, and if safe, press the accelerator gently with the ball of your foot on the pedal and the heel of your foot on the floor.

Shifting an Automatic Transmission

Manual shifting up or down the gear range or staying in a gear may be necessary depending upon load and/or terrain. When going down a hill, shift into the gear or the next lowest gear that would be used going up the hill. Shift one gear at a time without lugging the engine.

Read the manufacturer's manual or ask the service technician for recommended gear selection. Always emphasize proper gear usage and encourage the driver to practice using gears.

Transmission shifting procedures should follow district, charter, service provider, fleet, and owner manual procedures.

In the lower ranges (1, 2, and 3), the transmission will not shift up above the highest gear selected unless the recommended engine-governed speed for that gear is exceeded. Do not exceed the governed engine speed.

Making a Right Turn

You should turn right from the rightmost part of your lane, as close to the curb as possible. Completing a turn properly requires you to signal for an appropriate amount of time before the turn, search for hazards or other road users crossing your path, turn into and from the correct lane, and turn in a correct path. Accelerate out of turns until you reach the speed limit or traffic flow.

In urban areas, you must signal continuously for 100 feet before making a turn or lane change, and on four-lane highways or roads where the posted limit is faster than 40 mph, you must signal for 200 feet before making a turn or lane change.

Making a Left Turn

Crashes frequently occur during left turns as drivers need to see, assess, and navigate around oncoming traffic and pedestrians crossing the intersection. When making a left turn, wait at the stop line or crosswalk until there is a sufficient gap in oncoming traffic to complete your turn safely. Always check for pedestrians and smaller vehicles, such as cyclists and motorcyclists, and take the time to accurately gauge their speed and distance before proceeding. Entering the intersection while waiting to turn left obstructs emergency vehicles, reduces visibility for oncoming traffic, and places you at risk of a collision if the light changes and oncoming traffic runs a red light while you are turning. Never angle your front wheels to the left while waiting to turn, as being rear-ended could push you into oncoming traffic. When turning left, you should be on the left side of your lane.

In urban areas, you must signal continuously for 100 feet before making a turn or lane change, and on four-lane highways or roads where the posted limit is faster than 40 mph, you must signal for 200 feet before making a turn or lane change.

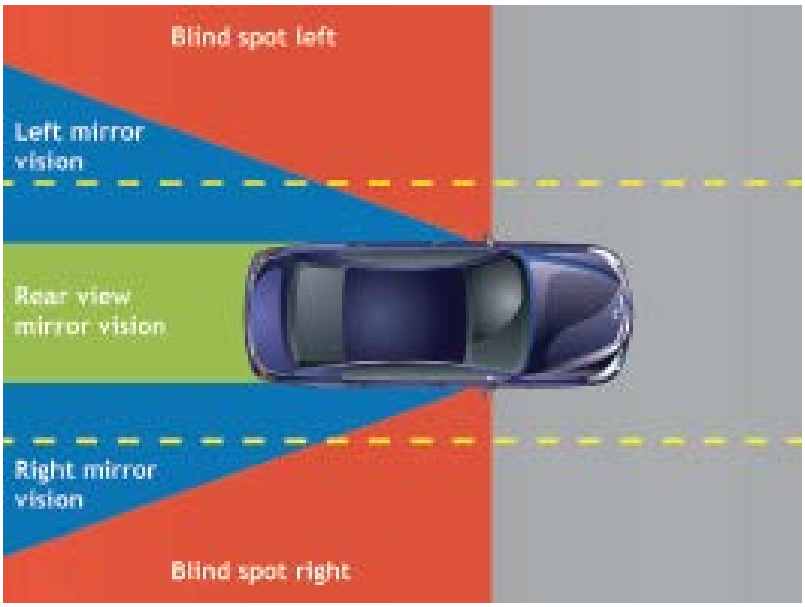
Crossing Intersections

An uncontrolled intersection is an intersection that does not have control devices such as stop signs or traffic lights. When more than one vehicle reaches an uncontrolled intersection at the same time, the vehicle on the left must yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right and allow the vehicle on the right to go first.

- When stopped and your vision is obscured by buildings, trees, parked vehicles, or blind spots created by parts of your vehicle, stop at the intersection and lean forward or back in your seat to eliminate the blind spots before proceeding.

C.R.S. 42-4-802

Drivers must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians when a pedestrian is entering the roadway within a crosswalk without dedicated traffic signals. Drivers can enter the crosswalk to continue driving if the pedestrian is on the other side of the crosswalk, but not if they are so close that they would feel endangered by the vehicle's passing.



Changing Lanes

Changing lanes involves moving from one lane to another, overtaking another vehicle, merging onto the road from an entrance ramp, and entering the roadway from the curb or shoulder. It is essential to check for hazards or

vehicles in the lane you intend to enter. This entails observing traffic ahead, to the sides, and behind your vehicle before making a lane change.

Stay mindful of blind spots—areas not visible in your rearview or side mirrors that are situated slightly to the sides and back of your vehicle. When changing lanes, you should:

- Activate your turn signal. Leave it active for a minimum of 3 seconds or 200 feet before leaving your lane.
- Check for possible hazards or vehicles in the lane you want to enter.
    - Check traffic ahead.
    - Use your mirrors to check for traffic behind your vehicle.
    - Look over your shoulder to check your blind spot, which is the area slightly to the rear and side of your vehicle that you cannot see in your mirrors.
    - When it is safe, move into the new lane.
    - After you are centered in the new lane, check the mirror for traffic behind you.
- Deactivate your turn signal within 3 seconds of completing the lane change.

Passing Another Vehicle

Signs and road markings indicate areas where you are and are not allowed to pass another vehicle. Typically, you should pass on the left. You are only allowed to pass on the right on one-way streets and on roadways with two or more lanes of travel in each direction. You are not allowed to pass another vehicle by driving off the pavement or onto the shoulder of a roadway.

Before deciding to pass another vehicle, including bicyclists, judge whether you will have enough time and room to pass safely by observing the traffic ahead, beside and behind you. If you have enough time and space to pass, begin by making a lane change, as directed above. Accelerate past the vehicle you wish to pass. When you can see both headlights of the vehicle you passed in the rearview mirror, change one lane to get back into your previous lane.

If passing a bicyclist, you must have a minimum of three feet of space between the outermost part of your vehicle, including any projections such as mirrors or trailers, and the bicyclist. You can briefly cross a solid yellow line

when there is no oncoming traffic and you have a clear view ahead. Be aware of wind blasts that can knock a bicyclist off their bike and safely pass by giving them more space on rural roadways, when operating a large vehicle or driving in windy conditions.

Stopping the Vehicle

Check your mirrors for traffic to the rear of your vehicle. Move your foot from the accelerator to the brake pedal. With steady pressure, press until your vehicle comes to a stop.

Hand Position on the Steering Wheel

You have better vehicle control when you place both hands on the outside of the steering wheel, on opposite sides, at the 3 and 9 o'clock positions or the 4 and 8 o'clock positions. Your grip on the steering wheel should be firm but gentle. Use your fingers instead of the palms of your hands and keep your thumbs up along the face of the steering wheel. Never grip the inside of the steering wheel when turning it.

Backing the Vehicle

Careful planning can minimize the need for backing; however, some situations require backing maneuvers. A school transportation vehicle operator must be able to back into a given space without allowing the vehicle to scrape or hit stationary objects. This maneuver must be made safely and without interfering with other traffic.

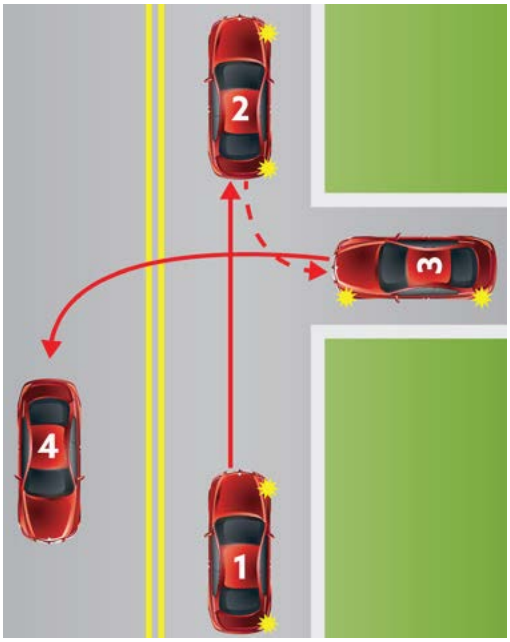
Follow all school district, charter school, or service provider policies on backing your vehicles. Best practice in backing a small-capacity vehicle includes:

- Stop the vehicle in the correct position to begin the backing maneuver.
- Check behind your vehicle before you get in. Children and small objects cannot be seen from the driver's seat.
- Turn on your hazard lights and honk your horn.
- Place your foot on the brake and shift to reverse.
- Grasp the steering wheel at the 12 o'clock position with your left hand. Place your right arm on the back of the passenger seat and look directly over your shoulder through the rear window.

- Use your mirrors for backing up, but keep in mind that these mirrors do not show the area immediately behind your vehicle. If you have a rear-view camera, use it in addition to checking over your shoulder and using your mirrors.
- Accelerate gently, smoothly, and slowly. Steer slightly in the direction the rear of the vehicle should move. If backing up while turning, check the front and sides quickly. Continue looking to the rear until you come to a complete stop.

Executing a Back-Up Turnaround

- Signal your intention to turn right.
- Stop and check traffic to the sides and rear of your vehicle.
- Move back until the rear bumper of your vehicle reaches the near edge of the driveway.
- While backing slowly, steer rapidly all the way to the right.
- As your vehicle centers in the driveway, straighten the wheels and stop.
- Shift to drive and check in both directions; if clear, signal and turn left into the proper lane and accelerate**.**
- ALWAYS have students inside the vehicle while making a back-up turnaround.



1 CCR 301-26, 14.0 Operation of a School Transportation Vehicle

14.9 The school transportation vehicle operator shall use extreme caution when backing. Before backing on a roadway, or highway, or private property, the horn or audible warning device shall be sounded, and four-way hazard lamps actuated or there shall be a person outside the vehicle giving direction.

14.09(a) Backing a school transportation vehicle when students are outside of the vehicle at a student stop is prohibited.

C.R.S. 42-4-1211(1) Limitations on Backing

The driver of a vehicle, whether on public property or private property which is used by the general public for parking purposes, shall not back the same unless such movement can be made with safety and without interfering with other traffic.

The driver of a vehicle shall not back the same upon any shoulder or roadway of any controlled-access highway.

Any person who violates any provision of this section commits a Class A traffic infraction.

Delineators

Delineator Post

A Delineator Post is located beside the roadway, painted interstate green, and topped with colored retro-reflectors or “delineators.” These posts are commonly found in areas of higher risk and along information-dense road sections, aimed at communicating various messages to drivers.

Delineator Panels

Retro-reflective panels are striped markers forming a vertical rectangle, featuring alternating black and yellow stripes that slope downward at a 45-degree angle toward the obstruction's side where traffic passes. These delineators are often located at the ends of guardrails, bridges, and similar structures.

Delineator

A retro-reflective device installed above and along the roadway surface in a series to indicate the alignment of the road, particularly at night or in adverse weather conditions, or to indicate an area of higher risk to the driver.

Most Commonly Seen Delineator Patterns

Three Amber Front Delineators

Type III (3-Yellow) delineators are to be installed to warn of the existence of objects not actually in the roadway but that may be so close to the edge of the roadway that they need a marker. These include underpass piers, bridge abutments, handrails, and culvert heads. The inside edge of the marker shall be in line with the inner edge of the obstruction. If a guardrail approach end is not flared, a Type III delineator will be placed immediately in advance of the approach end.

Two Amber Front and One Red Back Delineators

These are normally installed in medians for left-turn deceleration lanes.

Two White Front and One Red Back Delineators

These are designed to warn motorists of acceleration and deceleration lanes ahead. The red reflector is to warn motorists of the wrong way.

One Blue Delineator

These are for the Department of Transportation maintenance crew workers. These are installed at the bridge joints.

Three Green Front Delineators

These are for Department of Transportation maintenance workers. These are installed in front of approaching guardrails with flare ends, not on bridges. They can be found in front of curb heads.

Red Delineators

Runaway truck ramps are bordered on each side by red delineators spaced not more than fifty feet apart. Red delineators can also indicate the wrong way.

Blue and Black Striped Delineators

These are for emergency services to use as a slip-through.

Traffic Control Devices

Standardized traffic controls are used to control and guide driver behavior. This section will briefly review all types of traffic control devices, highlighting some of the less-understood, newer devices. Traffic signs can convey many diverse types of messages to the driver. They inform the driver of laws, warn of hazards ahead, or provide information and guidance. Traffic control can also be provided by law enforcement, highway personnel, or school crossing guards. You must obey directions from these persons.

Signs

Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs inform highway users of traffic laws or regulations. They are typically **rectangular with a black legend on a white background**, but other colors and shapes are also used. The two most common regulatory signs indicate right-of-way: the stop sign and yield sign.

Regulatory signs are used to control speeds, such as maximum and minimum speed limits and turning movements. For example, you may recognize these signs with a red circle and a slash mark, which means “no” or “do not.”

Regulatory signs control parking. When parking is prohibited, the parking signs have red lettering, such as “No Parking at Any Time,” “No Stopping, Standing, or Parking,” or “No Parking, Bus Stop.” When parking is permitted, the lettering is green, such as “One Hour Parking.”

Regulatory signs can also supplement information given by traffic signals, such as “Stop Here on Red” or “Crosswalk.” Finally, regulatory signs are used for a variety of other controls, such as providing the axle weight limit (GVWR) or “Road Closed to Through Traffic.”

Warning Signs

Warning signs inform the driver of situations ahead that may require extra care. **They are yellow with black lettering and generally diamond-shaped.** Warning signs can show changes in horizontal alignments, such as turns,

curves, and winding roads. Distinct types of intersections ahead are indicated symbolically. These signs can indicate crossroads or “T” and “Y” intersections. Advance warnings for traffic control devices can be provided.

Sometimes, a written message is used, such as “Stop Ahead,” or a picture of the device ahead is used, such as a yield sign or traffic signal.

Warning signs are used to show converging traffic lanes, such as the symbolic merge sign or the message or symbolic sign showing that the right lane ends. They are also used to indicate narrow roadways, such as “Road Narrows” or “One Lane Bridge.” Changes in highway design are also shown on warning signs. Examples include “divided highway ahead,” “divided highway ends,” or “two-way traffic.”

Traffic engineers are increasing the use of roundabouts. Drivers must pay particular attention to both warning signs and pavement indicators in these areas. If the driver becomes confused in these areas, the driver must not stop at the roundabout. The driver should proceed to a connecting road to re-route.

Warning signs can also indicate highway grades, advance warning of railroad crossings, and roadway surface conditions, such as bumps, soft shoulders, and slippery conditions. They also show various kinds of entrances and crossings, such as truck entrances, deer crossings, and bicycle crossings.

Warning signs are used to indicate advisory speeds, such as exit and ramp speeds.

Warning guide signs for construction or maintenance work also use standardized shapes and messages, but are distinctive in the black letters used on an orange background. Typical construction and maintenance warning signs warn of construction or a detour ahead. They can also warn of roadwork, shoulder work, or a survey crew ahead. Typical construction and maintenance guide signs provide information on the length of a construction or maintenance zone or the direction of a detour.

A special type of warning sign is the pennant-shaped “No Passing Zone” sign. When used, it is on the left side of the road and is used in conjunction with the regulatory “Do Not Pass” sign.

Finally, school signs are special warning signs that utilize the pentagon shape. These indicate the school area and school crossing.

Guide Signs

Guide signs are the third major classification of traffic signs. They guide drivers along streets and highways, inform them of intersecting routes, or direct them to their destination, be it a city, river, park, or similar type of destination. **Guide signs are generally rectangular and have a white message on a green background**. On conventional roads and streets, black messages on white backgrounds are frequently used as an alternative. In addition, distinct colors and shapes are used for special purposes.

Guide signs indicate highway junctions, highway direction, alternate routes, the end of a numbered route, and temporary routes. Various advanced route turn arrows and directional arrows are common guide signs. Two of the most typical guide signs are the familiar destination and mileage signs. On some interchanges, symbolic destination signs are used. A special type of guide sign is used for recreation areas. These signs have a white message on a brown background.

Another special guide sign is the service sign. These are white messages on a blue background. They illustrate the location of a phone or hospital and indicate that there are no barriers to the handicapped.

Other service signs indicate gas, food, lodging, or camping, either through symbolic or message signs. Mileposts are another form of guide sign. Mileage always runs from south to north or west to east and begins at the state line or at a junction where the route begins. Guide signs are also used to show the locations of airports, bus stations, and train stations.

Standard Road Sign Colors and Shapes

Standard Road Sign Colors and Meanings	
Color	***Meaning***
Black	***Regulation***
Blue	***Motorist services guidance***
Brown	***Public recreation and scenic guidance***
Fluorescent Yellow-Green	***Pedestrian, bicycle, playground, school, and school bus warning***
Green	***Movements permitted, direction, guidance***
Orange	***Construction and maintenance warning, temporary traffic control***
Purple	***Lanes restricted to use only by vehicles with registered electronic toll collection (ETC) accounts, special interest***
Red	***Stop or prohibition***
White	***Regulation***
Yellow	***General warning***

Standard Road Sign Shapes and Meanings	
Shape	***Meaning***
Circle	***Exclusively for Grade Crossing Advance Warning***
Crossbuck	***Exclusively for Grade Crossing***
Diamond	***Warning***
Octagon	***Exclusively for Stop***
Pennant	***Exclusively for No Passing***
Pentagon	***Exclusively for School Advance Warning***
Rectangle – Horizontal	***Guide signs***
Rectangle – Vertical	***Regulatory signs***
Rectangle – Square	***Some warning signs***
Trapezoid	***Recreational and Cultural Interest, National Forest Route***
Triangle	***Yield signs***

Signals and Road Markings

Traffic signals are lights that indicate when and where to stop and go. Traffic lights are typically located at intersections and are arranged (from top to bottom) in red, yellow, and green. There are intersections and other locations where individual green, yellow, or red lights may appear. If the traffic signal is not functioning or is malfunctioning, treat the intersection as a four-way stop.

Information in this section was taken from the Colorado Driver's Handbook.

Traffic Signals

HAWK signals (High Intensity Activated Crosswalk)

HAWK signals are traffic signals that allow pedestrians to cross the road safely. HAWK signals operate in a yellow-red flashing sequence to alert motorists that pedestrians need to cross the road.

Steady red light

Stop until a green light appears. After stopping and yielding to pedestrians and other traffic, and if not prohibited by a traffic sign, you may turn right while the light is red. Also, you may turn left on a red light if you are turning from a one-way street onto another one-way street, unless prohibited by a sign.

Steady yellow light

A red light is about to appear. Stop unless you are already in the intersection.

Steady green light

After yielding to any vehicle or pedestrian within the intersection or adjacent crosswalk, you may proceed straight through or turn right or left unless a sign prohibits such turns.

Red Arrow

A lighted red arrow means you must stop and may not turn in the direction shown.

Green arrow

A lighted green arrow, by itself or along with a red, green, or yellow light, means you may turn in the direction shown by the arrow. If the green arrow goes off, but the circular green is on, you may still turn after yielding to through vehicles and pedestrians, unless prohibited by a sign or red arrow.

Yellow arrow

A lighted red arrow is about to appear. Stop if you are not already in the intersection.

Flashing yellow arrow

A flashing yellow arrow indicates that a driver turning left should do so cautiously while yielding to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. It's important to avoid rushing through a flashing yellow arrow; take a moment to ensure that there is a clear path before entering the intersection. Subsequently, the signal will change to solid yellow, warning the driver that the light is about to turn red, and they should refrain from entering the intersection if they can stop safely. Eventually, the signal will turn red, requiring the driver to come to a complete stop.

Flashing red light

A flashing red light means the same as a STOP sign. Stop; then go only after yielding to pedestrians and other traffic.

Flashing yellow light

A flashing yellow light is a warning of a hazard. Slow down and proceed with caution.

Pavement Markings

Similar to traffic signs and signals, roadway markings serve a specific purpose and convey distinct meanings. Sometimes, they enhance the regulations and warnings presented on traffic signs and signals. At other times, they act independently when no other method effectively communicates this information. Roadway markings follow standardized colors and line types. Lines and symbols on the road separate lanes, indicate when passing or changing lanes is permissible, specify lanes designated for turns, outline pedestrian pathways, and show where to stop for traffic signals or signs.

Yellow lines

Separate traffic moving in opposite directions.

- Broken yellow line: Passing is permitted
- Solid yellow lines: No passing is permitted, unless to pass a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet of space when the oncoming travel lane is clear.
- Double solid yellow lines: Neither side can pass, unless to pass a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet of space when the oncoming travel lane is clear.
- Solid and broken yellow lines: You may not pass if the solid yellow line is on your side. If the broken yellow line is on your side, you may pass if it is safe to do so. You must return to your lane before the broken lines turn solid. You may cross a solid yellow line for a left turn into an alley, private road, or driveway, or to pass a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet of space when such movement can be made safely.

White Lines

Separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction.

- Broken white line: You may change lanes if it is safe.
- Solid white line: Requires you to stay within the lane and also marks the shoulder of the roadway.
- Green Paint: A lane or area on the roadway designated for bicyclists, which increases visibility of bicyclists.
- Sharrows: Some streets have shared lane markings or “sharrows” painted on them, letting road users know that the lane may be too narrow for drivers and bicyclists to travel side-by-side. Bicyclists may ride in the center of a lane with a sharrow or in any situation where they need to avoid obstacles or increase visibility for their safety.
- Crosswalks: A crosswalk is a marked or unmarked part of a road where pedestrians have the right-of-way to cross. The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way by slowing down or stopping, if need be, for pedestrians crossing the roadway within a crosswalk. Whenever you approach a vehicle from the rear that is stopped at a crosswalk, you must not pass and must stop behind the vehicle or behind the crosswalk in the adjacent lane if it is a multi-lane roadway.

- Conflict Zones: Broken lines in a bike or bus lane that alert drivers and bicyclists that they will be crossing each other's path.

Controlling Speed

Driving too fast to control the vehicle is a major cause of fatal crashes. You must adjust your speed to driving conditions. These include traction, curves, visibility, traffic, and hills.

Stopping Distance

Three things add up to the total stopping distance:

Perception Distance + Reaction Distance + Braking Distance = Total Stopping Distance

Perception Distance

This is the distance your vehicle travels from the time your eyes see a hazard until your brain recognizes it. The perception time for an alert driver is about 3/4 seconds. At 55 mph, you travel 60 feet in 3/4 seconds.

Reaction Distance

This is the distance traveled from the time your brain tells your foot to move from the accelerator until your foot is pushing the brake pedal. The average driver has a reaction time of 3/4 seconds, which accounts for an additional 60 feet traveled at 55 mph.

Braking Distance

This is the distance it takes to stop once the brakes are applied. At 55 mph, on dry pavement with good brakes, a heavy vehicle can take about 170 feet to stop, about 4 ½ seconds. Total Stopping Distance – At 55 mph, it will take about five seconds to stop, and your vehicle will travel about the distance of a football field.

Hydraulic Brakes - (PD + RD + BD) 60 + 60 + 170 = 290 feet.

Effect of Speed on Stopping Distance

Whenever you double the speed, it takes about four times as long to stop, and the vehicle will have four times the destructive power if it crashes. High speeds significantly increase stopping distances.

By slowing down a little, you will greatly reduce your braking distance.

Speed and Curves

Drivers must adjust their speed for curves in the road. If you take a curve too fast, two things can happen. The wheels can lose traction and continue straight ahead, causing the vehicle to skid off the road, or the wheels may keep their traction, causing the vehicle to roll over. Tests have shown that vehicles with a high center of gravity can roll over at the posted speed limit for a curve.

- Slow to a safe speed before you enter a curve.
- Braking in a curve is dangerous.
- Slow down as needed. Do not exceed the posted speed limit for the curve. To help maintain control, drive in a gear that allows a slight acceleration through the curve.

Reminder – The posted advisory speed is generally set for cars, not buses.

Speed and Distance Ahead

You should always be able to stop within the distance you can see ahead. Fog, rain, or other conditions may require a slower speed to enable you to stop within that distance. You cannot see as far ahead at night with low beams as you can with high beams. When using low beams, slow down.

Reminder – Never outdrive the range of what your headlights illuminate.

Speed and Traffic Flow

If possible, drive at the speed of the traffic without traveling at an illegal or unsafe speed. Maintain a safe following distance.

A common reason a driver may exceed the speed limit is to save time or reach a destination quickly due to fatigue. Anyone attempting to drive faster than the flow of traffic will not save much time. The risks involved are not worth it. Driving faster than other vehicles results in:

- Frequently passing other vehicles, thus increasing the chance of a crash.
- Fatigue results in a lack of response time, poor judgment, and can increase the chance of a crash.

Reminder - When driving in heavy traffic, the safest speed is the speed of other vehicles.

Speed on Downgrades

Traveling at an appropriate speed is the most important thing when descending long, steep hills safely. If you do not go slowly enough, overuse of the brakes can cause them to become so hot (brake fade) that they will not slow the vehicle down. Shift the transmission to a lower gear and check the brakes before starting down the grade. Pay attention to warning signs for long downhill grades ahead.

Proper Braking Techniques

Remember: The use of service brakes on a long and/or steep downgrade is only a supplement to the engine's braking effect. Once the vehicle is in the proper low gear, utilize the following proper braking technique:

- Downshift the transmission prior to the crest of the hill
- Be in the proper gear
- Apply the brakes hard enough to feel a definite slowdown of the vehicle
- When your speed has been reduced to approximately 5 mph below your "safe" speed, release the brakes. (This brake application should last for about 3-5 seconds.)
- When your speed has increased to your "safe" speed, repeat steps two and three. For example, if the "safe" speed is 40 mph, you would not apply the brakes until the speed reaches 40 mph. You now apply the brakes hard enough to gradually reduce the speed to 35 mph and then release the brakes. Repeat this as often as necessary until you have reached the end of the downgrade.
- If braking occurs too often, the vehicle is not in a low enough gear.

Basic Speed Law

Regardless of the posted speed limit, it may be necessary to reduce your speed to keep yourself and others safe. Signs will show when a reduced speed limit is in effect.

C.R.S. 42-4-110 Model Traffic Code; Part 11 – Speed Regulations

(1) No person shall drive a vehicle on a highway at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions then existing.

(2) Except when a special hazard exists that requires a lower speed, the following speeds shall be lawful;

(a) 20 mph on a narrow, winding mountain highway or on blind curves;

(b) 25 mph in any business district, as defined in C.R.S. 42-1-102(11);

(c) 30 mph in any residential district, as defined in C.R.S. 42-1-2(80);

(d) 40 mph on open mountain highways;

(e) 45 mph for all single rear axle vehicles in the business of transporting trash that exceed 20,000, where higher speeds are posted, when said vehicle is loaded as an exempted vehicle pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-110; Section 507(3);

(f) 55 mph on other open highways which are not on the interstate system, as defined in C.R.S. 43-2-101(2), and are not surfaced, four-lane freeways or expressways;

(g) 65 mph on surfaced, four-lane highways which are on the interstate system as defined in C.R.S. 43-2-101(2), or are freeways or expressways;

(h) Any speed not in excess of a speed limit designated by an official traffic control device.

(3) No driver of a vehicle shall fail to decrease the speed of such vehicle from an otherwise lawful speed to a reasonable and prudent speed when a special hazard exists with respect to pedestrians or other traffic or by reason of weather or highway conditions.

(7) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of subsection (2) of this section, any city or town may by ordinance adopt absolute speed limits as the maximum lawful speed limits in its jurisdiction, and such speed limits shall not be subject to the provisions of subsection (4) of this section.

(8)

(a) Deleted by amendment

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, no person shall drive a vehicle on a highway at a speed in excess of a maximum lawful speed limit of 75 mph.

The posted speed limit would also include the speed indicated on any advisory speed signs.

The term "reasonable" refers to a person who possesses sound judgment and acts fairly and sensibly. It is often used to describe a situation where no one with a sensible mind would object. Other synonyms include rational, logical, fair, fair-minded, just and equitable. The word can also be used to indicate something that is appropriate or moderate, such as the use of reasonable force by a police officer to gain entry. In this context, "reasonable" means that the action taken is within reason, practicable, and sensible.

"Prudent" refers to acting with care and thought for the future. For instance, no wise or well-judged money manager would authorize a loan without first knowing its purpose. Synonyms for "prudent" include "sensible" and "well-advised." It's important to keep in mind that the person determining whether your speed was reasonable and prudent is the one to pay attention to!

Your idea of reasonable may differ from their idea of reasonable. Always err on the side of safety and reduce your speed!!!!!

When on school grounds, you should always be going at an extremely low speed, even creeping, due to the high volume of people in the general vicinity. Would you be able to stop if a student were to dart out in front of your vehicle or slip off the curb?

Managing Your Space

To drive safely, you need space all around your vehicle. When things go wrong, space gives you time to think and act.

Managing space is essential to be adequately prepared for when something goes wrong. While this is true for all drivers, it is crucial for drivers of large vehicles, as large vehicles take up more space and require more space for stopping and turning.

Per the Colorado Commercial Driver Manual, of all the space around your vehicle, the area ahead of the vehicle – the space you are driving into – is most important.

The Need for Space Ahead

Maintain enough space in front of you to stop unexpectedly. Crash reports indicate that vehicles frequently collide with the one directly ahead. The primary reason for this is following too closely. Keep in mind that if the vehicle in front is smaller, it can stop more quickly than you. Following too closely increases your risk of a collision.

When you are stopped at an intersection behind another vehicle, create extra space by waiting 4 seconds before proceeding. While stopped at a traffic light or stop sign, position yourself far enough back to see the tires of the vehicle in front of you touching the road.

In a large vehicle like a school bus, proper mirror usage is crucial. Regularly check both side mirrors, left and right, every 5-8 seconds. Insufficient observation is a leading cause of accidents.

How Much Space?

How much space should you keep in front of you? One good rule says you need at least one second for every 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds below 40 mph. At greater speeds, you must add one second for safety. For example, if you are driving a 40-foot vehicle, you should leave four seconds between you and the vehicle ahead.

Heavy Vehicle Formula

For timed intervals, the following distance

- 1 second is required for every 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds under 40 MPH
- Above 40 MPH, use the same formula, then add one second for the additional speed

For example

- 40-foot truck (under 40 mph) = 4 seconds
- 50-foot truck (above 40 mph) = 6 seconds
- 60-foot truck (under 40 mph) = 6 seconds

To know how much space you have, wait until the vehicle ahead passes a shadow on the road, a pavement marking, or another clear landmark. Then count off the seconds like this: “one thousand and one, one thousand and two,” and so on, until you reach the same spot. Compare your count with the

rule of 1 second for every 10 feet of length. You are too close if you are driving a 40-foot truck and only count to 2 seconds. Drop back a little and count again until you have 4 seconds of following distance (or 5 seconds if you are going over 40 mph). After a little practice, you will know how far back you should be. Remember to add an additional second for speeds above 40 mph. Also, keep in mind that when the road is slippery, you need much more space to stop.

Look Far Enough Ahead

- Look ahead along your intended path of travel for about 12 to 15 seconds.
    - At lower speeds, this is about one city block
    - At highway speeds, this is about a quarter of a mile
- When following a large vehicle, allow additional space so that you may have a greater range of sight

Traffic

- Watch for vehicles coming onto the highway, into your lane, or turning
- Watch for brake lights from slowing vehicles
- Look far enough ahead to enable you to adjust your speed or change lanes if necessary to avoid a problem.

Traffic Signals and Signs

- If a light has been green for a long time (stale green), it will probably change before you get there; start slowing down and be ready to stop
- A crosswalk signal with a flashing hand indicates that the light is about to change.
- Traffic signs may alert you to current road conditions, indicating the need to change speed or lanes.

Lane Changes, Turns, Merging, and Tight Maneuvers

- Scan mirrors thoroughly before changing speeds, lanes, or direction of travel.
- A minimum of six mirror checks should be performed during lane changes, turns, merges, and other tight maneuvers.
- Check mirrors every 5 to 8 seconds to check traffic conditions around the vehicle.

Hills and Curves

- Look for hills, curves, or anything that may make slowing down or a lane change necessary.
- Activate your hazard lights if the speed of your vehicle impedes the normal flow of traffic.
- When going around a curve, check your mirrors to be sure that the rear of the vehicle is tracking correctly in your lane and not encroaching into the other lanes of traffic.

Managing Space Behind

You cannot prevent other drivers from following you too closely. However, there are a few things that you can do to reduce some of the risks that they create.

Slow Down

- Reduce your speed slowly. By reducing your speed, you reduce risk. If you are travelling at a slower speed, and they want to pass…let them.

Increase Your Following Distance

- When you slow down, you should also increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. This will allow you to avoid a sudden stop and reduce the possibility of being struck from behind.

Avoid Sudden Changes

- Signal early. Give them time to react if you are turning or changing lanes.

Do Not Play Tricks

- Flashing your taillights or applying your brakes suddenly will not do anything but escalate your frustration and increase the possibility of injury to your passengers.

Managing Space Below and Overhead

Below

Many drivers overlook the clearance space under their vehicles. When operating a school transportation vehicle, it's crucial to understand the clearance between your vehicle and the road. Vehicles with smaller

capacities or under-storage compartments might have limited clearance. When driving a larger vehicle, drainage channels and other depressions on roads can cause the long rear overhang to scrape. Cross such depressions with caution.

Occasionally, animals and other debris may block the roadway. Stay mindful of your surroundings and your clearances to prevent the risk of your vehicle becoming stuck or, worse yet, incurring significant damage to the undercarriage.

DO NOT attempt to cross floodwaters, no matter the depth; turn around and find a different route.

Overhead

If you have any reason to doubt that you have ample overhead clearance under a bridge or overpass, take a different route. Warnings for low clearance are typically posted, so remain alert. Overhead clearances can also concern building overhangs; inform your supervisor about the unsafe condition and document it.

Know the height of your vehicle – this will change with vents and roof hatches being opened.

Vehicle Awareness

Avoid driving alongside other vehicles whenever possible. The average Type A minibus is 7 ½ feet wide without mirrors, but some models can be as wide as 8 ½ feet. The average lane width on a roadway is approximately 9 to 12 feet. Given the size of the vehicle in relation to the lane, there is little room for error. It is essential to keep the vehicle centered in the lane as much as possible. Driving too close to the centerline or the edge of the road can pose additional hazards for pedestrians, cyclists, mailboxes, and other motorists.

Avoid traveling in another vehicle's blind spot; either move forward or drop back to ensure that the other driver can see you.

When exiting tunnels, you may experience intense winds that make it difficult to stay in your lane. Stay alert and be prepared.

When two lanes are designated for turning, ensure that you remain in your lane and turn into the appropriate lane.

Driving Hazards

Typically, you should operate your vehicle on the right side of the road. Stick to a single lane and avoid crossing into multiple lanes. When on roads lacking marked lanes, position your vehicle slightly to the right of the center. When operating a school transportation vehicle, it's crucial to recognize various hazards and act or react accordingly.

Hazards on the Road

A hazard is any road condition or user (driver, bicyclist, pedestrian, animal) that may create a danger. Recognizing a hazard allows you time to prepare and react if an emergency develops.

Always Have a Plan

A professional driver is constantly looking for hazards. Many hazards turn into emergencies. Being watchful and prepared to act will give you time to plan a way out of an emergency. Always have an escape route.

The following are examples of some hazards on the road to be aware of.

- Animals
  - Wild animals or domestic livestock may be on or next to the roadway and are very unpredictable. Swerving to avoid them can cause loss of control of your vehicle. 90% of deer/vehicle collisions occur between dawn and dusk.
- Bicycles
  - Bicycles, especially when ridden by children, can be unpredictable. Give them plenty of room when passing.

C.R.S. 45-4-1008.5 – Crowding or Threatening a Bicyclist

The driver of a motor vehicle shall not, in a careless and imprudent manner, drive the vehicle unnecessarily close to, toward, or near a bicyclist. Any person who violates subsection (1) of this section commits careless driving as described in 42-4-1402.

- Children
  - Children may not be looking for traffic and may create a hazard. They see traffic from a vastly different perspective. Always expect the unexpected.

- Conflicts
    - Conflicts are hazardous conditions. When a change in speed and/or direction to avoid hitting other vehicles occurs, a conflict with other vehicles may be created. Conflicts occur at intersections where vehicles meet, at merge areas (such as on and off ramps), and where there are forced lane changes (such as the end of a lane, forcing a move to another lane of traffic). Other situations include slow-moving or stalled traffic in the roadway and crash scenes. Watch for drivers who conflict with others. Depending on the way they react to the situation, it may put them in conflict with you.
- Confused drivers
    - A slow, confused driver often changes direction suddenly or may stop without warning. Tourists might be unfamiliar with the area, frequently stopping or slowing as they approach intersections. Hesitation, driving very slowly, frequent brake use, or sudden stops are all strong indicators of a confused or lost driver.
- Crash scenes
    - People involved in a crash are often distracted and may not be aware of oncoming traffic. Frequently, at the scene of a crash, individuals run across the roadway without looking, while passing motorists tend to slow down or stop suddenly. Additionally, you must remain alert for emergency vehicles and equipment arriving at the scene.
- Disabled vehicle
    - Be especially alert when approaching a disabled vehicle stopped along the roadway. Drivers changing a tire or checking the engine may not pay attention to roadway traffic.
- Distracted people
    - People who are distracted in some way present a hazard for drivers. Pedestrians and cyclists may be distracted by wearing portable stereos with headsets, having their backs to the traffic, looking elsewhere, or hurrying to escape the inclement weather.
    - Drivers or pedestrians talking on cell phones or texting may not be paying attention.
- Drivers in a hurry
    - Drivers in a hurry may feel your school bus is preventing them from getting to their destination on time. They may pass you without leaving a safe gap in the oncoming traffic, or they may cut too close in front of you, causing you to brake suddenly. Drivers of postal vehicles and local delivery vehicles are often in

a hurry, stepping out of their vehicles or re-entering the flow of traffic.

- Drivers under the influence
  - Motorists under the influence of drugs or alcohol are a hazard to themselves and other motorists. Be especially alert around closing times for sporting events or nightclubs. Watch for drivers who have trouble staying in their lane, do not maintain a constant speed, stop without reason, or show other signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Drop-offs
  - Uneven pavement and the shoulder of the road present a road hazard. If the tires of the vehicle drop off the edge of the pavement, it could cause the vehicle to tilt, hitting roadside objects. It may also be difficult to steer the vehicle back onto the roadway.
- Fallen objects
  - Avoid objects that have fallen onto the roadway. Hitting an object may cause damage to or loss of control of the vehicle.
- Impaired drivers
  - An impaired driver may be sleepy, ill, or under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or medications. Some of the signs to look for are weaving, erratic speed, and inappropriate stops.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall not permit a school transportation vehicle operator to transport students while the operator's ability or alertness is so impaired, through fatigue, illness, or any other cause, as to make it unsafe for the operator to transport students.

- Obstructed views
  - Be alert for drivers of vehicles with the rear window blocked. Their view may be limited or completely obstructed.
- On/off ramps
  - Many freeway and turnpike on and off ramps have posted speed limit signs. These should be considered maximum speeds for large vehicles. Use special caution on downhill and curved parts of the ramp. Entrance and exit ramps may be short and can exit to the left instead of to the right.

- Parked vehicles
    - Parked vehicles can be a hazard. Watch brake lights, backup lights, exhaust fumes, front wheels turned to the traffic side of the road, and other clues that might indicate the driver is about to move the vehicle.
- Potholes
    - These can develop quickly, especially in the spring. Hitting potholes may cause loss of steering control and damage to the bus.
- Shopping areas
    - People in and around shopping areas are often not watching closely because they are looking for a certain store or looking into store windows. They may be carrying packages, talking to a companion, or supervising one or more children.
- Trucks
    - Be cautious when driving around large trucks, especially in hazardous road and weather conditions. Avoid tailgating a truck. Trucks need twice as much stopping distance. Never pull out in front of a truck or cut a truck off.
    - Do not drive in a truck's blind spot. Drive where you can be seen. Trucks have a deep blind spot directly in front of the cab, off to the right and left sides, and the immediate back. These blind spots make up what is called the NO-ZONE.
    - If you cannot see the driver's face in the truck's side-view mirrors or cannot see the whole cab in your rear-view mirror when you are in front of the truck, then you are in the truck's NO-ZONE and must adjust the vehicle position as soon as possible
- Work zones
    - Work zones with construction vehicles and workers require caution and courtesy on the driver's part. Lanes may be narrow and uneven. Keep your eyes focused and use your four-way hazard lamps to warn drivers behind you of the need for caution.

Overtaking and Passing Other Vehicles

You must yield the right-of-way to vehicles already occupying the lane you wish to enter or use for passing. Do not change lanes if another vehicle must slow down for you. When overtaking or passing other vehicles, follow these steps:

- Check traffic signs and markings to determine if passing is allowed.
- Check traffic using mirrors, ensuring that there is no oncoming traffic or another vehicle is preparing to pass.
- Make sure any vehicles ahead of you that are passing have completed their pass, your view of the road ahead is clear, and an acceptable gap is present.
- Activate the left turn signal at least 100 feet (200 feet if going over 40 mph) before executing the passing maneuver. Allow the turn signal to flash at least three times before starting each shift in your passing maneuver.
    - When clear, pull smoothly into the passing lane and cancel the left turn signal.
    - Move smoothly past the vehicle at a safe speed within the speed limit.
    - Activate the right turn signal.
    - Shift back into the right lane when there is at least 1 ½ vehicle lengths ahead of the passed vehicle.
- After returning to your original travel lane, perform another traffic check.
    - Cancel the right turn signal.

Use extra caution when:

- The vehicle to be passed is towing a trailer, has an open trunk lid, or has the rear window obstructed.
- The vehicle in front of you is getting ready to pass.
- Being passed by another vehicle, and they move laterally toward your vehicle.
- The driver of the other vehicle appears to be inattentive or distracted.
- There is reduced visibility due to weather conditions.
- Passing a large vehicle, be mindful of the blind spots.
- There is an intersection, driveway, acceleration lane, or deceleration lane nearby.

Do **not** pass when the driver of the lead vehicle is:

- Signaling or otherwise indicating a left or right turn, or changing lanes.
- Decelerating suddenly
- Passing pedestrians, bicyclists, or animals
- Being passed by another vehicle
- Weaving or wandering

Roundabouts

A roundabout, also known as a traffic circle, is a circular intersection where vehicles move to the right around a raised central island. Vehicles entering the roundabout must yield to the traffic that is already circulating. As you approach the roundabout:

- Pay attention to signs and road markers for guidance.
- Yield to any traffic approaching from the left before entering;
- Do not come to a complete stop unless traffic conditions require it.
- Always check crosswalks for pedestrians and yield to those waiting to cross.
- When entering or exiting the roundabout, give way to pedestrians or cyclists in the crosswalks and vehicles already inside the roundabout.
- Drive on the right and remain alert for directional signs and signals.
- Once the way is clear, merge into the roundabout lane.
- Use turn signals to indicate your intentions when changing lanes or exiting the roundabout to inform other drivers.
- If the traffic circle is too small for the vehicle to be able to stay in one lane, once the circle is clear, use the center of the two lanes combined.
- If the roundabout is too small for the vehicle to drive through safely, a different route must be found.
- It is illegal for a vehicle to go through a roundabout in the wrong direction.

Railroad Crossing Procedures

Reminder: Scan the whole area as you approach the crossing. If a suspicious person is lingering near the tracks, quickly open your door and shut it immediately. DO NOT speak to anyone other than an officer or correctly identified railroad personnel.

Exercise caution at railroad crossings, as trains can arrive anytime, day or night. Always follow warning devices, lights, gates, and signs. Stop if necessary, before reaching an unmarked crossing without flashing lights or gates to check for trains. Never stop on the tracks, as it is illegal and extremely dangerous. Do not proceed onto the crossing until you are certain the tracks are clear and there is enough space beyond the tracks to clear a train, especially at multiple-track crossings where a second train might follow. If your vehicle stalls on a crossing, evacuate everyone and move as far away as possible, even if a train isn't immediately visible. Call the number on the blue Emergency Notification Sign by the crossbuck sign or contact local

authorities. Take the time to accurately assess the train's speed and distance, as trains appear to move more slowly than they are. A freight train traveling at 55 mph, for instance, requires approximately one mile to come to a stop.

1 CCR 301-26, 19.0 Route Planning – Student Loading and Discharge

19.13 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-707, School transportation vehicle operators of School Buses, Multifunction Buses, and Motor Coach Buses, whether transporting students or not, shall apply the following procedures during the process of approaching, stopping, and crossing railroad tracks:

19.13(a) Activate the four-way hazard lamps not less than 200 feet from the railroad crossing to alert other motorists of the pending stop for the crossing;

19.13(b) Stop the bus within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail of the railway;

19.13(c) When stopped, the bus shall be as far to the right of the roadway as possible and shall not form two lanes of traffic unless the highway is marked for four or more lanes of traffic; and

19.13(d) Use a prearranged signal to alert students to the need for quiet aboard the bus when approaching railroad tracks. Turn off all noisemaking equipment (fans, heater, radio, etc.)

19.14 After quietness aboard the stopped bus has been achieved, bus operators shall open the service door and operator window. The

bus operator shall listen and look in both directions along the track(s) for any approaching train(s) and for signals indicating the approach of a train or on-track equipment.

19.14(a) If the tracks are clear, the bus operator shall close the service door and may then proceed in a gear low enough to permit crossing the tracks without having to manually shift gears. The bus operator shall cancel the four-way hazard lamps after the bus has cleared the tracks.

19.14(b) When two or more tracks are to be crossed, the bus operator shall not stop a second time unless the bus is completely clear of the first crossing, with at least 15 feet clearance in the front and at least 15 feet clearance to the rear.

19.14(c) Before crossing the tracks, the bus operator shall verify that there is enough space after the tracks for the bus plus 15 feet if it is necessary to stop after crossing the tracks.

19.15 School transportation vehicle operators of School Buses, Multifunction Buses, and Motor Coach Buses are not required to stop at crossings controlled:

19.15(a) Only by a red, amber, or green traffic control signal when it is in the green position;

19.15(b) Or when the crossing is controlled by a police officer or human flag person;

19.15(c) Or when the crossing is marked with an official "exempt" sign placed on the railroad crossing light post or crossbucks post.

Be especially alert at multi-track crossings. Be aware that mechanical failures can occur with the traffic control devices.

Light Rail Track Crossing Procedures

General Information

School transportation vehicle operators must exercise the utmost care when approaching, traveling alongside, and crossing light rail tracks.

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) has incorporated Light Rail Transit into its mass-transit fleet in the Denver Metropolitan area. Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) are six-axle, articulated, bidirectional rail vehicles electrically powered by overhead wires. The light rail tracks in and around downtown Denver represent points of extreme danger.

The RTD light rail tracks are not far from the road like most railroad tracks. They are often part of the same street that motorists use. The light rail tracks run parallel to traffic, either traveling in the same direction or against the flow. There are several locations where the RTD light rail tracks intersect with major streets.

Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs) can approach from either direction, as they are bi-directional. Pay attention to all tracks. Although a train may have left the crossing on one track, another train might be approaching on a different track. The Light Rail Vehicles are noticeably quiet and seem to be traveling slower than they actually are. Each car weighs 40 tons and comes equipped with a bell, an emergency siren, and three bright lights that can be seen two to three blocks away. Two of the lights are in the 'normal' headlight positions, while the third is located in the middle at the top of the LRV. LRVs also have turn signals to indicate the direction they are turning.

In most cases, there are no physical barriers, such as curbs or medians, separating vehicle traffic from the LRV rails. The rails are set in concrete and are a lighter color than the asphalt on the street. Certain weather and light conditions can reduce the visibility of this subtle difference. In some areas, the tracks are close to parking spots, confusing motorists about where to park.

Driver Safety Tips

- Never turn in front of an approaching LRV.
- Never turn across a set of light rail tracks without checking in all directions.
- Watch for people getting on and off a stopped LRV.

- Be especially alert in light rail areas as nearby buildings and foliage can make it difficult for motorists to see LRVs.
- Some light rail crossing areas can have regular traffic lights to communicate with motorists. Some have warning lights, and some have gates with railroad-type traffic arms. All these signals mean the same thing: Stop and do not cross the tracks.
- Never drive around the traffic gates, even if an LRV has just passed. Another vehicle might be coming from the other direction.
- Be aware of your vehicle height. Overhead wires are a standard height of 18 feet, 6 inches above the center of the tracks. Always assume a wire hanging from the overhead catenary is electrified, so never touch the wire or anything else it touches.

If you find a wire hanging from overhead or if you think any safety devices are malfunctioning, please call 911 or RTD at 303-299-6000 and report the situation.

Warning Signs

A yellow, diamond-shaped warning sign with a black symbol of a streetcar indicates the location of the LRV tracks.

At intersections or by the tracks, these signs have a black bi-directional arrow below the streetcar symbol. Before intersections, these signs have the term 'AHEAD' below the streetcar symbol.

Procedures for Light Rail Crossings

Treat light rail crossings as railroad crossings, except for the use of the hazard lights; only activate the hazard lights when necessary, as they are neither recommended nor required.

- Use a prearranged signal to alert students to the need for quiet aboard the bus when approaching railroad tracks. Turn off all noise-making equipment (fans, heater, radio, etc.).
- Flash the brake lights if required to stop.
- Stopping on the tracks is unsafe and unlawful.
- Always observe the location of the "Stop Here on Red" sign and the white safety stripe (stop line).
- Traffic light-controlled intersections govern both the motorist and the LRV. Treat these locations like any other traffic light-controlled intersection. Look and listen in the appropriate directions for LRVs, motorists, and pedestrians before crossing the tracks.
- At stop sign-controlled intersections, the Department of Education recommends that a school transportation operator driving a bus (School Bus, Activity Bus, Type A school bus, or MFSAB), when stopped, open the driver's side window and service door.
- Look and listen in both directions for LRVs, motorists, and pedestrians. Close the service door before crossing the tracks.
- Never cross the light rail tracks until the entire vehicle's length can safely clear the tracks.
- Never back across the light rail tracks.

School transportation operators should avoid parking their vehicles close to light rail tracks or crossings. If parking near a light rail track is necessary, ensure there is a safe area for loading and unloading, that you are not at risk of being hit by a train, and that you do not obstruct the view of the tracks.

Driving at Night

Driving at night poses a greater risk for drivers. Hazards are less visible than during daylight hours, resulting in less time to respond. Drivers taken by surprise are less capable of avoiding a crash. Three factors that influence night driving are the driver, the roadway, and the vehicle.

Driver Conditions

People cannot see as sharply at night or in dim light. Additionally, the eyes require time to adjust to low light conditions. Most people notice this when entering a dark movie theater. Drivers can be temporarily blinded by bright lights, and some are particularly sensitive to glare. Individuals have been momentarily blinded by the high beams of oncoming vehicles. It can take several seconds to recover from glare, and even two seconds of glare blindness can be dangerous. A vehicle traveling at 55 mph will cover more than half the length of a football field within that time. To avoid experiencing glare blindness, look to the right side of the road when an oncoming vehicle has very bright lights.

Fatigue and lack of alertness may increase at night. The body's need for sleep is beyond a person's control, and most people are less alert at night, especially after midnight. This is especially true for those who have been driving for a long time. Drivers may not react as quickly to hazards, which increases the risk of a crash. When sleepy, the only safe solution is to pull off the road and get some rest. If you don't, you are risking your life and the lives of others.

Roadway Conditions

In the daytime, there is usually enough light to see well. This is not the case at night. Some areas may have bright streetlights, while others have poor lighting. On most roads, you will have to rely entirely on your headlights.

Less light means you will not be able to see hazards as clearly. Road users without lights are difficult to see. There are many crashes at night involving pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, and animals.

Even when there are lights, the road scene can be confusing. Traffic signals and hazards may be hard to see against the background of signs, shop windows, and other lights. Reduce your speed when the lighting is poor or confusing so you can stop within the distance you can see ahead.

Vehicle Conditions

At night, your headlights are usually the main source of light, enabling you to see and allowing others to see you. Visibility at night with your headlights is not as good as in daylight. Low beams provide visibility of about 250 feet, while high beams extend it to about 350-500 feet. Adjust your speed to keep

your stopping distance within your sight distance (the ability to stop within the range of your headlights).

Night driving can be more dangerous if you encounter problems with your headlights. Dirty headlights may emit only half the light they should, reducing your ability to see and making it harder for others to see you. Ensure that all lights are clean and functioning correctly. Headlights can also be misaligned; if they do not point in the right direction, they can impair your view and blind other drivers. Have a qualified person check that they are appropriately adjusted.

For you to be seen easily, the following items must be clean and working correctly:

- Reflectors
- Reflective tape
- Turn signals
- Clearance lights
- Taillights
- Headlights
- Brake lights

At night, your turn signals and brake lights become even more crucial for informing other drivers of your intentions. Ensure they are clean and functioning properly.

At night, it is essential to have clean windshields and mirrors. Bright lights can cause dirt on these surfaces to create a glare, obstructing your view.

Most people have experienced driving toward the sun as it rises or sets, only to find that they can barely see through a windshield that looks fine in the middle of the day. Clean the inside and outside of the windshield for safe driving at night.

Deaths from vehicle collisions occur three times more frequently in the evening, so pay special attention while driving during the late afternoon, early evening, and early morning hours. Slow down and drive with greater caution.

Dangers of Night Driving

- Visibility may be reduced
- Peripheral vision is not as sharp

- Darkness impairs your ability to judge distances, movements, and colors.
- You are more likely to become drowsy or fatigued.
- Night blindness makes objects appear further away.
- Depth perception in mirrors can be distorted.

Precautionary Measures

- Before starting to drive at night, give your eyes an extra five minutes to adjust to the dark.
- Properly pre-trip your vehicle and know the location of all switches.
- Never wear sunglasses when driving in low-light conditions.
- CDE requires headlights to be on when the vehicle is in operation

1 CCR 301-26, 14.0 Operation of a School Transportation Vehicle

14.3 A school transportation vehicle's headlights shall be activated while the vehicle is in operation.

- Slow down and leave at least 300 feet between you and the vehicle ahead of you.
- Dim your headlights before they cause glare for other drivers, within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle and 500 feet of the vehicle ahead of you.
- Use high beams when it is safe and legal to do so. Some drivers make the mistake of always using low beams. This seriously cuts down on their ability to see ahead of them.
- Do not look directly at the high beams of an approaching vehicle – look forward and slightly to the right.
- Light inside the vehicle makes it harder to see outside. Keep the interior light off and adjust the instrument lights as low as possible, and still be able to read the gauges.
- Stop driving if you feel sleepy. People often don't realize how close they are to dozing off. You are in a hazardous state. The only safe remedy is to sleep.

Right-of-Way

In traffic, "right of way" refers to the legal privilege a driver has to proceed on the road before other drivers or pedestrians. It essentially determines who gets to go first in a particular traffic situation. When you have the right-of-

way, others are expected to yield (wait and let you proceed). At an uncontrolled intersection, the vehicle on the right has the right-of-way. Left-turn traffic must yield to all other traffic except when a left-turn arrow is present.

C.R.S. 42-4-108 – Public Officers to Obey Provisions – Exceptions for Emergency Vehicles

(1) The provisions of this article applicable to the drivers of vehicles upon the highways shall apply to the drivers of all vehicles owned or operated by the United States, this state, or any county, city, town, district, or other political subdivision of the state, subject to such specific exceptions as are set forth in this article with reference to authorized emergency vehicles.

(2) The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call, or when in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, or when responding to but not upon returning from a fire alarm, may exercise the privileges set forth in this section, but subject to the conditions stated in this article. The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may:

(a) Park or stand, irrespective of the provisions of this title;

(b) Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation;

(c) Exceed the lawful speeds set forth in section 42-4-1101(2) or exceed the maximum lawful speed limits set forth in section 42-4-1101(8) so long as said driver does not endanger life or property;

(d) Disregard regulations governing directions of movement or turning in specified directions.

(3) The exemptions and conditions provided in paragraphs (b) to (d), in their entirety, of subsection (2) of this section for an authorized emergency vehicle shall continue to apply to section 24-10-106 (1) (a), C.R.S., only when such vehicle is making use of audible or visual signals meeting the requirements of section 42-4-213, and the exemption granted in paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of this section shall apply only when such vehicle is making use of visual signals meeting the requirements of section 42-4-213 unless using such visual signals would cause an obstruction to the normal flow of traffic; except that an authorized emergency vehicle being

operated as a police vehicle while in actual pursuit of a suspected violator of any provision of this title need not display or make use of audible or visual signals so long as such pursuit is being made to obtain verification of or evidence of the guilt of the suspected violator. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require an emergency vehicle to make use of audible signals when such vehicle is not moving, whether or not the vehicle is occupied.

(4) The provisions of this section shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of such driver's reckless disregard for the safety of others.

(5) The state motor vehicle licensing agency shall designate any particular vehicle as an authorized emergency vehicle upon a finding that the designation of that vehicle is necessary to the preservation of life or property or to the execution of emergency governmental functions. Such designation shall be in writing, and the written designation shall be carried in the vehicle at all times, but failure to carry the written designation shall not affect the status of the vehicle as an authorized emergency vehicle.

Use of Hazard Warning Lights

Under certain circumstances, operators may use their hazard warning lights to provide an extra margin of safety while transporting students or during route while conducting student stops in a school transportation vehicle.

Slowing Down

Warn drivers behind you when you need to slow down. A few light taps on the brake pedal to flash the brake lights will warn drivers behind you. Use the four-way hazard lamps when you are driving less than 25 mph when in an area with a higher posted speed limit or are stopped. Warn other drivers in the following situations:

Trouble ahead

The size of your vehicle may make it hard for drivers behind you to see hazards ahead. If you see a hazard that will require slowing down, warn the drivers behind by flashing your brake lights.

Tight turns

When driving a larger vehicle, most other drivers do not know how slow you must go to make a tight turn in a large vehicle. Give drivers behind you a warning by braking early and slowing gradually.

Stopping on the road

When stopping on the road for any reason other than a student stop, warn drivers behind you by activating your brake lights, turn signals, or hazard lights. Do not stop suddenly.

When parked at the side of the road

After pulling off the traveled portion of the road and stopping, activate the four-way hazard lamps. This is especially important at night. Do not trust the taillights to give warning. Drivers have crashed into the rear of a parked vehicle because they thought it was moving normally. If you must stop on a road or the shoulder of a road, place the reflective triangles appropriately as soon as possible. See Unit Eleven, Emergencies.

Driving Slowly

Drivers often do not realize how fast they are catching up to a slow-moving vehicle until they are remarkably close. In Colorado, if you are a traffic hazard, such as stopping at a railroad crossing, traveling under 25 mph on a highway or interstate, or parked, you must use the four-way hazard lamps to alert other drivers. Do not use the hazard lamps otherwise. (Laws regarding the use of hazard lamps differ from one state to another. Check the laws of other states where you might drive.)

1 CCR 301-26, 14.0 Operation of a School Transportation Vehicle

14.8 A school transportation vehicle operator may use the strobe, in addition to the four-way hazard lamps, to warn other motorists that the vehicle is not in motion or is being operated at a speed of 25 miles per hour or less.

14.9 The school transportation vehicle operator shall use extreme caution when backing. Before backing onto a roadway, highway, or private property, the horn or audible warning device shall be sounded, and four-way hazard lamps actuated, or there shall be a person outside the vehicle giving direction.

14.09(a) Backing a school transportation vehicle when students are outside of the vehicle at a student stop is prohibited.

1 CCR 301-26, 19.0 Route Planning – Student Loading and Discharge

19.7 Four-way hazard lamps shall be used on private property such as parking lots.

19.11 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1903(2), school transportation vehicle operators are not required to actuate the alternating flashing red warning signal lamps on a school bus:

19.11(a) When the student stop is at a location where the local traffic regulatory authority has, by prior written designation, declared such actuation unnecessary and no passenger is required to cross the roadway; or

19.11(b) When discharging or loading passengers who require the assistance of a lift device, and no passenger is required to cross the roadway.

19.11(c) Further, Type A Multifunction Buses and school transportation small-capacity vehicles do not have the functionality to control traffic. In these instances, the school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right off the roadway as possible to reduce obstruction to traffic, activate the four-way hazard warning lamps a minimum of 200 feet prior to the student stop, continue to display the four-way hazard warning lamps until the process of discharging or loading passengers has been completed, and deactivate the four-way hazard lamps before resuming motion. Students are prohibited from crossing any lanes of traffic to access the student stop or after disembarking.

19.13 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-707, School transportation vehicle operators of School Buses, Multifunction Buses, and Motor Coach Buses, whether transporting students or not, shall apply the following procedures during the process of approaching, stopping,

and crossing railroad tracks:

19.13(a) Activate the four-way hazard lamps not less than 200 feet from the railroad crossing to alert other motorists of the pending stop for the crossing;

19.14 After quietness aboard the stopped bus has been achieved, bus operators shall open the service door and operator window. The bus operator shall listen and look in both directions along the track(s) for any approaching train(s) and for signals indicating the approach of a train or on-track equipment.

19.14(a) If the tracks are clear, the bus operator shall close the service door and may then proceed in a gear low enough to permit crossing the tracks without having to manually shift gears. The bus operator shall cancel the four-way hazard lamps after the bus has cleared the tracks.

C.R.S. 42-4-230 – Emergency Lighting Equipment – Who Must Carry

(2) Whenever a motor vehicle referred to in subsection (1) of this section is stopped upon the traveled portion of a highway or the shoulder of a highway for any cause other than necessary traffic stops, the driver of the stopped motor vehicle shall immediately activate the vehicular hazard warning signal flashers and continue the flashing until the driver places the bidirectional emergency reflective triangles as directed in subsection (3) of this section.

Road Rage

The main characterization of road rage is a brief period of irrationality. Drivers experience exaggerated anger, irritation, aggravation, and impatience when this occurs! These emotions lead to impaired judgment, saying or doing things they may later regret, engaging in risky driving behaviors, and attempting to punish or retaliate against the offending driver.

How to Avoid Road Rage

- Avoid eye contact – aggressive motorists may feel challenged if you stare them down.
- Do not cut in front of a motorist, no matter how big of a hurry that you are in.
- Allow fellow motorists to cut in during traffic jams.

- In rural areas, pull over to allow a motorist to pass if several cars pile up behind you.
- Do not stay in the fast lane.
- Do not allow your students to aggravate fellow drivers, such as making obscene gestures or throwing things out of the windows.
- Do not tailgate – always maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you.
- Use your horn sparingly – if you must get the attention of someone in a non-emergency, tap your horn lightly.

Communication

Communication with other drivers is crucial for road safety and includes using various signals, cues, and gestures to convey intentions and share information. This includes using turn signals to indicate lane changes or turns, using brake lights to signal you are slowing down, and employing hazard lights to warn of potential hazards.

Signaling

Other drivers do not know what you are going to do until you tell them. Therefore, signaling is important for safety. Situations that require signaling include turning, lane changing, slowing, stopping, passing, and parking.

Directional Signals

Directional signals are used to communicate with surrounding traffic when you are performing a maneuver that requires a change in your path of travel. Three good rules for using turn signals are:

- Signal early
    - Signal well before the maneuver you are about to execute.
    - The signal should be activated:
        - At least 100 feet before the maneuver when the speed limit is 40 mph or less
        - At least 200 feet before the maneuver when the speed limit is over 40 mph
- Signal continuously
    - You need both hands on the wheel to complete the maneuver safely.
- Cancel your signal
    - When you have finished the maneuver and established your desired path of travel, cancel your signal.

Lane Changes

Engage the turn signal before switching lanes. Transition to the new lane gradually and smoothly. Conduct traffic checks before, during, and after the lane change. When changing multiple lanes, ensure you ‘take possession” of each lane before moving to the next one. The proper techniques for lane changes were covered earlier in this chapter.

Passing

Whenever you approach a vehicle, pedestrian, or cyclist, act as if they cannot see or hear you. They may unexpectedly move in your path. At night, switch your headlights from low to high beam and back again. Drive cautiously to prevent an accident. The proper techniques for passing or overtaking were covered earlier in this chapter.

When it is Hard to See

At dawn or dusk, or in rain or snow, you need to make your vehicle more visible. If you are having trouble seeing other vehicles, other drivers may have trouble seeing you. Leave the headlights on low beams; high beams can bother people in the daytime as well as at night.

Horn

Using the horn can let others know you are there and may help to avoid a crash. Use your horn when needed. However, it can startle others and could be dangerous when used unnecessarily.

Eye Contact

By establishing eye contact, you have a better indication that the other driver or pedestrian sees you. Do not rely on eye contact alone.

Do NOT Direct Traffic

Some drivers try to help others by signaling when it is safe to pass or to pull out into the traffic lane. Do not do this. Directing traffic may cause a crash, and you could be held liable.

Horns and Warning Devices

The car horn should be used judiciously and intentionally for safety purposes rather than to vent frustration or anger. It serves as a means to notify other

drivers or pedestrians of your presence or to alert them to potential hazards. A quick tap on the horn can attract attention, while prolonged or repetitive honking may signal more critical circumstances, such as an impending collision or a hazardous situation.

Emergency Vehicle Approaching Student Stop

It is important to remember that, above all else, the student 's safety is your priority. If you are being approached by an emergency vehicle with lights and sirens on while performing a student stop, follow these steps.

- Keep the students on the bus if possible.
- If all students are still on the bus, cancel your eight-way student lights and activate your hazard lights.
- If the students are already off of the bus, signal them about the emergency vehicle and try to keep them clear of the oncoming vehicle.
    - Leave the eight-way student light system activated! If you turn off the eight-way system, traffic will begin to flow and could cause an even more dangerous situation.
- Let the operator of the emergency vehicle make the decision when it is safe for them to proceed.

C.R.S. 42-4-224 – Horns or Warning Devices

(1) Every motor vehicle, when operated upon a highway, shall be equipped with a horn in good working order and capable of emitting sound audible under normal conditions from a distance of not less than 200 feet, but no horn or other warning device shall emit an unreasonable loud or harsh sound except as provided in section 213(1) in the case of authorized emergency vehicles or as provided in section 222. The driver of a motor vehicle, when reasonably necessary to ensure safe operation, shall give an audible warning with the horn but shall not otherwise use such horn when upon a highway.

(4) Snowplows and other snow-removal equipment shall display slashing yellow lights meeting the requirements of section 214 as a warning to drivers when such equipment is in service on the highway.

5(a) When any snowplow or other snow-removal equipment displaying flashing yellow lights is engaged in snow and ice removal or control,

drivers of all other vehicles shall exercise more than ordinary care and caution in approaching, overtaking, or passing such snowplow.

Headlights

Headlights can be used for communication with other drivers. Your vehicle's headlights help you see what is in front of you. They also make it easier for other drivers to see your vehicle. Dim your high-beam headlights to low beams within 500 feet of a vehicle coming toward you or within 300 feet of a vehicle you are following. It is illegal to drive using only parking lights. A vehicle must have headlights with high and low beams.

C.R.S. 42-4-205 – Head Lamps on Motor Vehicles – Penalty

(1) Every motor vehicle other than a motorcycle or autocycle, shall be equipped with at least two head lamps with at least one on each side of the front of the motor vehicle. The head lamps shall comply with the requirements and limitations set forth in sections 202 and 204 to 231 and part 3 of the Colorado Motor Vehicle Code where applicable.

More information regarding the use of your high and low beams was covered earlier in this chapter.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration – Mobile Phone Restriction Rules for Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers

49 CFR 392; Subpart H 392.82 – Driving of Commercial Vehicles; Using a hand-held mobile telephone

(a)

(1) No driver shall use a hand-held mobile telephone while driving a CMV.

(2) No motor carrier shall allow or require its drivers to use a hand-held mobile telephone while driving a CMV.

(b) *Definitions.* For the purpose of this section only, *driving* means operating a commercial motor vehicle on a highway, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays. Driving does not include operating a commercial motor vehicle when the driver has moved the vehicle to

the side of, or off, a highway and has halted in a location where the vehicle can safely remain stationary.

(c) *Emergency exception.* Using a hand-held mobile telephone is permissible by drivers of a CMV when necessary to communicate with law enforcement officials or other emergency services.

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Unit Six – Adverse Weather and Mountain Driving

This unit includes information on adverse weather conditions, driving techniques, and information pertinent to school transportation vehicle driving in all weather conditions experienced in Colorado. Becoming aware of the effects of the conditions will provide the understanding required to respond correctly. Should you slow down, pull over, or decide to reschedule? Safety must be the driver's primary concern.

Adverse Weather Driving

Wind

Intense winds pose significant challenges to the handling of a school bus. Steering becomes more difficult, and staying within the travel lane is a struggle during high winds. Wind gusts can exert pressure on the side of the bus, leading to sideways thrust. In extreme cases, roof hatches have been known to pop open and tear off, highlighting the severity of the situation.

Overcompensated steering can cause the bus to tip over or leave the travel lane. Wind may blow around debris that can hit the bus, causing damage or injuries.

High winds increase just before and at the beginning of a change in the weather. Visibility can be severely impaired during thunderstorms, dust storms, and blizzards. Operators should be cautious when crossing bridges and overpasses, driving between hills, exiting tunnels, on open straightaways, and passing high-profile vehicles.

Tips for Driving in Intense Winds

- Grip
  - Keep a firm grip on the steering wheel.
  - Anticipate the wind gusts.
- Speed reduction
  - Reduce speed to lessen the effect of the wind
  - Pull off the road and wait it out
- Pull-over
  - Pull onto a solid shoulder, side road, or parking lot
- Call

    - Contact your school district, charter school, or service provider to convey the situation and ask for further instructions.
- Observe your surroundings
    - Watch for blowing debris, falling trees, or downed power lines.
    - Reduced visibility may occur from blowing dust, sand, rain, or snow.
- Prepare
    - Always be prepared for the unexpected.

Tornadoes

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air. In the northern hemisphere, tornadoes rotate counterclockwise. They develop in warm, moist air before an eastward-moving cold front. Most tornadoes move southwest to northeast. The average forward speed of a tornado is 30 mph, but it can be up to 70 mph.

When the temperature is between 65 and 84 degrees, and the dew point is above 50, the dangers of a tornado are at their highest. Tornadoes often accompany severe thunderstorms.

Tornadoes are common in eastern Colorado. Though rare, tornadoes are possible in the mountains, foothills, and western valleys.

Tornado Signs

- Green-colored sky
- Hail
- Wall cloud
- Funnel cloud

Many say a tornado sounds like a freight train approaching. If it does not appear to be moving, a tornado may be coming toward you. If you are on the bus and see a tornado, evacuate to a safe location, preferably a building.

When in a building, go to an interior room or basement, away from windows, and have all passengers sit and cover their heads with their hands.

When in the direct path of a sighted tornado and shelter in a building is unavailable and an evacuation is ordered, escort passengers to a nearby ditch, culvert, or depression. Direct all passengers to lie face down on the ground with their hands covering their heads. They should be far enough away so the bus cannot topple on them.

Avoid areas subject to flash floods. Never go under a bridge or overpass, which can become the equivalent of a wind tunnel.

Downbursts - Micro and Macro

Downbursts

These are also known as straight-line winds, are intense winds formed by air that falls quickly to the ground and then disperses outward from the point of impact. The term downburst encompasses both macro and microbursts. The key distinction between microbursts and macrobursts is their size and duration. However, both types can unleash winds surpassing 100 mph, resulting in significant damage.

Microbursts

A microburst is a small, focused downburst that releases a sudden burst of intense winds at or near the ground. Microbursts are compact, measuring less than 2.5 miles across, and typically last only five to ten minutes. There are two types of microbursts: wet and dry. A wet microburst occurs alongside heavy rainfall at the surface, whereas dry microbursts, often found in areas like the high plains and the intermountain west, happen with minimal to no precipitation reaching the ground.

Macrobursts

A macroburst is a sudden outflow of intense winds at or near the ground, spanning horizontal distances greater than 2.5 miles, which occurs when a powerful downdraft hits the surface. Initially, macroburst winds can start in a smaller region and then expand to a broader area, sometimes causing damage similar to a tornado. While they are typically linked to thunderstorms, macrobursts can also happen with light showers that lack sufficient strength to generate thunder.

They are hard to detect, so be careful when thunderstorms and high winds are in the area.

Other types of High Wind Weather

Gust Front

A gust front refers to the leading edge of cool air generated by rain, which collides with the inflowing warmer air of a thunderstorm. These gust fronts are distinguished by changes in wind direction, a drop in temperature, and

gusty winds that precede a thunderstorm. Occasionally, these winds can elevate air above them, resulting in the formation of a shelf cloud or a detached roll cloud.

Derecho

A derecho is a common, long-lasting windstorm linked to a swiftly advancing band of showers or thunderstorms. Typically, a derecho includes many microbursts, downbursts, and clusters of downbursts. According to the definition, an event can be categorized as a derecho if the damage path extends over 240 miles and features wind gusts of 58 mph or higher for most of its length.

Rain

When it starts to rain, the water mixes with oil and other road grime, making the road very slippery. Standing water on the roadway may lead to additional challenges like hydroplaning.

Thunderstorms

A thunderstorm is a rain event accompanied by thunder. As thunder results from lightning, every thunderstorm features lightning. A thunderstorm is deemed "severe" if it includes one or more of the following elements:

- Hail one inch or greater,
- Winds gusting in excess of 57.5 mph, or
- A tornado

Thunderstorms typically occur in spring and summer, primarily in the afternoon and evening, though they can happen at any time of year. They are often linked to various hazardous weather events. When conditions are favorable, the rainfall from thunderstorms can lead to flash flooding.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch

The NOAA Storm Prediction Center meteorologists issue a severe thunderstorm WATCH when weather conditions are favorable for severe thunderstorms. A watch can cover parts of a state or several states.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning

A Severe Thunderstorm WARNING is issued by the NOAA National Weather Service Forecast Office meteorologists when severe weather is reported by

spotters or detected by radar. Warnings indicate a serious threat to life and property for those in the storm's path. A warning may encompass parts of one or more counties that are in danger.

Lightning

Sudden storms can produce lightning. If a severe storm produces lightning, the safest place is in the vehicle, roll the windows up, and avoid contact with any conducting paths leading to the outside of the vehicle (e.g. radios, CB's, ignition, etc.). Avoid touching metal objects or pulling over in high-risk areas (canyons, near power lines, or tall trees).

If a vehicle is struck by lightning, the metal shell acts as a Faraday cage, protecting passengers inside and making the vehicle relatively safe during a lightning storm. The electrical current from the lightning mainly travels through the metal frame and tires, avoiding the passengers. Despite this protection, the vehicle may still sustain damage, particularly to the antenna, electrical system, rear windshield, and tires.

After a lightning strike, it's recommended to remain inside the car for at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder before exiting.

Water on Roadways

Water on brake drums will reduce braking efficiency. A light application of the brakes can prevent excessive water between the drum and brake pads. During excessively wet conditions or after passing through standing water, it may be necessary to apply the brakes slightly for a short distance to dry them out and restore normal braking.

Hydroplaning

Hydroplaning can occur on any wet road surface, but the first 10 minutes of a light rain can be the most dangerous. When a tire encounters more water than it can scatter, water pressure in the front of the wheel pushes water under it, thus separating the tire from the road surface with a thin film of water. The result is loss of traction, steering, braking, and power control.

How to Avoid Hydroplaning

- Slow down when roads are wet.
    - The faster the speed, the more difficult it is for tires to scatter water properly.
- Stay away from standing water and puddles.

- Do not use cruise control – if equipped.
- Drive in a lower gear.
- Avoid hard braking
- Try to avoid making sharp or quick turns.

Never drive in flowing water, as the depth and force of the current are unknown. Hazards masked by water may not be detected until it is too late. There may be debris, downed power lines, or washed-out portions of the road.

Slippery Surfaces

Vehicle braking or steering cannot occur unless there is traction. Road conditions may reduce traction and require slower speeds. When slick road conditions exist, it will take longer to stop and be harder to steer the vehicle without skidding.

Slippery surfaces can more than double stopping distances.

Common Slippery Surfaces

- Shaded areas
  - Shaded parts of the road may remain icy and slippery long after open areas have melted and dried.
- Bridges
  - When the temperature drops, bridges freeze before the road surface.
  - Be especially careful when the temperature is at or near freezing (32°F).
- Snow
  - Various types of snow offer different levels of traction. The most traction can be obtained from dry, granular snow or very cold snow.
  - Occasionally, packed snow may give better traction than freshly fallen snow.
  - When temperatures fluctuate around freezing, the danger of driving increases because the road surface may be covered with snow, camouflaging ice, or the snow may be ice-covered, thus reducing traction.
  - The roads are most hazardous when the snow or ice begins to melt.

    - It is important to exercise extra caution when driving on packed snow or icy roads when the temperature outside is close to freezing (32°F).
- Black Ice
    - When the temperature drops below freezing, but the road looks wet, it may be covered in black ice.
    - This thin, transparent layer of ice can occur anywhere but is more common in high-traffic intersections and areas exposed to wind.
    - It is most prevalent during the early morning hours, especially after snow melts on the roadways, and it can refreeze overnight when the temperature drops below freezing.
    - This can also form when roadways are slick from rain, and temperatures drop below freezing overnight.
- Hail
    - Like ice, hail provides a unique set of hazardous circumstances.
    - Hail on the roadways can produce an extraordinarily slippery and uneven road surface.
    - Hail can also break windshields and windows.
    - If you're facing hail, it's generally wise to look for a sheltered, low-risk parking spot if available. It’s better to wait it out than risk damaging your windows.
- Mud and Mudslides
    - Roads covered in excessive mud can become slippery and nearly impossible to navigate.
- Heat
    - High temperatures can lead to the tar in road pavement surfacing, resulting in a soft or slippery area.
- Other
    - Materials applied to roadways for anti-icing and de-icing, such as gravel, magnesium chloride, and salt, can initially enhance traction by melting the upper layer of snow or ice during daylight. However, as temperatures fall below freezing at night, they may lead to the formation of new ice, ultimately reducing traction.

Skids

A skid happens when a vehicle’s tires lose traction on the road. Some common ways this can happen are:

- Over-braking

    - Braking too hard and locking up the wheels
- Over-steering
    - When the operator turns the wheels sharper than the vehicle can turn at a given moment.
- Over-acceleration
    - When the driver applies too much power, the tires can lose traction and spin, leading to a loss of control.
- Driving too fast
    - Driving at speeds exceeding what the road surface and tire grip can handle increases the likelihood of skids.

Operators who adjust their driving to the conditions do not over-accelerate and do not have to over-brake or over-steer from gaining too much speed. Learning to stay off the brake and react quickly during a skid takes a lot of practice. Avoid sudden movements, such as abruptly changing the steering, acceleration, or braking, which could worsen the skid. Keep your eyes up and look where you want to go, focus on your desired path, not where the car is currently sliding.

The best place to practice this is on a large driving range or "skid pad."

Drive-wheel Skids

This is the most common skid and happens when the rear wheels lose traction through excessive braking or acceleration. Rear wheel braking skids occur when the rear wheels (drive tires) lock. This usually happens on slippery surfaces. Because locked wheels have less traction than rolling wheels, the rear wheels usually slide sideways in an attempt to "catch up" with the front wheels (steer tires). In a bus, the vehicle will slide sideways into a "spin out."

To correct a drive-wheel skid:

- Stop accelerating
- Stop braking to allow the rear wheels to roll again
- Steer into the direction the vehicle is sliding. This helps to counteract the sliding motion and regain control.
- Once the vehicle regains traction, gently steer in the desired direction to continue moving forward.

Important Considerations:

- Front-wheel drive (FWD) and all-wheel drive (AWD) vehicles

    - Lifting off the accelerator and steering the direction of the slide will best help to correct the skid.
- Rear-wheel drive (RWD) vehicles
    - Steering to the skid is particularly important in RWD vehicles, as the rear wheels are the ones losing traction.

Front-wheel Skids

Driving too fast and having inadequate tread depth on the front tires causes most front-wheel skids. In this type of skid, the front of the bus tends to go in a straight line regardless of how much the steering wheel is turned. This causes extreme difficulty (if not impossibility) when steering around a curve or turn.

To correct a front-wheel skid:

- Release the accelerator
- Do NOT brake. This will allow the front wheels to turn again and regain traction.
- In a front-wheel skid, it is generally better to keep the steering wheel in the position it was in before the skid happened.

Winter Driving

Weather conditions can be unpredictable, placing additional demands on the vehicle and operator. Always be prepared for winter roads and adjust your speed to match the existing conditions.

Drive according to highway and weather conditions. Some bridges and overpasses in Colorado are heated or equipped with de-icing sprayers, which can create an abrupt change in road conditions. Scan ahead and remain aware of these locations.

In winter, particularly in bad weather, stopping on a slippery road takes more time. To prevent sudden braking, maintaining ample space between the bus and the vehicle in front is crucial. A useful recommendation for safe spacing in these circumstances is to apply the “four to five-second rule" and double it.

Be cautious; snow on the road can be slippery, drifting, or compacted. It may also appear smooth, soft, rutted, or slick. A slick track forms when traffic compresses the snow enough to create icy conditions. Since the bus usually tracks wider than the vehicles that created the hard pack, ruts, or slick tracks, controlling it may become challenging. Instead of allowing the bus to

sway between the narrow tracks or ruts, adjust your lane position to travel over the untracked snow within the lane. Driving on the untracked areas will help you maintain both speed and steering control.

Wet snow can create slushy roads. Heavy slush can accumulate in the vehicle wheel wells and impact steering. Remember to look ahead to identify hazards early enough to respond.

Three Key Elements to Safe Winter Driving

- Stay alert
- Slow down
- Stay in control

Reduced Visibility

School transportation vehicle operators can expect to experience all the following driving hazards that may result in reduced visibility. The most important response is to slow down. Maintain a speed that allows safe continuation in these conditions:

- Fog
- Sun
- Dust
- Rain
- Snow
- Debris
- Smoke
- Terrain
- Hail or Graupel darkness
- Light variations
- Vegetation

Additional Hints and Reminders for Winter Driving

- Check road conditions prior to departure.
    - o www.cotrip.org
- Speed should be conservative when conditions are less than perfect.
- Maintain a speed that allows you to stop quickly in the event of the unexpected.
- Know your limits and the vehicle's limits.

    - If you are uncertain, pull off to a safe location rather than continuing in adverse or unsafe conditions.
- Test traction and braking ability in a safe location free from traffic or other hazards.
- False shoulders exist in all seasons (i.e., snow, tall grasses, and heavy rains). Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Increase the following distances.

Mountain Driving

Mountain driving presents unique situations that require greater attention to the same driving skills and expertise expected of all school transportation vehicle operators.

Navigating a school transportation vehicle along winding, narrow roads poses numerous challenges for operators. It demands a variety of driving skills to ensure safety in such environments. Given the steep or fluctuating grades, sharp or blind curves, potential rockfalls, traffic, wildlife, and unpredictable weather, it's clear that extensive practice and unwavering focus are vital during operation. Equally crucial is the need to be PREPARED for driving in these regions. The margin for error is significantly reduced, and even small mistakes can lead to serious issues. Mountain driving necessitates heightened concentration and a strong respect for the landscape. Additionally, these areas often lack a reliable cellular signal, and in some instances, there might not be a house for miles.

This section focuses on maintaining control, transmission and retarder usage, braking, pitch and grade, chains, and other skills for safe school transportation vehicle operation in the mountains. Here are some things to remember when preparing to drive in mountainous and/or hilly locations.

CDE recommends frequent skill refresher training for mountain drivers.

1 CCR 301-26, 5.0 School Transportation Vehicle Operators

5.02(i) The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.

5.03(g) The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.

C.R.S. 42-4-1902 – School Vehicle Drivers – Special Training Required

On and after July 1, 1992, the driver of any school vehicle as defined in section 42-1-102(88.5), owned or operated by or for any school district in this state shall have successfully completed training, approved by the department of education, concerning driving on mountainous terrain. As defined in section 1901(3)(a), and driving in adverse weather conditions.

Climbing the Pass

Chains

Chaining is crucial to mountain driving in adverse weather. The Department of Transportation requires chains on commercial motor vehicles on all mountain passes. The two most common types of chains are automatic and conventional. There are several installation methods. Below are some commonly used methods and tips for safely chaining a vehicle.

Automatic Chains

These chains permanently fasten to the rear suspension of the school bus and can be present on Type A minibuses or MFSAB as well. They activate from a dashboard switch that opens an electric over-air solenoid mounted on the frame rail. Air pressure from the buses on board air brake system or an auxiliary air source flows to two air cylinders that lower the two chain wheels down until they contact the tire sidewall. The friction between the tire and the chain wheel causes the chain wheel to rotate. Each chain wheel has a length of chain attached to it. The centrifugal force created causes the chains to flail out and pass between the tire and road surface to enhance traction in snow and ice. The additional traction also reduces the stopping distance in these same slippery conditions. When in the “off” position, the solenoid exhausts the air in the cylinder, and the spring in the cylinder returns the chains to the retracted position.

Despite the many benefits of automatic tire chains, the system has limitations, and precautions must be taken to ensure proper operation.

Advantages of automatic chains:

- Automatic tire chains perform best on surfaces with up to 6 inches of snow and ice. Their effectiveness may diminish in deeper snow, depending on its consistency. Consequently, it is crucial to recognize the current conditions and understand that these chains are not designed for winter off-road driving.
- Automatic tire chains are pneumatic mechanical systems permanently installed beneath the vehicle. This position exposes them to tough conditions like water, gravel, and road salt, making regular maintenance crucial. Ideally, the chains should be engaged at least once a month—even in summer—to keep the bearings well-lubricated and ensure optimal function of the moving parts.
- This increases safety, as the bus is always equipped and has quick access on short notice. The typical engagement time is two seconds.
- Automatic chains dramatically reduce the time spent installing conventional chains, increasing the productivity of the operator. More importantly, routes can remain on schedule.
- Automatic chains can eliminate body damage caused by broken conventional chains, which at times can be a mission-disabling failure.
- Hauling force, acceleration, and stopping distance.
- The operator may lower or raise automatic chains at any time during speeds less than 30 mph.

Disadvantages:

- The operator must realize that this system is not a “fix-all” (avoid a false sense of security).
- Operator activation is required.
- The system, per design, is limited to ice and a maximum of up to four inches of snow.
- In deep snow conditions, the operator may still have to install conventional chains.
- To avoid damage, do not raise the chains if the bus is not in motion. If the chains are raised when not in motion, damage can occur to the chains, arm mechanism, and air system.

Conventional Chains

The operator must install and remove conventional chains. Always plan ahead when chaining is a possibility. If there is any doubt about traction, it is best to chain up to avoid safety issues.

When determining locations to install and remove conventional chains, always find a safe location that is out of the way of traffic. If passengers are on board, they should remain inside the bus. Ensure the engine is off and the brake is set so the bus will not move.

Check your chains

- When laying out the chains, make sure the hooks face up. This will ensure they face out when you place them on the tires. All the tensioners should be open.
- If you lay out your chains on a snow-covered surface, brush off the snow before putting them on your tires.

Choose the proper chaining method to use: In-place or Draping.

- In-place
    - Drape the chains over the tire so that the cross-links at the bottom do not hinder the effort to fasten the inside hook to the chain link.
    - Use a chain tightener or coat hanger to guide the link between the dual tires to fasten the chain link with the inside hook.
    - Pull the chains as tight as possible. A good tip is to use your knee against the tire to spare using only your back. Fasten the chains with the outside clasp and attach the tighteners.
    - When the vehicle has moved and is out of danger, remove the tighteners, readjust the chains, fasten both the inside hook and outside clasp, and reattach the tighteners.
    - Never drive over 30 mph when chains are installed on the tires.

- Draping
    - Drape the chains over the tire, with at least half of the chain falling to each side. Use your fingers to clean any remaining snow off the chains. Make sure the hooks are facing out and the tensioners are open.
    - Hooks on the inside, clasps on the outside, cross-links perpendicular to the tire, and all reinforcement bars on cross-

links facing away from the tire.
    - Roll the vehicle over the chains. Determine the optimal direction to roll (forward or backward) by assessing which direction has the most room.
    - Avoid rolling over the hook and clasp the end of the chain, if possible. If on a slope, always ensure the operator is on the upward side of the tire when fastening chains.
    - Place a mark on one side of the front passenger door and drive the vehicle with the front wheels straight until the opposite side of the entry door is lined up with the mark.
    - Fasten the chains. The inside hooks should be fastened first. Do not hook on the end link. The identical number of links on the inner hook and outside clasp is ideal for fastening the chains.
    - Attach the stretchers/tighteners on the outside of the tire.
    - Drive forward 50- 100 yards, remove the stretchers, tighten the chains, and reattach the tighteners.

Removal Steps

- Remove conventional chains only when the road surface provides safe traction without the use of chains.
- Find a safe area away from traffic and keep the students in the vehicle.
- Remove the tightener.
- Loosen the outer clasp.
- Unhook the inner hook first to prevent the chains from dropping between freezing wheels.
- Drive over the chains in a manner that prevents the tires from running over clasps or hooks.
- Stretch the chains out to check for broken or badly worn links. Bundle chains for storage.
- Place the tightener perpendicular to the cross-links and pull each individual link over the tightener while inspecting the condition of each link.
- Fasten the tightener at the ends and place it in the desired storage area.

If you are unsure about the condition of any part of the chains, take them to a mechanic or other repair person for inspection and/or replacement.

Additional Tips

- Carry additional tighteners in case of breakage.

- Inspect and install all chains in the fall to ensure the proper condition and fit.
- Every element of a chain is a moving part. Check for broken chain links and verify the hooks and clasps are in good operating condition.
- Label all chains with paint to confirm they are the proper ones for that particular vehicle and add this check to the daily pre-trip inspection.
- If new tires are installed on the vehicle, always check the chains for the proper size.

Colorado Passenger Traction and Chain Laws

https://www.codot.gov/travel/winter-driving/tractionlaw

During winter storms or when conditions require, CDOT will implement the Passenger Vehicle Traction Law (Code 15) or the Passenger Vehicle Chain Law (Code 16). CDOT can implement Passenger Vehicle Traction and Chain Laws on any state highway.

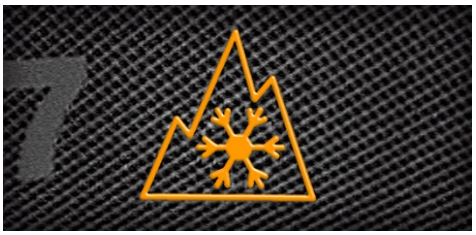
Passenger Vehicle Traction Law (Code 15)

Code 15 shall mean an implementation of the chain law which restricts all motor vehicles from travel on the state highway unless the vehicle has snow tires or is equipped with tire chains or ATD's or is a four-wheel drive vehicle with adequate tires and all four wheels engaged.

During a Traction Law, all motorists are required to have EITHER:

- 4WD or AWD vehicle and 3/16" tread depth
- Tires with a mud and snow designation (M+S symbol) on the sidewall and 3/16" tread depth. Tires with tread designs that meet the definition may be branded with the letters "M" and "S" in several different ways (e.g., M&S, M+S, M/S, MS, etc.) at the discretion of the tire manufacturer.

- Winter tires or all-weather tires (Mountain + Snowflake symbol) on the sidewall and 3/16" tread depth



- Chains or an approved alternative traction device (ATD)

Passenger Vehicle Chain Law (Code 16) Chain Up or Stay Off

Code 16 shall mean an implementation of the chain law which requires the use of chains or ATD's by all vehicles. Under this code, autotransports shall be restricted from travel unless able to use chains or ATD's.

During severe winter storms, CDOT will implement the Passenger Vehicle Chain Law. All passenger vehicles must have chains or alternate traction devices (ATDs) on two or more drive tires. This rule applies to every two-, four-, or all-wheel drive passenger vehicle in the affected area. This is the final safety measure before the highway is closed.

Motorists driving with inadequate equipment when a Traction Law or Chain Law is in effect could be fined more than $130. If a motorist blocks the roadway because they have inadequate equipment when a Traction Law or Chain Law is in effect, he/she could be fined more than $650.

Test Your Tread:

- Insert a penny upside-down into your tire tread, with Lincoln's head facing down and towards you.
- If the top of his head is covered by tread, you are good to go.
- If you can see the top of Lincoln's head, your tire tread is worn down to 2/32 of an inch or less.
- If the top of his head is visible at any point around the tire (check in multiple locations), you cannot drive when a Traction Law or Chain Law is called. You also likely need new tires.

Pull-Out Locations

Use pull-out locations to allow traffic backed up behind the vehicle to pass safely. If a pull-out is large enough, maneuver the front of the vehicle so that you can look over your shoulder for oncoming traffic before reentering the roadway. Do not rely solely on the mirror if the opportunity to square off and look exists.

Lane Position

Observing lane position can prevent head-on collisions. Pay attention to tail swing on tight curves, especially switchbacks. Keep centered in your lane to maintain safe clearance around the vehicle. Riding too close to the outside of a curve raises the risk of having a tire drop off the road and onto a soft shoulder. Conversely, staying too close to the inside can cause your mirrors to intrude into other motorists' space. When possible, adjust your speed and spacing to avoid driving next to other vehicles in a curve on a multilane highway. On right-hand curves, position yourself as far outside the lane as possible. It's crucial to monitor the relationship between your right rear tires and the pavement. Oncoming tends to take their half out of the middle while navigating a left-hand curve.

Be aware of rocks that overhang the road. Off-tracking brings the center of the bus closer to these overhanging objects. When entering a tunnel, pay attention to the curve of the edges and top. The vehicle height may fit through the middle, but not along the outer edges.

Speed

Slow to a safe speed before entering any curve. Braking in a curve is dangerous because it is easier to lock the wheels and cause a skid. Do not exceed the posted speed limit for the curve. Since the posted speed limit is for small vehicles, the bus speed should be 5-10 mph below the posted limit. To help maintain control, be in a gear that will allow slight acceleration through the curve. When entering a curve while going downhill, allow gravity to provide slight acceleration.

Descending the Pass

Pass Checks

Pass checks are a frequent practice in mountainous states. Although not required by law, they are incredibly wise as a precautionary measure.

Generally, there are wider areas that allow for chaining up your vehicle as you climb the pass, and these areas are available for you to pull into to complete a “Pass Check.”

- As you enter the parking area, apply firm pressure on the brakes, checking for proper stopping and that the vehicle does not pull to one side or the other.

- Secure your vehicle and walk around to ensure all the lights are working.
- Stop at each wheel and feel the hub for signs of heat.
- Look at all tires for damage and proper inflation.
- Return to the driver's seat and place the vehicle in the proper gear to descend the downgrade.

When approaching a downgrade where a full check of the vehicle is not possible, prior to reaching the apex of the hill, firmly apply the brakes to feel for proper brake response and no pulling in either direction. Shift down to the proper gear prior to the apex of the hill.

Pitch and Grade

Pitch and grade affect how mountain drivers maneuver through curves. Long, wide curves in the mountains may remain slippery for continuous periods of time due to the pitch of the road or the position of the sun. During a downhill curve, the bus may accelerate on its own. Do not brake in a turn, especially during adverse conditions. Apply the retarder or service brake (depending on conditions) well in advance of the curve and allow the speed of the bus to decrease gradually. Once the bus has reached the apex of the turn, gradually accelerate. This helps the bus track correctly through the lane. Braking through a turn may cause the bus to skid and make control difficult.

When approaching curves, notice how the road pitches from side to side in relation to the curve and the grade. Often, the operator can drive at a higher speed if the curve maintains a pitch that follows the direction of the turn (on-camber) than if the curve is flat or off-camber. The amount of acceleration out of the curve will depend on the degree of pitch. A skid can occur by accelerating too early when negotiating curves with a relatively flat pitch.

Terrain

One of the hardest techniques to learn may be reading terrain. Maintain a safe scanning distance and scan the entire area for changes in grade, upcoming curves, wildlife, and traffic. When possible, look through the trees beyond the curve before entering.

Tips for Reading Terrain

- Whitewater – indicates a steep grade
- Objects that seem to change size rapidly – indicate a steep grade

- Canyon walls that appear to close in ahead of the bus – indicate a possible narrow road ahead
- Do not blindly follow the traffic ahead of you – other drivers may misinterpret the terrain.

One of the most complex techniques to learn may be reading terrain. Maintain a safe scanning distance and scan the entire area for changes in grade, upcoming curves, wildlife, and traffic. When possible, look through the trees beyond the curve before entering.

Maintaining Control

To stay in control on a steep downgrade, prioritize engine braking (engine compression) by shifting to a lower gear before beginning the descent, and refrain from excessive braking. Combine engine braking with light, intermittent braking to manage speed and prevent brake overheating. Additionally, be aware of both your and your vehicle's capabilities.

Never coast down a steep hill in neutral. This removes the engine's ability to help slow the vehicle and can lead to a loss of control.

Target Speed

Target speed is the speed a driver determines is safe for a driving condition. How to properly brake the vehicle using the Target Speed.

- Find a speed at which you are comfortable driving the vehicle in the conditions you are experiencing.
- When the vehicle speed increases to the target speed, the driver applies the service brake and slows down to 5 mph below the target speed.
- Once you have dropped your speed to 5 mph below your target speed, allow the vehicle speed to increase naturally back to the target speed.
- Repeat this process as needed.
- If this process happens often, the driver has not shifted down to a gear that will provide the engine compression to hold the vehicle at or below the target speed.

Engine Compression

Engine compression is the first source of braking power, even in vehicles fitted with a retarder. When navigating a long, steep descent, ensure you are in a gear low enough to ascend that same incline. For steeper grades or when

carrying a heavy load, shift down to at least one gear lower. Remember that if the engine hits its maximum RPMs, automatic transmissions may upshift, even if manually locked in gear.

Select the appropriate gear for the grade before starting your descent, and keep the bus in that gear until reaching the bottom of the grade. This will prevent the risk of being unable to shift into the next lower gear if necessary. This is particularly important with a standard transmission. Maintain the manufacturer's recommended RPM range for the selected gear to avoid over-revving or lugging, as these conditions may damage the engine.

Service Brake Use

When driving in mountainous areas, gravity significantly influences your vehicle's behavior. Gravity accelerates the vehicle as you descend steep slopes, and a heavier load results in increased speed. It's crucial to drive slowly enough to avoid relying on the service brakes, which helps maintain a safe speed. Continuous use of the service brakes can lead to brake fade, where the brake's stopping power is diminished. This phenomenon occurs due to heat buildup that causes brake linings to glaze or break down at elevated temperatures, reducing their effectiveness and, in severe instances, potentially igniting a fire. Always keep your speed within safe limits. For extended downhill stretches, control your speed by utilizing engine compression and the retarder, if available, to minimize service brake use. Apply the service brakes sparingly, allowing sufficient time between applications to keep the linings, drums, and/or rotors cool.

A driver is in control when the school transportation vehicle is maintained at a safe road and engine speed. A safe school bus (Type A minibus or MFSAB) speed is either at or below the posted limit. The vehicle manufacturer determines the safe engine speed or revolutions per minute (rpms).

Emergencies

Emergency Stops

The school transportation vehicle's braking systems are mechanical and can fail. The following emergency stopping procedures should be demonstrated and practiced during on-the-road (hands-on) training. These simulations will prepare the operator for situations in which any or all braking systems fail. Except where noted, use a road or highway with minimal traffic and good visibility for the simulations.

The Every Which Way Simulation

This simulates when there is a need to stop the vehicle when the service brakes fail to operate. The operator will use all available means to stop the vehicle. Shift down to the first gear of the automatic transmission, and pull the parking brake. As the vehicle slows, the transmission will automatically downshift. As the engine speed slows, the operator will downshift through the sequence in a standard transmission.

The Four-Wheel Lock Simulation

This simulates when the service brakes are functioning and the engine is running. The operator will experience the forces involved in the severe use of the brakes. The operator will get the feel of a vehicle skidding. At 25 mph, the driver will release their grip on the steering wheel and press hard on the brake pedal. Note any tendency of the vehicle to pull right or left. Make sure there is room on both sides of the lane for the vehicle to pull in either direction.

The Park Brake Simulation

This simulation is to practice when the service brakes are inoperable, with the speed too fast for downshifting to slow the vehicle. Depending on the service brake defect, the parking brake may be inoperable or already set due to a loss of air pressure. Select a flat, straight portion of the road with a full-width shoulder lane where the vehicle can pull completely out of the travel lane. At highway speed, turn on the hazard lamps, let up on the accelerator, pull the parking brake, and carefully pull the vehicle into the shoulder lane as it slows to a stop.

The Ride-It-Out Simulation

This simulation is to practice when the parking brake is broken and hot, the brakes are fading, and the engine is running.

Simulate stopping a vehicle without the use of brakes. Select a downgrade that will allow the vehicle transmission, when placed in the highest gear, to maintain the approximate posted speed limit. The downgrade should decrease for safe simulation of the procedure. Let up on the accelerator at the top of the descent, put the gear selector in first (if automatic), and ride out the descent. As the vehicle slows, the transmission will automatically downshift. The operator will downshift through the sequence in a standard transmission as the engine and road speed slow. Turn on the hazard lamps at 25 mph and

pull into the shoulder lane. At an idle in first gear, pull the right-side wheels into the soft shoulder dirt, shift the transmission into neutral, and allow the vehicle to stop.

Escape Ramps

Runaway truck ramps exist to provide refuge when a vehicle loses its brakes traveling at higher speeds on steep downgrades. Runaway truck ramps are usually located on steep, sustained grades in mountainous areas. Long descending grades can result in reaching high-vehicle speeds, and heavy-duty vehicle brakes can overheat and fail through extensive use.

Colorado features runaway truck ramps on key routes to avert collisions when the brakes of heavy-duty vehicles fail. These ramps consist of a lengthy bed filled with loose, soft material like pea gravel, designed to decelerate a runaway vehicle, often alongside an incline. Operators should be familiar with the locations of all escape ramps on their assigned routes. Signs clearly indicate where these ramps can be found. Escape ramps are crucial for preserving lives and protecting equipment.

These are marked by delineator posts with red reflectors. In Colorado, you will not be fined for using a runaway truck ramp in an emergency. These ramps are designed to help vehicles that have lost braking control safely come to a stop, and their use is encouraged in such situations.

Other Considerations

Tourists and Bicyclists

Sightseeing motorists and/or tourists may drift to either side of the roadway. Many motorists are also uncomfortable driving on mountain roads. They may fear driving toward the outside of the lane and crowding the center of the road. Pay attention to other vehicles' tire-to-ground contact, which indicates their exact position in their lane. Be aware that motorists may park on mountain shoulders, around curves, and walk on the roadway.

More people are riding bicycles in the mountains. In most cases, they ride in the traffic lane. Bicycles, especially when ridden by children, can be unpredictable. Give them plenty of room when passing.

C.R.S. 42-4-1008.5 – Crowding or Threatening a Bicyclist

The driver of a motor vehicle shall not, in a careless and imprudent manner, drive the vehicle unnecessarily close to, toward, or near a bicyclist.

Any person who violates subsection (1) of this section commits careless driving as described in 42-4-1402, C.R.S.

Never outdrive your ability to stop in the distance you can see.

Passenger Well-Being

When organizing a mountain trip and navigating through mountainous roads, consider the needs of your passengers. When did they last get a chance to stretch their legs? Make sure to take breaks for stretching whenever necessary, and do so in safe pullout zones.

Keep in mind that numerous passengers experience motion or carsickness. It's advisable for these passengers to sit in the front with one or more windows open for fresh air. If their condition is known in advance, consider discussing additional remedies with their parents or guardians. Reducing speed around curves may benefit these individuals. While the driver might feel at ease with the speed on winding roads, it's important for them to observe the comfort level of passengers seated in the back of the bus.

Anyone can suffer from altitude sickness. Ensure they drink fluids, stay still (sitting or lying down), and descend to a lower altitude as soon as possible.

Driver Care

Operators may experience fatigue or minor aches and pains when driving long distances. Before leaving, ensure that you are positioned so that your back is completely against the seatback with your feet flat on the floor.

Think about placing a lumbar roll or a rolled towel between your lower back and the seat back. Adjust the seat height so your hips are a bit higher than your knees. Ensure that the back of your knees does not touch the edge of the seat. Move the seat forward or backward so that your knees are slightly bent when fully pressing the pedals. Your arms should easily reach the steering wheel and controls without requiring much leaning or twisting.

Make sure to adjust the mirrors to prevent twisting your body into uncomfortable positions. To reduce fatigue, be sure to stretch both before and after driving.

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Unit Seven – Crashes and Emergency Procedures

All school transportation vehicle operators, bus paraprofessionals, and students must recognize the possibility of facing a crisis at some point. Be it a collision, fire, or any other calamity, having an emergency plan and being aware of the appropriate protocol can avert chaos and anxiety. This preparation has the potential to save lives.

C.R.S. 42-4-705 - Colorado Move Over Law

(1) Upon the immediate approach of an authorized emergency vehicle making use of audible or visual signals meeting the requirements of section 42-4-213 or 42-4-222, the driver of every other vehicle shall yield the right-of-way and where possible shall immediately clear the farthest left-hand lane lawfully available to through traffic and shall drive to a position parallel to, and as close as possible to, the right-hand edge or curb of a roadway clear of any intersection and shall stop and remain in that position until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer.

(2)

(a) A driver in a motor vehicle shall exhibit due care and caution and proceed as described in subsections (2)(b) and (2)(c) of this section when approaching or passing:

(I) A stationary authorized emergency vehicle, including a port of entry vehicle, that is giving a visual signal by means of flashing, rotating, or oscillating red, blue, or white lights as permitted by section 42-4-213 or 42-4-222;

(II) A stationary towing carrier vehicle that is giving a visual signal by means of flashing, rotating, or oscillating yellow lights;

(III) A stationary public utility service vehicle that is operated by a public utility, as defined in section 39-4-101 or 40-1-103, or an authorized contractor of the public utility and that is giving a

visual signal by means of flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights; or

(IV) A stationary motor vehicle giving a hazard signal by displaying alternately flashing lights or displaying warning lights.

(b) On a highway with at least two adjacent lanes proceeding in the same direction on the same side of the highway where a stationary vehicle described in subsection (2)(a) of this section is located, the driver of an approaching or passing vehicle shall proceed with due care and caution and yield the right-of-way by moving into a lane at least one moving lane apart from the stationary vehicle described in subsection (2)(a) of this section unless directed otherwise by a peace officer or other authorized emergency personnel. If movement to an adjacent moving lane is not possible due to weather, road conditions, or the immediate presence of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, the driver of the approaching motor vehicle shall proceed in the manner described in subsection (2)(c) of this section.

(c)

(I) On a highway that does not have at least two adjacent lanes proceeding in the same direction on the same side of the highway where a stationary vehicle described in subsection (2)(a) of this section is located, or if movement by the driver of the approaching motor vehicle into an adjacent moving lane, as described in subsection (2)(b) of this section, is not possible, the driver of an approaching motor vehicle shall reduce and maintain a safe speed with regard to the location of the stationary vehicle described in subsection (2)(a) of this section; weather conditions; road conditions; and vehicular or pedestrian traffic and proceed with due care and caution, or as directed by a peace officer or other authorized emergency personnel.

(II) For the purposes of this subsection (2)(c), the following speeds are presumed to be safe unless the speeds are unsafe for the conditions as provided in section 42-4-1101 (1) and (3):

(A) If the speed limit is less than forty-five miles per hour, twenty-five miles per hour or less; or

(B) If the speed limit is forty-five miles per hour or more, twenty miles per hour less than the speed limit.

(2.5)

(a) A driver in a vehicle that is approaching or passing a maintenance, repair, or construction vehicle that is moving at less than twenty miles per hour shall exhibit due care and caution and proceed as described in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this subsection (2.5).

(b) On a highway with at least two adjacent lanes proceeding in the same direction on the same side of the highway where a stationary or slow-moving maintenance, repair, or construction vehicle is located, the driver of an approaching or passing vehicle shall proceed with due care and caution and yield the right-of-way by moving into a lane at least one moving lane apart from the vehicle, unless directed otherwise by a peace officer or other authorized emergency personnel. If movement to an adjacent moving lane is not possible due to weather, road conditions, or the immediate presence of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, the driver of the approaching vehicle shall proceed in the manner described in paragraph (c) of this subsection (2.5).

(c) On a highway that does not have at least two adjacent lanes proceeding in the same direction on the same side of the highway where a stationary or slow-moving maintenance, repair, or construction vehicle is located, or if movement by the driver of the approaching vehicle into an adjacent moving lane, as described in paragraph (b) of this subsection (2.5), is not possible, the driver of an

approaching vehicle shall reduce and maintain a safe speed with regard to the location of the stationary or slow-moving maintenance, repair, or construction vehicle, weather conditions, road conditions, and vehicular or pedestrian traffic, and shall proceed with due care and caution, or as directed by a peace officer or other authorized emergency personnel.

(2.6) A driver in a vehicle that is approaching or passing a motor vehicle where the tires are being equipped with chains on the side of the highway shall exhibit due care and caution and proceed as described in subsection (2) of this section. The driver of a motor vehicle that is being equipped with chains shall give a hazard signal by displaying alternately flashing lights or displaying warning lights.

(3)

(a) Any person who violates subsection (1) of this section commits a class A traffic infraction.

(b)

(I) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (3)(b)(II) and (3)(b)(III) of this section, any person who violates subsection (2), (2.5), or (2.6) of this section commits careless driving as described in section 42-4-1402.

(II) If the person violates subsection (2) of this section and the person's actions are the proximate cause of bodily injury to another person, the person commits a class 1 traffic misdemeanor.

(III) If the person violates subsection (2) of this section and the person's actions are the proximate cause of the death of another person, the person commits a class 6 felony and shall be punished as described in section 18-1.3-401.

Crashes

When you encounter a crash, use caution and continue moving. Staying too long at an accident can cause another crash and put the drivers behind you at risk.

- Remain alert and briefly size up the crash scene.
- Resist the urge to rubberneck.
- Begin braking early to warn other drivers to slow down, but do not stop completely.
- Be prepared if you are involved in an accident or stopped by law enforcement.
- Always carry your driver's license.

Do not move the bus unless instructed by a law enforcement officer/fire department, or as posted.

Never admit fault, but cooperate with the investigating officer. Provisions will need to be made for transporting children to their homes or schools.

If your school transportation vehicle is involved in a crash, the driver should follow your district policy. Your district policy may include:

- Stop and secure the vehicle. ALWAYS ON THE SAME SIDE AS THE CRASH – NEVER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LANE.
- Activate 4-way hazard lights, if operable.
- Remain at the scene of the crash (there is a severe penalty for any person convicted of leaving the scene of the crash).
- Make certain all passengers are safe. If keeping passengers inside the school transportation vehicle is deemed unsafe, evacuate them to a safe place away from traffic.
- Notify the proper law enforcement authority and school administrator immediately. If necessary, request emergency medical assistance. On accident alert days, follow the reporting procedures as set out by the local law enforcement agency.
- Check for injuries; render any person injured in the crash reasonable assistance.

Remember: Never do more than you are trained to do.

- Remain alert regarding fire or the possibility of fire in any vehicle involved in the crash.

- Check for a ruptured fuel tank and fuel lines.
- Check for an electrical fire.
- Check for hot tires that may catch fire. This is caused by metal rubbing against a tire from impact to the final resting place.
- Mark the scene with emergency reflective triangles as required by Colorado State Statute (within 10 minutes) as specified earlier in this unit, if possible.
- Information such as names, license numbers, registration numbers, location, time, road and weather conditions, insurance information, and witnesses should be obtained and accurately written down.
- If possible, a transportation staff member should be at the scene to render assistance and take pictures.

Documentation

If involved in an accident, the investigating officer may ask the driver to provide:

- Appropriate driver's license – Correct class and endorsements (if required)
- DOT Medical card (if required)
- Proof of Insurance
- Vehicle registration
- Pre-trip documentation
- Current CDE Affidavit of Annual Inspection
- Emergency Packet
- Seating charts
- Exchange of Information forms
- Witness Information forms

Your school district, charter school, or service provider may require additional information.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.5 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have written emergency procedures and/or contingency plans to be followed in the event of a traffic accident, vehicle breakdown, unexpected school closing, unforeseen route change, or relocation of a student stop in an emergency.

Emergency Planning

Emergency preparedness and planning in school transportation is crucial for protecting students and staff during unexpected events like accidents, natural disasters, or active shooter situations. By having well-defined procedures, training, and communication protocols, school districts, charter schools, and service providers can minimize risks and ensure a swift, organized response to emergencies, ultimately safeguarding lives.

Emergency preparedness and planning training helps students and staff feel more confident and prepared to handle emergencies, reducing anxiety and improving their psychological well-being during crises.

Pre-trip Your Vehicle

The best deterrent against a breakdown is to inspect your vehicle and conduct a thorough pre-trip inspection before departing on your journey, as required by the rule. If a defect is found, it is advisable to identify it while you are still at the school district, charter school, and service provider, rather than fifty miles down a mountain highway. For the same reasons, ensure you perform an additional pre-trip inspection before leaving for your return trip.

1 CCR 301-26, 10.0 Pre-trip/Post-trip Vehicle Inspections

10.1 Each school transportation vehicle shall have a daily pre-trip and post-trip inspection performed and documented by the school transportation vehicle operator or other transportation employee authorized by the school district, charter school, or service provider. A daily pre-trip inspection shall be completed prior to a vehicle being placed in service. A daily post-trip inspection shall be completed at the end of the daily operation of each vehicle.

Emergency Contact Information

Before you depart on your trip, make sure you have the following contact information:

- Driver supervisor or school district, charter school, or service provider designee phone numbers (work and cell).
- School district, charter school, or service provider office hours.
- After-hours numbers for a mechanic, principals, supervisors for your school district, charter school, or service provider.

- Depending on the school district, charter school, or service provider policy, a copy of the CDE Emergency Contact List on board would provide you with other outside school district, charter school, or service providers' contact information if you ever need mutual aid due to a breakdown or accident.

Medical Emergencies

What is the school district, charter school, or service provider's policy if a student or driver should become ill on the trip? Do any of the passengers have any medical concerns that you should be aware of? Epilepsy? Allergy to bees? Double-check with your trip sponsor to see if they have been given this information prior to departure.

Vehicle Information and Supplies

Prior to departing, make sure that the vehicle you will be driving has a current STU-25 CDE Annual Inspection Affidavit inside the vehicle, registration, and current proof of insurance. If you are in a crash, or get pulled over, and lack a current STU-25 Affidavit of Annual Inspection in the vehicle, you will be the one ticketed, not the school district, charter school, or service provider.

Make sure that you have adequate cleaning supplies, trash bags, etc.

Emergency Equipment

Emergency equipment in a vehicle is crucial for ensuring safety and preparedness in unexpected situations like breakdowns, minor accidents, or adverse weather.

Emergency Triangles

"Staking out your vehicle" refers to taking steps to make your vehicle more visible to other motorists and potentially safer. When stopping on the road, you want to ensure that other drivers are aware of your presence, particularly when visibility may be poor due to weather, hills, curves, or other obstructions. When you pull off the road and stop, activate the 4-way hazard lamps. Taillights may not provide adequate warning to motorists. Drivers have crashed into the rear of a parked vehicle because they thought it was moving normally.

Each school transportation vehicle is equipped with three emergency reflective triangles. In case of a breakdown, accident, or other emergencies,

the driver, paraprofessional, or qualified individual will place the triangles, as the law requires.

1 CCR 301-25, 20.0 Emergency Equipment

20.4 Emergency Reflectors: All school transportation vehicles shall carry three bidirectional emergency triangle reflectors in compliance with C.R.S. 42-4-230, and with FMVSS 125, contained in a securely mounted case easily accessible to the driver or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate markings.

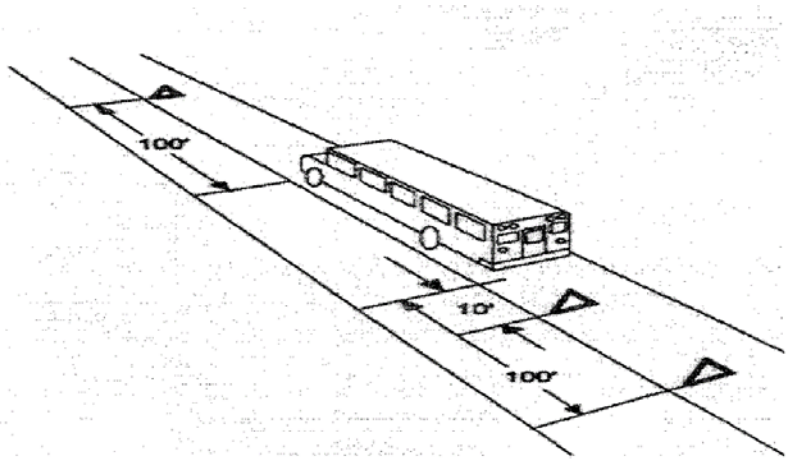
If you must stop on a road or shoulder of a road, set your emergency reflective triangles within 10 minutes.

When placing the triangles, it's best practice to hold the assembled triangle toward oncoming traffic to further enhance visibility, especially at night. When the triangles are unfolded for use, the weighted base must be turned to make a cross with the bottom of the triangle to keep the triangle from tipping over.

Reminder: If the line of sight is obstructed due to a hill or curve, move the rearmost triangle to a point giving adequate warning.

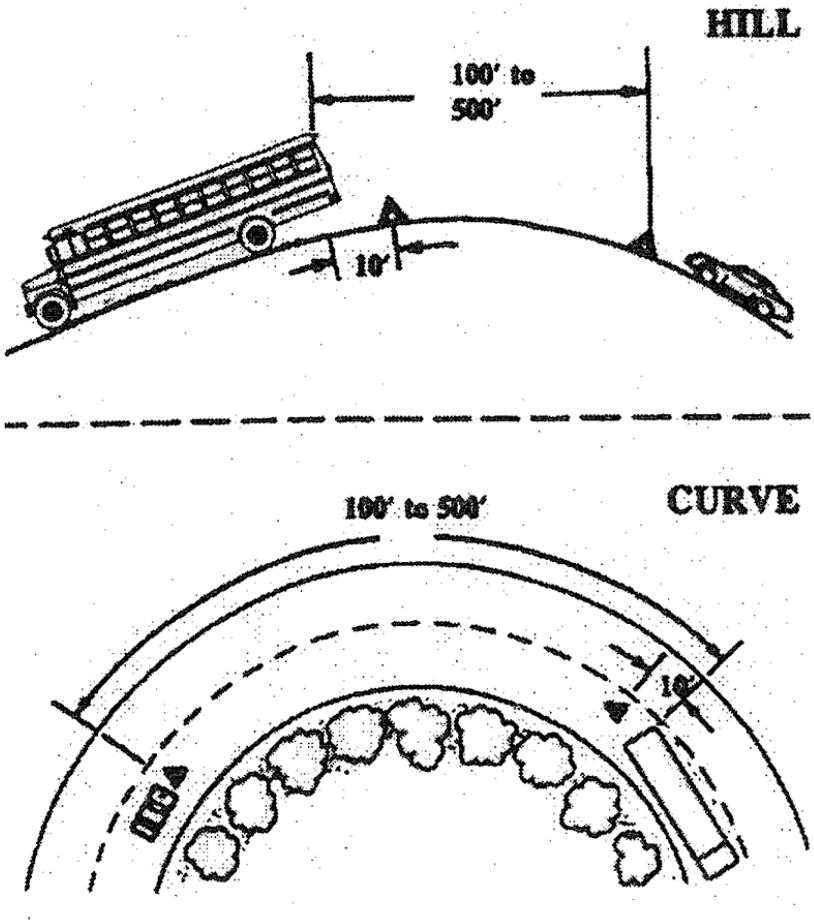
On a two-lane roadway, placement should be at the following locations:

- On the traffic side of the vehicle, within 10 feet from the rear corner, to mark the vehicle's location.
- Approximately 100 feet ahead of and behind the vehicle, on the shoulder or in the lane where you are stopped.



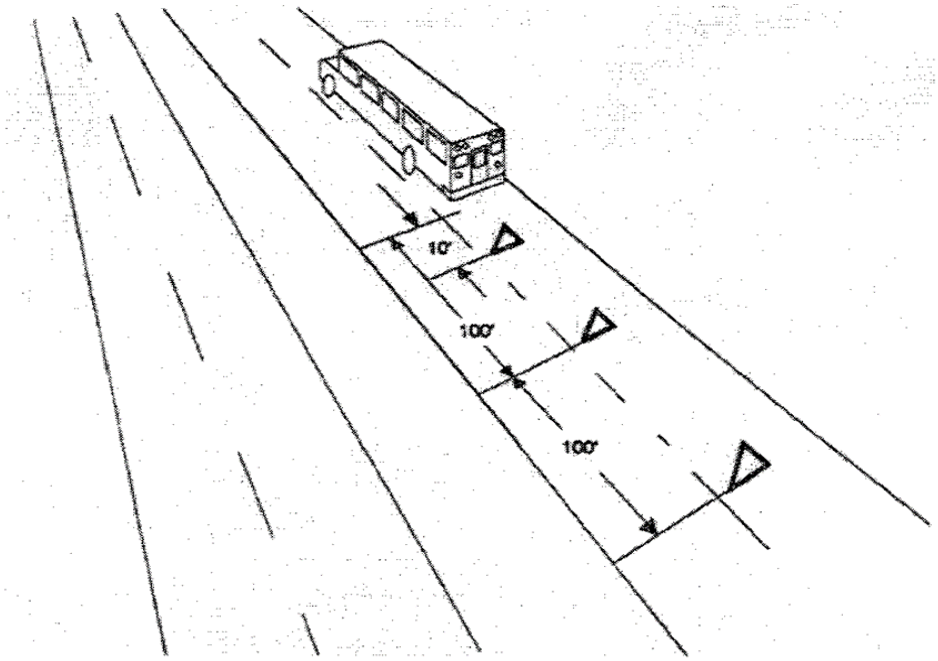
On hills or curves:

- Position the rearmost triangle behind any hill, curve, or other obstruction that blocks other drivers from seeing the vehicle from 500 feet away.



On a one-way or divided roadway, placement should be at the following locations:

- On the traffic side of the vehicle, within 10 feet from the rear corner, to mark the vehicle's location.
- Approximately 100 feet behind the vehicle, on the shoulder or in the lane where you are stopped.
- Approximately 200 feet behind the vehicle, toward the approaching traffic.



The safety of the students is your first priority!

Fire Extinguisher Operation

The fire extinguisher is to help you safely evacuate students from a burning vehicle. It does not have sufficient capacity to extinguish a major vehicle fire.

If possible, stand upwind from burning material to prevent standing in smoke and heat. Avoid standing near areas of flammable, unburned materials that could catch fire in a flashback. Never open the hood when an engine fire occurs; it could cause a flashback. Do your best to direct the fire extinguisher stream through the grill or under the fenders.

- Hold the extinguisher upright. It should not be held on its side when operating.
- Twist and pull the safety pin, breaking the seal.
- Squeeze the handle to discharge the powder.
- Aim at the base of the fire closest to you and progress forward, moving the discharge cone from side to side in a sweeping motion.
- Release the handle to turn the extinguisher off.
- Continue to use the extinguisher as necessary to control the fire.
- After use, report the extinguisher for replacement or recharge.

1 CCR 301-25, 20.0 Emergency Equipment

20.1 All school transportation vehicles, except for small-capacity vehicles, shall be equipped with at least one pressurized, five-pound, dry-chemical fire extinguisher, with a total rating of not less than 2A10BC. The operating mechanism shall be sealed with a type of seal that will not interfere with the use of the fire extinguisher.

20.01(a) The fire extinguisher shall be securely mounted in an extinguisher bracket (automatic type) and located in full view of and readily accessible to the driver within the cab, or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate signage. A pressure gauge shall be mounted on the extinguisher to be easily read without removing the extinguisher from its mounted position.

20.01(b) Fire extinguishers shall be inspected annually for charging and certification to standards by a certified fire extinguisher technician.

20.2 Small-capacity vehicles shall be equipped with one securely mounted, 2 ½ pound, dry chemical fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 1A10BC.

Emergency Evacuations

Planning for emergencies and knowing what to do at the time of an emergency will prevent panic and confusion. When a large number of passengers are moving rapidly to evacuate a school transportation vehicle, there is always the possibility of panic and injury. The safety of the students

is always your first priority. In the majority of emergency situations, the vehicle is the safest place for the passengers unless extenuating circumstances warrant evacuation from the vehicle. Under no circumstances should any student move another student who is injured without the permission of the school transportation vehicle operator or emergency responder attending the accident.

The following are examples of serious types of emergencies that may require evacuation. For a Type A minibus or MFSAB, the front door evacuation is typically the safest option.

Front-end Crash

- Determine which exits are accessible and may be used.
- Check for any serious injuries.
- Look and watch for fire.

Rear-end Crash

- Determine which exits are accessible and may be used.
- Check for any serious injuries.
- Do not use the rear exit door.
- Look and watch for fire.

Broadside Crash

- Determine which exits are accessible and may be used.
- Check for any serious injuries.
- Look and watch for fire.

Rollover Crash

- Use the rear exit, roof hatches, and windows (if available) along the top side of the vehicle if they are free of broken glass.
- If a fire does not exist, and the bus is not lying on the front door side, the front exit may also be used.
- Check for serious injuries.
- Look and watch for fire.

Fire

- Determine which exits are accessible and may be used.
- Use the exit furthest from the fire.

- Check for any serious injuries.
- Many injuries are caused by panic rather than by the fire itself. Try to remain calm.

Railroad Crossings

- Determine which exits are accessible and may be used.
- Check for any serious injuries.
- Stay clear of all traffic and keep students in a group.
- DO NOT re-enter the bus.
- Have students move away from the tracks
    - Proceed in the direction of the oncoming train.
    - Move at 45° angle from the tracks.
        - This is important because if a train were to hit a disabled vehicle, it would push it down the tracks.

Blizzard

- Remain in the vehicle as long as possible – it is warmer inside the vehicle than outside.

Flood waters

- Do not drive through flood waters unless you are instructed to do so by a law enforcement officer.
- If the vehicle stalls during a water crossing and law enforcement is absent, notify dispatch or the transportation supervisor.
- Evacuate all passengers if the situation warrants.
    - What is the safest option for the students?

Situations where the vehicle position may become more hazardous

- Remain in the vehicle for as long as possible.
- Evacuate all passengers if the situation warrants.
    - What is the safest option for the students?
- If the vehicle is in a location where the risk of a collision or other hazard is high, evacuation is warranted.
- If the bus is in a location where conditions (like weather or road damage) are worsening and could endanger the students, evacuation is recommended.
- If the bus's position is changing or sliding and the risk of danger is increasing, evacuation should be considered.

It is a good idea for your students to know

- The locations of the first aid kits
- How to shut off the engine
- How to set the park brake, unless the students' disabilities preclude this.

The emergency evacuation drill should resemble the real situation as closely as possible. The drill must be discussed with the students before the day of the drill. It should follow the evacuation procedures for the designated exit(s) utilized.

If there are potential language barriers, drivers should be made aware of them so they can prepare to address the situation ahead of time.

1 CCR 301-26, 20.0 Emergency Evacuation Drills

20.1 Emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted with students by all school transportation vehicle route operators, excluding small-capacity vehicle operators as defined in 1 CCR 301-25, and school transportation paraprofessionals at least twice during each school year.

20.01(a) One drill shall be conducted in the fall, and the second drill in the spring.

20.01(b) Substitute and Multifunction operators shall be trained on how to conduct emergency evacuation drills.

20.2 Students at school-related events shall receive emergency evacuation instructions prior to every initial departure.

20.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain records documenting that the required evacuation drills were conducted and/or evacuation instruction was given

General Procedures for Evacuations

Above all, remain calm. Follow these general procedures in any evacuation.

- Secure the vehicle
  - Put the transmission in neutral or park if so equipped
  - Set the parking brake
- Turn off the engine

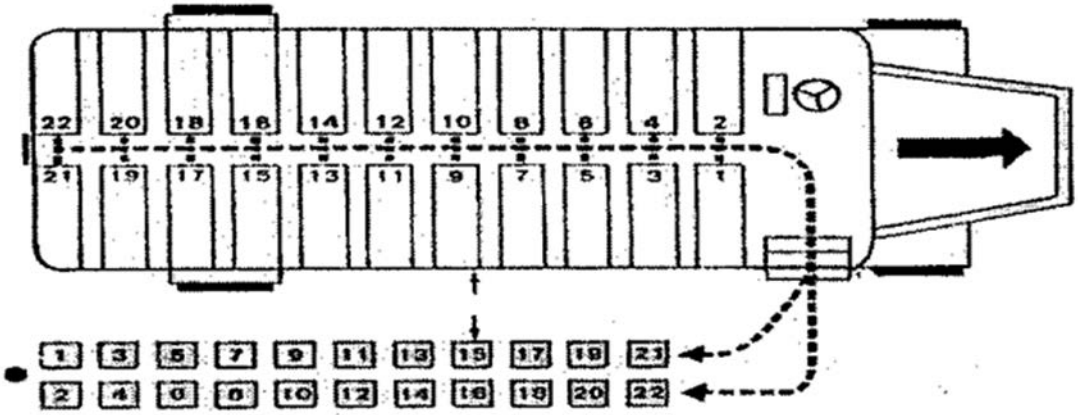
- Turn on your four-way hazard lamps (if operable)
- Evaluate the situation
    - Is evacuation necessary?
        - Which exit is best to use?
    - Are there any injuries?
        - Do you have any extremely quiet students?
- Determine a safe waiting area
- Determine which door you will be evacuating from
- Notify the proper authorities
- Know the number of students on the bus
- Set out reflective triangles within 10 minutes of the incident.
- Keep all students together and orderly until emergency services arrive.

Locating a Safe Waiting Area

- A safe location for the students will be at least 100 feet away from the road, facing oncoming traffic.
    - This will protect them from being struck by debris should another vehicle collide with the bus.
- Direct or lead the students upwind of the bus if fire is present.
- Direct or lead the students as far away from railroad tracks as possible and toward any oncoming train.
- Direct or lead students upwind of the bus at least 300 feet if there is a risk from spilled hazardous materials.
- If the bus is in the direct path of a sighted tornado and evacuation is ordered, escort students to a nearby ditch or culvert if shelter in a building is not readily available, and direct them to lie face down, hands covering their head.
    - They should be far enough away so that the bus cannot fall on them.
    - Avoid bridge and overpass areas, as they can create a vacuum that may pull you away from the location.
- Avoid areas that are subject to flash floods.

Emergency Evacuation Using the Front Door

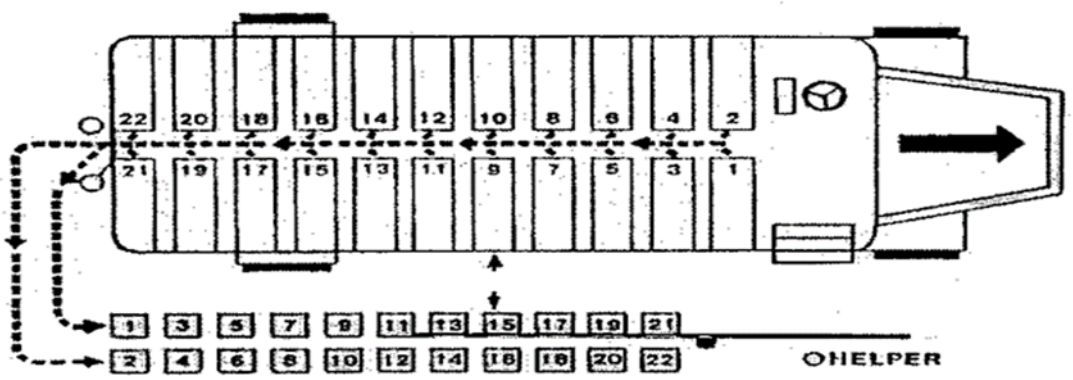
Under most circumstances, the front door will be the safest door from which to evacuate.



- Start by standing and facing the students
- Get the students' attention
    - Speak clearly and concisely
    - Announce, "Remain seated, emergency evacuation, front door."
    - Tell the students about the location of the safe waiting area
        - At least 100 feet from the bus and the roadway
- All belongings are to remain on the bus
- Evacuate the bus by dismissing the students
    - Start at the front row on the right side and alternate from side to side, row by row, as you move to the back of the bus until all students have exited the vehicle.
- If possible, give the first aid kit to a responsible student who is exiting the bus.
- Do not impede the flow of the students' exit.
- Check each seat as you move back towards the front of the vehicle to make sure all students have evacuated the bus.
- Once outside, account for all students
    - Render first aid if necessary

Emergency Evacuation Using the Rear Door

Use the rear door if evacuating through the front door is impossible or unsafe, or when it is crucial to evacuate quickly via the rear exits.



- Start by standing and facing the students
- Get the students' attention
    - Speak clearly and concisely
    - Announce, "Remain seated, emergency evacuation, rear door."
    - Tell the students about the location of the safe waiting area
        - At least 100 feet from the bus and the roadway
- All belongings are to remain on the bus
- Evacuate the bus by dismissing the students
    - Assign two "helpers" to assist students out of the rear door.
        - Have them sit on the floor at the emergency door and scoot or slide out of the door onto the ground.
        - One helper will have their back against the door so the door cannot move during evacuation
        - The other helper is positioned on the other side of the door area.
        - Helpers are particularly important in preventing injuries when exiting the bus from the rear door.
    - Start at the back row on the right side and alternate from side to side, row by row, as you move to the front of the bus until all students have exited the vehicle.
- If possible, give the first aid kit to a responsible student who is exiting the bus.
- Do not impede the flow of the students' exit.
- Check each seat as you move back towards the rear of the vehicle to make sure all students have evacuated the bus.
- Have helpers assist you with
- Once outside, account for all students
    - Render first aid if necessary

Emergency Evacuation Using the Front and Rear Doors (Combined)

Follow the procedures outlined for both the front door and rear door evacuations. The major difference between a combined evacuation and a front or rear door evacuation is that the driver will not be able to dismiss the rows.

A combined evacuation is the fastest method for evacuating a school bus. Separate the students at the halfway mark of the vehicle (approximately six rows from the rear), and have the front half evacuate out the front door, and the back half evacuate out of the rear door.

Emergency Evacuation Using the Side Door

Follow the above procedures for a rear door evacuation with the following exception: dismissing the students.

- Begin at the seat nearest the exit, approximately six rows from the rear of the vehicle.
- Work to the rear of the vehicle, alternating from side to side, then return to the seat immediately in front of the side exit and work to the front of the vehicle, again alternating from side to side.

Using a side door exit is a more difficult evacuation procedure because of the height of the door from the ground. With small children, you might have to assist them from the door to the ground.

Emergency Evacuation Using Side Windows

If the front, rear/side door exits are blocked, there are two other ways to evacuate a bus if needed. These are the side emergency windows and the roof hatches.

The side window exits are designed for use when all other exits are blocked or inoperable. Instructions for operating the window are posted next to or on the window glass.

- If the bus is upright, on its wheels
    - A push-out emergency window should have a student holding the window fully open to prevent it from swinging shut while students are exiting the bus.
    - Two students should exit first to assist the other students as they exit.

        - Students should exit feet first and place their feet on the rub rail approximately halfway down the outside of the bus.
        - Helpers will assist them from there.
- If the bus is upright, on its roof
    - A slide-down emergency window will need two people to hold each side of the window up to prevent it from falling on students as they exit.
    - A push-out emergency window should have a student holding the window fully open to prevent it from swinging shut while students are exiting the bus.
    - Two students should exit first to assist the other students as they exit.
        - Students should exit feet first and slide from the emergency exit to the ground.
        - Helpers will assist them as they evacuate.
- If the bus is lying on its side.
    - All windows on the top of the vehicle should be able to be opened normally.
        - Push-out windows can be opened and flipped against the side of the bus.
    - Two helpers exit first to assist other students from the bus to the ground.
        - Students can then crawl out and slide down the roof of the bus to avoid the undercarriage of the bus.

Emergency Evacuation Using Roof Hatches

Roof hatch evacuations are your last resort. Like a side window evacuation, these are intended to be used when all other exits are blocked or inoperable.

- The instructions to open the roof hatches are posted on the hatch.
- Two helpers should get out first by flipping the hatch open against the vehicle's roof.
    - Depending on the vehicle's position, they may need to pull students up and/or assist them to the ground.

Emergency Evacuation for Students with Special Needs

In an actual emergency, there will be no time to explain the evacuation plan. Drivers, paraprofessionals, and students must be aware of what to do ahead of time. These guidelines should encourage each transportation department

to establish procedures for conducting these drills. A bus carrying special needs students, particularly those who are physically disabled, would be evacuated in an emergency only when absolutely necessary to preserve life. Some special needs students may not be able to fully participate in an evacuation drill due to the nature of their disabilities. Decisions should still be made regarding how these students can be evacuated in an actual emergency, and this should be documented.

- It is advisable to talk to parents or guardians of students with disabilities to plan for an emergency evacuation carefully.
- A written plan should be developed, maintained with the route sheet, and kept confidential. All drivers should know where the plan is located and review it before departing on a route or trip.
- When possible, make sure to include students with special needs in the discussion and have them participate in the actual drill. If you wish to include students with special needs in the drill, get permission from parents/guardians.
- Responsible students may be assigned to help a student with special needs get to a safe area away from the bus, traffic, and other dangers. The plan should address each student's characteristics and abilities.

The most important thing to note during a drill is how the students exit the bus: calmly, orderly, and following directions.

When the drill is over, have the students return to the bus. Spend a few moments discussing the drill. Point out the positive things that occurred and discuss ways to improve the drill.

For additional information regarding evacuating special needs students, check out the Transporting Students with Special Needs Guide on the CDE website.

Safety Equipment

Per the Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles (1 CCR 301-25), each school transportation vehicle must carry or have the following safety or emergency equipment that should be properly secured within the vehicle and either within the driver's direct line of sight or labeled to indicate where to find it.

- For small-capacity vehicles or Type A minibuses

- One pressurized, 2 ½ pound, dry chemical fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 1A10BC
- A 24-unit first aid kit
- A bodily fluid clean-up kit
- Three triangle reflectors
- A durable webbing (seatbelt) cutter with a full-width handgrip and a protected blade.
- Horn
- Driver's seatbelt

First Aid Training

In order to handle emergencies efficiently and safely, the Colorado Rules for the Operation, Maintenance, and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles requires that First aid and CPR **training** be provided for school transportation vehicle ROUTE operators; while First aid and CPR **information** is required for school transportation, small-capacity vehicle and Type A ACTIVITY operators. This training equips them with the skills to manage various medical issues that may arise on the bus, including choking, bleeding, and shock.

Bodily Fluid Kits

The body fluids of all individuals should be treated as if they contain infectious agents (germs). The term "body fluids" includes blood, semen, drainage from scrapes and cuts, feces, urine, vomit, respiratory secretions (e.g. nasal discharge), and saliva. Contact with body fluids presents a risk of infection from various germs. However, in general, the risk is very low and depends on several factors, including the type of fluid involved. Put on disposable gloves before starting the cleanup process. Following established school district, charter school, and service provider procedures, body fluids must be contained or removed immediately. Wash the affected area with warm, soapy water as soon as possible.

Optional Emergency Equipment

- Blankets
- Two-way radio or cellular phone
- Emergency information forms
- Crash checklist
- Student list – seating chart
- Flashlights
- Disposable masks
- Bag of salt, kitty litter, or sand

1 CCR 301-26, 5.0 School Transportation Vehicle Operations Requirements

5.01(i) ***The operator shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions, within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the operator holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate, it will meet the requirements of this section. Operators shall receive first aid training and/or recertification training every two years thereafter.***

5.02(j) ***The operator shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions, within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the operator holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate, it will meet the requirements of this section. Operators shall receive first aid training and/or recertification training every two years thereafter.***

5.03(h) ***The operator shall be given and/or have access to first aid information, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions.***

1 CCR 301-25, 20.0 Emergency Equipment

20.2 ***Small-capacity vehicles shall be equipped with one securely mounted, 2 ½ pound, dry chemical fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 1A10BC.***

20.3 ***First Aid Kit: All school transportation vehicles shall carry one First Aid Kit which shall be securely mounted in full view of the driver or with the location plainly indicated by appropriate signage. Additional kits may be installed. The kit(s) shall be mounted for easy removal.***

20.03(a) ***The kit shall be sealed. The seal verifies the integrity of the contents without opening the kit. The seal shall be designed to allow easy access to the kit's contents. If zip***

ties are used to seal the kit, they must be breakaway zip ties.

20.03(b) Consideration should be given to replacing items in the First Aid Kit every 36 months due to the breakdown of materials.

Contents of the 24-Unit First Aid Kit	
Item	***Unit(s)***
Adhesive tape	***1***
1-inch bandage compress	***2***
2-inch bandage compress	***1***
3-inch bandage compress	***1***
4-inch bandage compress	***1***
4-inch x 3-inch plain gauze pads	***1***
Gauze roller bandage 2-inch wide	***2***
Plain absorbent gauze – ½ square yard	***4***
Plain absorbent gauze – 24-inch x 72-inches	***3***
Triangular bandages	***4***
Scissors	***1***
Tweezers	***1***
Space rescue blanket	***1***
Non-latex disposable pair of gloves	***1***
CPR mask or mouth-to-mouth airway	***1***
Moisture and dustproof kit of sufficient capacity to store the required items.	

20.4 Emergency Reflectors: All school transportation vehicles shall carry three bidirectional emergency triangle reflectors in compliance with C.R.S. 42-4-230, and with FMVSS 125, contained in a securely mounted case easily accessible to the driver or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate markings.

20.5 Body Fluid Cleanup Kit: All school transportation vehicles shall have a one removable body fluid cleanup kit accessible to the driver, within the cab, or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate signage.

20.05(a) Consideration should be given to replacing items in the Body Fluid Cleanup Kit every 36 months due to the breakdown of materials.

Contents of the Basic Body Fluid Clean-up Kit	
Item	***Unit(s)***
Antiseptic towelette	***1***
Disinfected towelette	***1***
Absorbing powder (capable of ½ gallon absorption)	***1***
Non-latex disposable pair of gloves	***1***
Disposable wiper towels	***2***
Disposable scoop bag with closure mechanism and scraper	
Moisture and dustproof kit of sufficient capacity to store the required items.	

20.6 All school transportation vehicles shall be equipped with one durable webbing cutter having a full-width handgrip and a protected blade. The cutter shall be mounted in a location accessible to the seated driver.

20.06(a) Seat belt cutters shall be replaced after they have been used, or if there is any sign of rust or corrosion on the blade.

20.7 Emergency Equipment shall be securely mounted, clearly visible, or in a location plainly indicated by appropriate signage.

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Unit Eight – Transporting Students and Activity Trips

The loading and unloading of passengers present the driver with tremendous responsibilities and require sound judgment. As a driver, you play a crucial role in executing the proper procedures for interacting with other vehicular traffic, directing students crossing the roadway, and managing students who are loading and unloading from the bus.

This unit deals with correctly using the alternately flashing student lights and/or hazard warning lights, and the procedures for safe passenger loading and unloading.

Learning and using these procedures will not only assist you in safely transporting your passengers to and from school but also help you mitigate potential risks. At this point, students and drivers are exposed to many hazards. It's crucial to understand that ignoring these procedures could result in severe injury or death to one or more of your passengers or other highway users.

Proper uses of the alternately flashing red lights include:

- Activated only by the driver
- Required if school students must cross the roadway
- Used only when stopped on a highway, street, or private road
- Used only to receive or discharge students
- The flashing red lights must be deactivated before resuming motion

Improper uses of the alternately flashing red lights include:

- Used for reasons other than loading or unloading students
- Used on private property, including driveways
- Used while backing or used in making turns or turnarounds
- Used when stopping at a railroad crossing
- Used when driving in inclement weather

When Loading or Unloading Students

- Never take your eyes off what is happening outside the vehicle.
- Count all students as they enter or exit

- Ensure that all students are at a safe distance from the vehicle before departing the bus stop once you have unloaded.
- Make sure you know the location of each student
- If you cannot locate a child
    - Check ALL mirrors
    - If you still cannot find the child, secure the vehicle
    - Get out and check around, and under your vehicle
    - DO NOT MOVE until you have located the child.

Loading Procedure Steps

Students should wait in a designated location for the school transportation vehicle, facing the vehicle as it approaches. Students should board the vehicle only when signaled by the driver. Monitor all mirrors continuously. There is a safe technique for making stops that protects all involved. These steps should be practiced in the same sequence, so they become a habit.

- Check mirrors and traffic.
    - Students will be loading soon, and you must scan the traffic scene to locate students and traffic hazards. A mistake here could be tragic.
- Apply brakes lightly and slow down.
    - As you approach the student stop, you must have your vehicle under control.
    - Slowing down gradually will give you the control you need if someone runs out in front of your vehicle.
- Activate the eight-way student light system (if equipped) or hazard lights if the vehicle is not equipped with an eight-way system, at least 200 feet in advance of the stop, on the roadway in which the student stop will be performed.
    - An eight-way system student light system is the amber and red lamps mounted at the same horizontal level, intended to identify the vehicle as a school bus and to inform other users of the highway that such vehicle is stopped or about to stop on the roadway to take on or discharge school children.
    - Remember that the 200 feet is the minimum distance; you may activate your lights earlier than that. Always watch for larger vehicles that take additional distance to stop.
- Turn on the right-turn signal indicator about 100-300 feet or approximately 3-5 seconds before pulling over.
- Do not pull closer than 10 feet to waiting students.

    - In winter weather, your vehicle could also slide during the stopping procedure.
    - Stop short of the line of waiting students for their safety. You must teach your students to stay back 10 feet from the location of the bus stop and wait for your signal to board the vehicle.
- If students do not cross the road to get to their home or to the student stop C.R.S. 42-4-1903
    - Stop the vehicle as far to the right of the roadway or private road as practicable.
    - It is important to consider where the students will be waiting for the school transportation vehicle.
- If students cross the road to get to their home or to the student stop
    - You may stop the vehicle on the roadway or private road; or
    - Stop the vehicle as far to the right of the roadway or private road as practicable.
- Apply the parking brake and shift the bus to neutral.
    - The parking brake is always the first on and last off!
    - It is possible that your foot could slip off the brake, and the vehicle could move.
    - Place your vehicle in neutral or park, **and** set the parking brake at every student stop.
- Check mirrors and traffic
    - Check to see what the traffic around your vehicle is doing before you open your student door, and signal your students to approach the vehicle.
    - If you notice a vehicle quickly approaching you, keep your lights active and do not prompt students to approach the vehicle.
- Open the door
    - The eight-way system will automatically shift from flashing amber caution lights to flashing red stop lights, signaling other motorists to come to a complete stop. This will also signal students that it is time to enter the vehicle.
    - Students crossing the roadway will require an additional signal from the driver before proceeding across the road to the vehicle.
- Have students enter the vehicle in an orderly manner.
    - This is the most dangerous step in our loading procedure.
    - More than half of all school transportation vehicle passenger fatalities are students who have been struck by the vehicle in which they were entering or leaving.
    - Drivers are responsible for the safety of all their students, including those who must cross the roadway or street.

    - Instruct students in the safe use of the handrail.
    - Count the students as they get off the bus and count them again as they move away from the bus.
        - Counting and tracking students who must cross the road at the bus stop is especially important.
- Check to see that all students are seated and close the door
    - This will deactivate the eight-way system on buses.
    - Students may fall if you move the vehicle before they are seated.
        - Do not rush the seating procedure.
        - Remember that small children may take considerable time to enter the vehicle. Help them if you can!
- Check mirrors and traffic
- Turn on the left turn signal.
    - Check all of your mirrors again
- Allow traffic to clear, where legal and practicable.
    - If possible, you are legally required to allow stopped traffic to clear before merging your vehicle back into traffic. Failing to do so may lead to a motorist attempting to pass unsafely because they do not want to get stuck behind your vehicle. C.R.S. 42-4-1903(5)
- When it is safe, move the vehicle to enter the traffic flow and continue on the route.

1 CCR 301-26, 19.0 Route Planning – Student Loading and Discharge

19.1 School transportation small-capacity vehicles, Type A Multifunction Buses, and School Buses (Types A, B, C, and D) may be used to transport students. Multifunction Buses Type B, C, D, and Motor Coach Buses shall not be used to transport students to and from school.

19.2 The location of student stops shall consider factors including:

19.02(a) Ages of the students;

19.02(b) Visibility;

19.02(c) Lateral clearance;

19.02(d) Student access; and

19.02(e) Control of other motorists

19.02(e)(1) Student stops for Type A Multifunction Buses and school transportation small-capacity vehicles should be located off the roadway whenever possible.

19.3 School transportation vehicle operators shall stop at least 10 feet away from students at each designated stop. The school transportation vehicle operator shall apply the parking brake and shift the vehicle into neutral or park prior to opening the service door of a bus or the passenger door(s) of a small-capacity vehicle.

19.4 The school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right of the roadway, highway, or private road as possible before discharging or loading passengers - allowing sufficient area to the right and front of the vehicle but close enough to the right to prevent traffic from passing on the right - so that students may clear the vehicle safely while in sight of the operator.

19.04(a) Exception: The school transportation vehicle operator may block the lane of traffic when passengers being received or discharged are required to cross the roadway.

19.5 Student stops shall not be located on the side of any major thoroughfare whenever access to the destination of the passenger is possible by a road or street which is adjacent to the major thoroughfare.

19.6 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that if students are required to cross a roadway, highway, or private road on which a student stop is being performed, they are prohibited from crossing a roadway, highway, or private road constructed or designed to permit three or more separate lanes of vehicular traffic in either direction or with a median separating multiple lanes of traffic.

19.7 Four-way hazard lamps shall be used on private property, such as parking lots.

19.8 Alternating flashing red warning signal lamps shall not be activated within 200 feet of an intersection if the intersection is controlled by a traffic control signal.

19.9 Routes shall be planned as to:

19.09(a) Eliminate, when practical, railroad crossings; and

19.09(b) Have stops be a minimum of 200 feet apart (since alternating flashing amber warning signal lamps must be activated a minimum of 200 feet in advance of the stop on the roadway on which the bus stop will be performed).

19.09(b)(1) Exception: In areas where wildlife may create a high risk of threat to students' safety while they are waiting and/or walking to a student stop, designated stops may be less than 200 feet apart upon detailed written approval by the school district board of education or governing body of a charter school (or the board's designee). A copy of the written approval shall be kept in the school transportation office, and route operators shall be given written notice of the exception and have it indicated on route sheets.

19.10 In determining the length of routes, school districts, charter schools, and service providers must make an effort to minimize student ride times while considering student educational needs, geographic boundaries, terrain, traffic congestion, and financial resources within the district. A local board of education, or the governing body of a charter school, may establish a maximum student ride time.

19.11 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1903(2), school transportation vehicle operators are not required to actuate the alternating flashing red warning signal lamps on a school bus:

19.11(a) When the student stop is at a location where the local traffic regulatory authority has by prior written designation declared such actuation unnecessary and no passenger is required to cross the roadway; or

19.11(b) When discharging or loading passengers who require the assistance of a lift device, and no passenger is required to cross the roadway.

19.11(c) Further, Type A Multifunction Buses and school transportation small-capacity vehicles do not have the functionality to control traffic. In these instances, the school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right off the roadway as possible to reduce obstruction to traffic, activate the four-way hazard warning lamps a minimum of 200 feet prior to the student stop, continue to display the four-way hazard warning lamps until the process of discharging or loading passengers has been completed, and deactivate the four-way hazard lamps before resuming motion. Students are prohibited from crossing any lanes of traffic to access the student stop or after disembarking.

19.12 School transportation vehicle operators shall not relocate a student stop without the approval of the school district, charter school, or service provider.

C.R.S. 42-4-1903 – School Buses; Stops – Signs - Passing

(1)

(a) The driver of a motor vehicle upon any highway, road, or street, upon meeting or overtaking from either direction any school bus that has stopped, shall stop the vehicle at least twenty feet before reaching the school bus if visual signal lights as specified in subsection (2) of this section have been actuated on the school bus. The driver shall not proceed until the visual signal lights are no longer being actuated. The driver of a motor vehicle shall stop when a school bus that is not required to be equipped with visual signal lights by subsection (2) of this section stops to receive or discharge school children.

(b)

(I) A driver of any school bus who observes a violation of paragraph (a) of this subsection (1)

shall notify the driver's school district transportation dispatcher. The school bus driver shall provide the school district transportation dispatcher with the color, basic description, and license plate number of the vehicle involved in the violation, information pertaining to the identity of the alleged violator, and the time and the approximate location at which the violation occurred. Any school district transportation dispatcher who has received information by a school bus driver concerning a violation of paragraph (a) of this subsection (1) shall provide such information to the appropriate law enforcement agency or agencies.

(II) A law enforcement agency may issue a citation on the basis of the information supplied to it pursuant to subparagraph (I) of this paragraph (b) to the driver of the vehicle involved in the violation.

(2)

(a) Every school bus as defined in section 42-1-102 (88), other than a small passenger-type vehicle having a seating capacity of not more than fifteen, used for the transportation of schoolchildren shall:

(I) Bear upon the front and rear of such school bus plainly visible and legible signs containing the words "SCHOOL BUS" in letters not less than eight inches in height; and

(II) Display eight visual signal lights meeting the requirements of 49 CFR 571.108 or its successor regulation.

(b)

(I) The red visual signal lights shall be actuated by the driver of the school bus whenever the school bus is stopped for the purpose of receiving or discharging schoolchildren, is stopped because it

is behind another school bus that is receiving or discharging passengers, or, except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, is stopped because it has met a school bus traveling in a different direction that is receiving or discharging passengers and at no other time; but such lights need not be actuated when a school bus is stopped at locations where the local traffic regulatory authority has by prior written designation declared such actuation unnecessary.

(II) A school bus shall be exempt from the provisions of subparagraph (I) of this paragraph (b) when stopped for the purpose of discharging or loading passengers who require the assistance of a lift device only when no passenger is required to cross the roadway. Such buses shall stop as far to the right off the roadway as possible to reduce obstruction to traffic.

(c) The alternating flashing yellow lights shall be actuated at least two hundred feet prior to the point where the bus is to be stopped for the purpose of receiving or discharging schoolchildren and the red lights shall be actuated only at the time the bus is actually stopped.

(3) Every school bus used for the transportation of schoolchildren, except those small passenger-type vehicles described in subsection (1) of this section, shall be equipped with school bus pedestrian safety devices that comply with 49 CFR 571.131 or its successor regulation.

(4) The driver of a vehicle upon a highway with separate roadways need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus which is on a different roadway. For the purposes of this section, "highway with separate roadways" means a highway that is divided into two or more roadways by a depressed, raised, or painted median or other intervening space serving as a clearly indicated dividing section or island.

(5) Every school bus shall stop as far to the right of the roadway as possible before discharging or loading passengers; except that the school bus may block the lane of traffic when a passenger being

received or discharged is required to cross the roadway. When possible, a school bus shall not stop where the visibility is obscured for a distance of two hundred feet either way from the bus. The driver of a school bus that has stopped shall allow time for any vehicles that have stopped behind the school bus to pass the school bus, if such passing is legally permissible where the school bus is stopped, after the visual signal lights, if any, are no longer being displayed or actuated and after all children who have embarked or disembarked from the bus are safe from traffic.

(6)

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection (6), any person who violates any provision of paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section commits a class 2 misdemeanor traffic offense.

(b) Any person who violates the provisions of paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section commits a class 1 misdemeanor traffic offense if such person has been convicted within the previous five years of a violation of paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section.

(7) The provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of public transportation programs for student transportation under section 22-51-104 (1) (c), C.R.S.

C.R.S. 42-4-1904 – Regulations for School Buses; Regulations on Discharge of Passengers

(1) The state board of education, by and with the advice of the executive director of the department, shall adopt and enforce regulations not inconsistent with this article to govern the operation of all school buses used for the transportation of schoolchildren and to govern the discharge of passengers from such school buses.

Such regulations shall prohibit the driver of any school bus used for the transportation of schoolchildren from discharging any passenger from the school bus which will result in the passenger's immediately crossing a major thoroughfare, except for two-lane highways when such crossing can be done in a safe manner, as determined by the local school board in consultation with the local traffic regulatory

authority, and shall prohibit the discharging or loading of passengers from the school bus onto the side of any major thoroughfare whenever access to the destination of the passenger is possible by the use of a road or street which is adjacent to the major thoroughfare. For the purposes of this section, a "major thoroughfare" means a freeway, any U.S. highway outside any incorporated limit, interstate highway, or highway with four or more lanes, or a highway or road with a median separating multiple lanes of traffic. Every person operating a school bus or responsible for or in control of the operation of school buses shall be subject to said regulations.

(2) Any person operating a school bus under contract with a school district who fails to comply with any of said regulations is guilty of breach of contract, and such contract shall be cancelled after notice and hearing by the responsible officers of such district.

(3) Any person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than one hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

(4) The provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of public transportation programs for student transportation under section 22-51-104 (1) (c), C.R.S.

At the Bus Stop

If a backing turnaround is required on the route, load students onto the vehicle before backing into the turnaround. Unload students after making the turnaround. When making a backing turnaround, students should always remain seated. Use extra caution.

Do not impede the regular flow of traffic. If a build-up occurs behind you, display professional courtesy. If possible, pull to the side of the road only if a vehicle can safely go around.

- Allow vehicles to pass.
- Check traffic using all outside mirrors.
- Resume position on the road.

Unloading Procedure Steps

Unloading students poses additional problems. You are responsible for the safety of all students crossing the roadway, regardless of grade level.

Follow loading procedures with these additions:

- Students should stay seated until the door fully opens, and the traffic around the vehicle is at a complete stop.
- If backing is required, do not unload students until the backing maneuver is completed.
- Do not allow enough room on the right for a motorist to squeeze between the vehicle and the curb or edge of the pavement for students not crossing. Protect your door!
- If a student is crossing in front of the vehicle, instructions shall be given to walk approximately out 10 feet from the vehicle, then walk 10 feet in front of the vehicle and wait for the driver's signal before crossing the roadway.
- If the students are crossing, the bus may be toward the center of the lane – no need for a turn signal.
- While performing a student stop, remember that you are not a traffic officer and have no rights other than those of a regular motorist. Do not signal to any motorist to do anything.
- When the students have safely crossed the road and/or cleared the unloading zone, locate all students, then cancel the flashing red lights by closing the student door.
- If a driver of a motor vehicle violates the stop arm law, follow the school district, charter school, or service provider procedure for reporting.

Signaling to Students

Having a student wait for your signal before crossing the road is essential for their safety. Waiting allows you to visually confirm that the road is clear, ensuring that no unexpected vehicles or pedestrians pose a threat. It also provides drivers with ample time to see and acknowledge the student, which helps prevent accidents.

When it is Safe to Cross

- Establish eye contact with the student(s)
- Give the pre-arranged signal for crossing

    - This signal should be clear enough that other motorists do not mistake it as a signal to proceed.
- Before disembarking the vehicle, students are to be instructed to stop one additional time at the left front corner of the vehicle before crossing the centerline of the roadway, look both ways, and look back at the driver for the signal to cross the road.
- Use the outside PA system if it is available.
- Follow all school district, charter school, or service provider procedures

Report Route Hazards

As discussed earlier, a hazard can occur at any time. One of the most frequent route hazards that school transportation route operators encounter is the stop arm violator.

Stop Arm Violators

School transportation vehicle drivers are professional drivers and should never "trap" a motorist. If stopping at an intersection, they should allow traffic to clear before activating the stop arm and red lights. A school transportation vehicle operator must always perform their duties in a professional manner. C.R.S. 42-4-1903, as seen above, has more information on when a driver is required to stop when they meet a school bus conducting a student stop.

Some important observations to attempt to make if someone disregards your stop arm:

- Location – closest intersection or landmark
- Time of day the violation occurred
- The direction you are headed
- The direction the violator is headed
- What type of car was it? (Sedan, SUV, heavy truck, pickup truck)
- Color of the vehicle
- Description of the driver – do the best you can
- License plate (State, number, color) – do the best you can
- Other descriptive features – vehicle damage, rust spots, mismatched paint, T-top, convertible, etc.

Other Route Hazards

If you notice something that has become a hazard while performing your route, follow school district, charter school, or service provider procedures for reporting such incidents. This could be a snowbank that is too high to see

over, a tree in the road, construction, etc. These hazards and the corrective action may need to be listed on the route description for the substitute driver.

Review the school district, charter school, or service provider procedure on reporting route hazards and how to determine when a change is warranted. The driver shall never change a stop without following the school district, charter school, or service provider procedures.

Never change a student's stop location without following the school district, charter school, or service provider procedures!

1 CCR 301-26, 19.0 Route Planning – Student Loading and Discharge

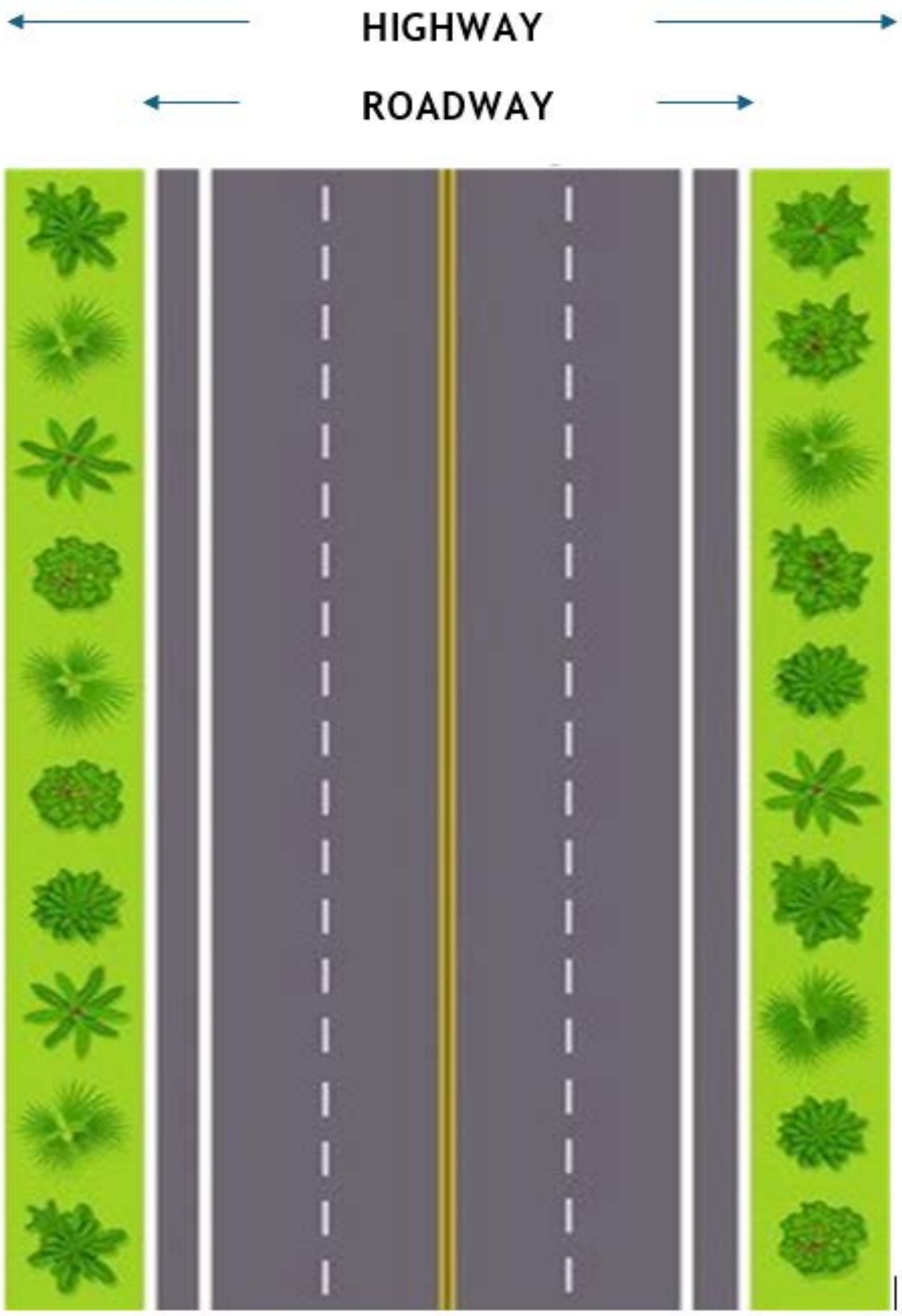
19.12 School transportation vehicle operators shall not relocate a student stop without the approval of the school district, charter school, or service provider.

Highway and Roadway

“Highway” means the entire width between the boundary lines of every way publicly maintained when any part thereof is open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel or the entire width of every way declared to be a public highway by any law of this state. [§42-1-102(43), C.R.S.] “Highway” includes bridges on the roadway and culverts, sluices, drains, ditches, waterways, embankments, retaining walls, trees, shrubs, and fences along or upon the same and within the right-of-way. [§ 43-1-203(1), C.R.S.]

Whereas a "roadway" means that portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel, exclusive of the sidewalk, berm, or shoulder even though such sidewalk, berm, or shoulder is used by persons riding bicycles or other human-powered vehicles and exclusive of that portion of a highway designated for exclusive use as a bicycle path or reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles, human-powered vehicles, or pedestrians. If a highway includes two or more separate roadways, "roadway" refers to any such roadway separately but not to all such roadways collectively.

The rest of this section will show visual representations of student stops on varying roadways.


HIGHWAY
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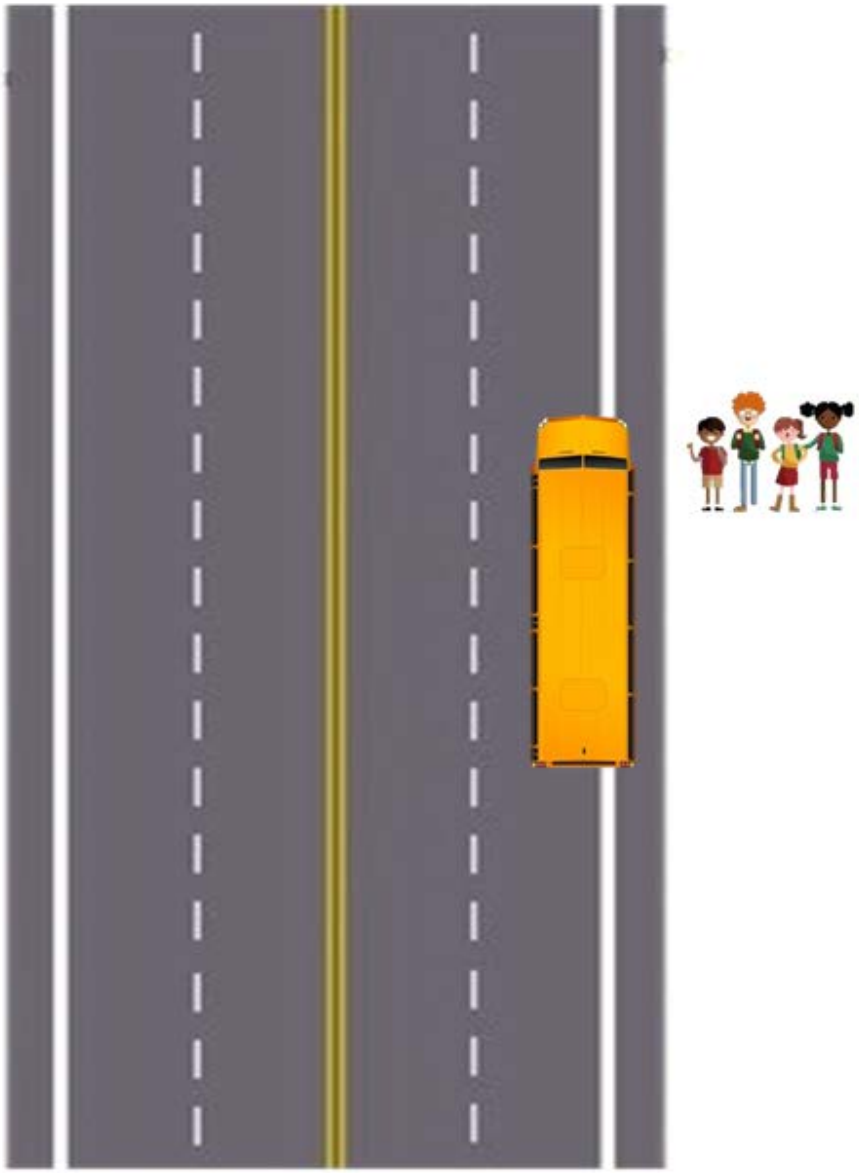
School Bus Stop – Paved Road and Paved Shoulder – Not Crossing



School Bus Loading Stop – Student(s) NOT Crossing

Paved road with paved shoulder

19.04 The school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right of the roadway, highway or private road as possible before discharging or loading passengers, allowing sufficient area to the right and front of the vehicle but close enough to the right to prevent traffic from passing on the right so students may clear the vehicle safely while in sight of the operator.

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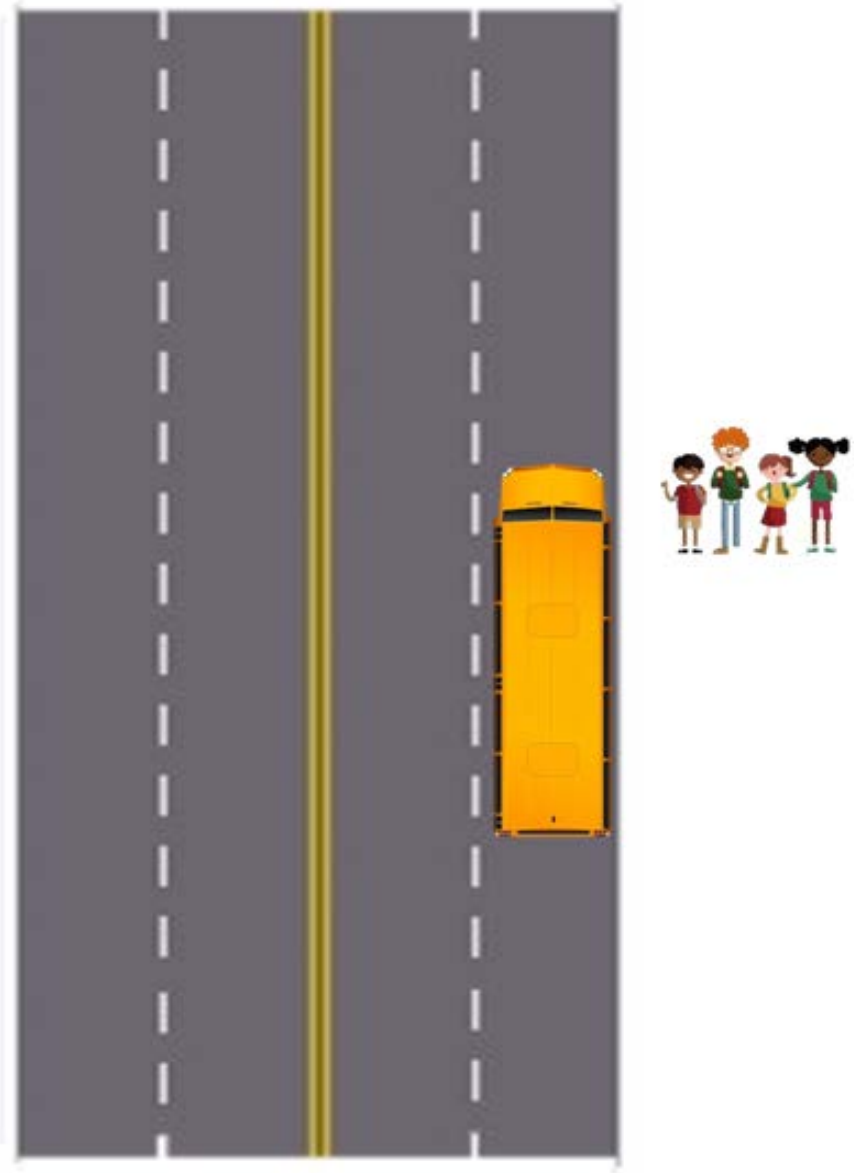
School Bus Stop – Paved Road and No Shoulder - Not Crossing



School Bus Loading Stop – Student(s) NOT Crossing

Paved road with No shoulder

19.04 The school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right of the roadway, highway or private road as possible before discharging or loading passengers, allowing sufficient area to the right and front of the vehicle but close enough to the right to prevent traffic from passing on the right so students may clear the vehicle safely while in sight of the operator.

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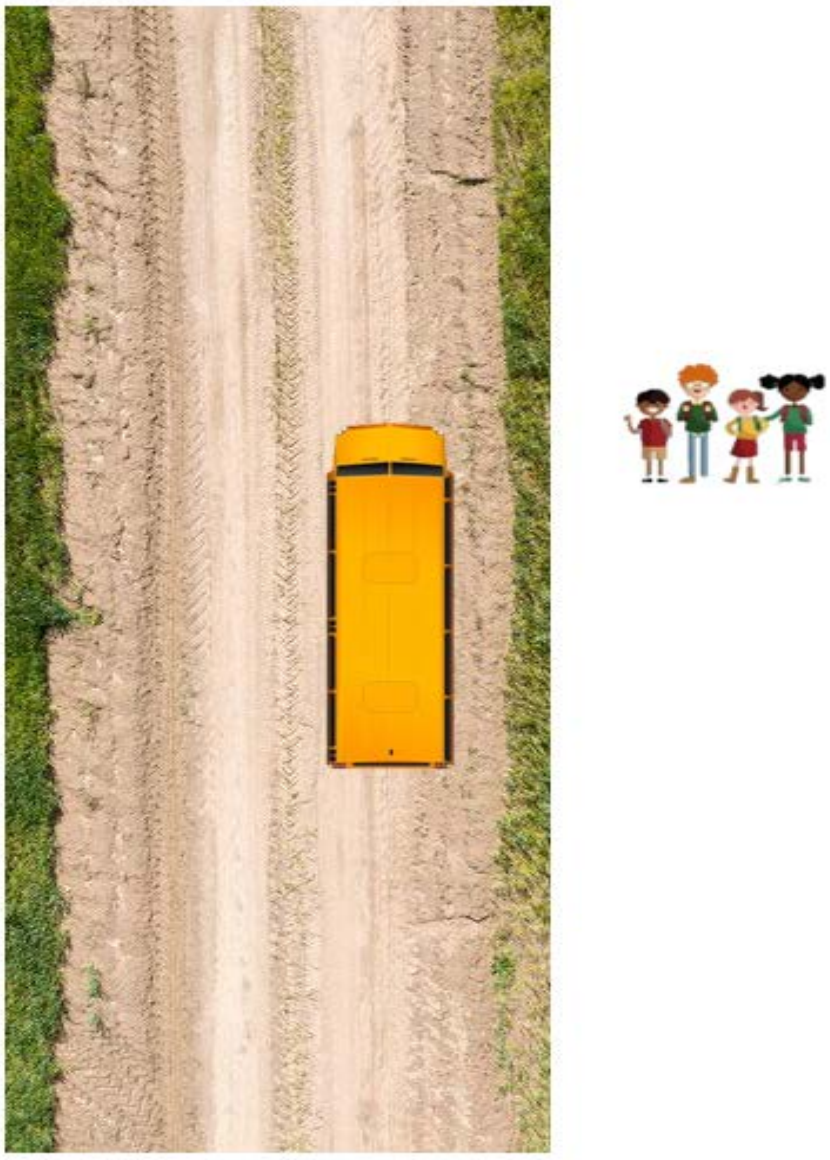
School Bus Stop – Dirt Road and No Shoulder - Not Crossing



School Bus Loading Stop – Student(s) NOT Crossing

Dirt road with No shoulder

19.04 The school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right of the roadway, highway or private road as possible before discharging or loading passengers, allowing sufficient area to the right and front of the vehicle but close enough to the right to prevent traffic from passing on the right so students may clear the vehicle safely while in sight of the operator.

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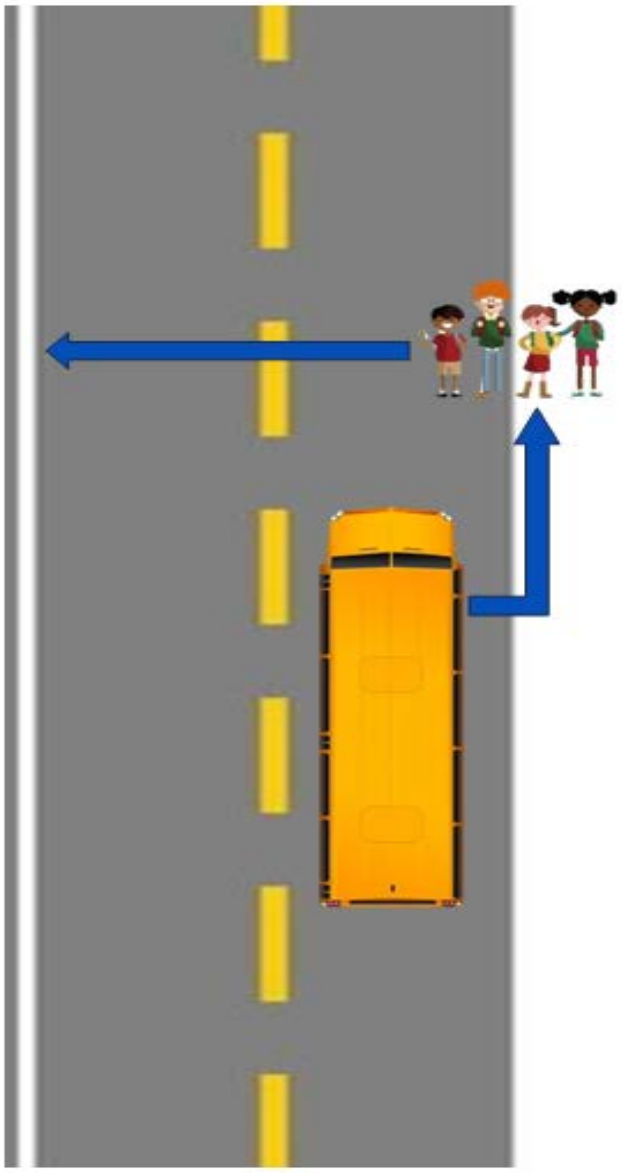
School Bus Stop – Paved Road and No Shoulder – Student Crossing



School Bus Stop – Student(s) Crossing

Paved Road with No Shoulder

19.04(a) Exception: The school transportation vehicle operator may block the lane of traffic when passengers being received or discharged are required to cross the roadway.

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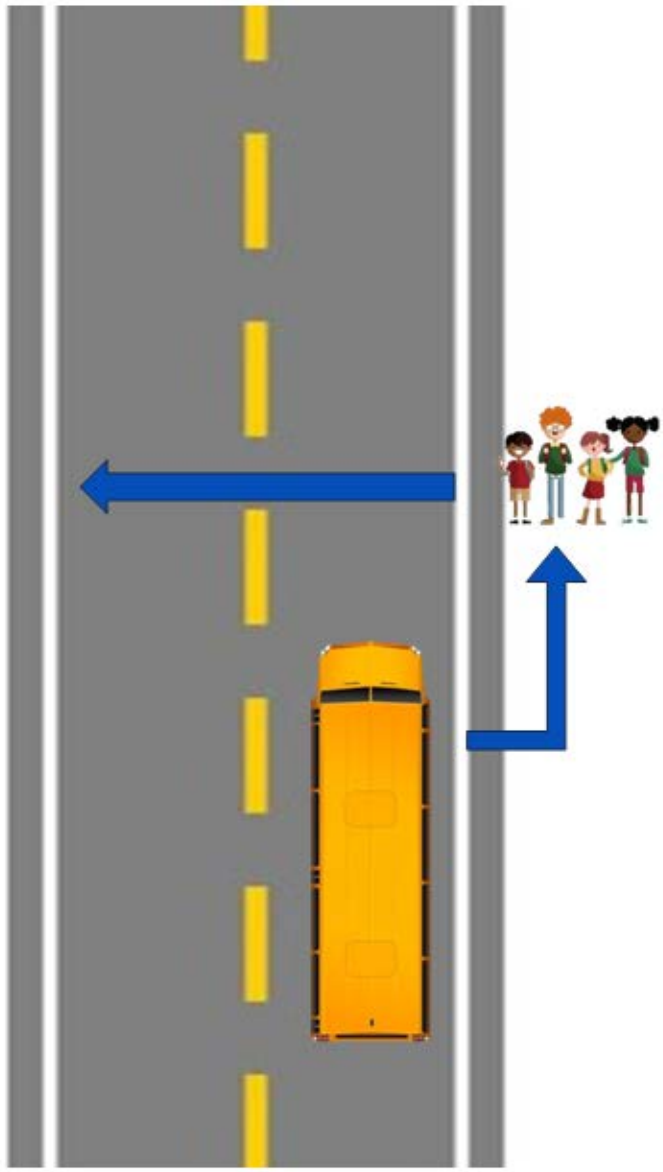
School Bus Stop – Paved Road and Paved Shoulder – Student Crossing



School Bus Stop – Student(s) Crossing

Paved Road with Paved Shoulder

19.04(a) Exception: The school transportation vehicle operator may block the lane of traffic when passengers being received or discharged are required to cross the roadway.

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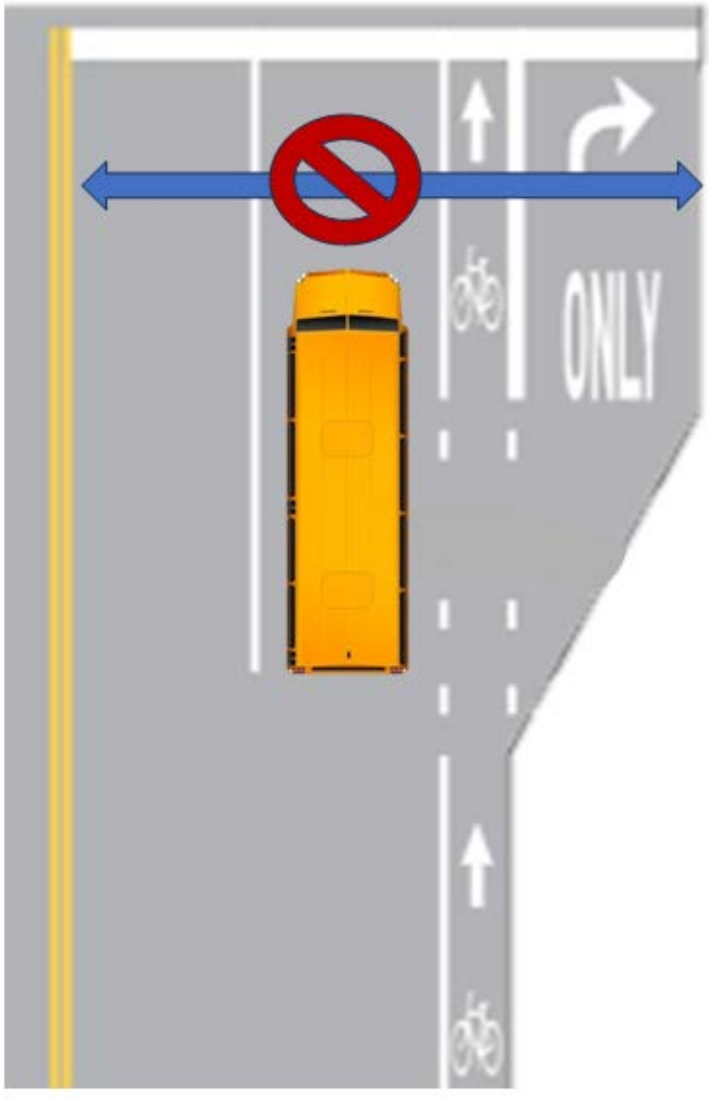
School Bus Stop – PROHIBITED STOP – More than 2 Lanes



School Bus Stop - Student Crossing

Prohibited – More than 2 lanes

"If students are required to cross a roadway, highway, or private road on which a student stop is being performed, they are prohibited from crossing a roadway, highway or private road constructed or designed to permit three or more separate lanes of vehicular traffic in either direction or with a median separating multiple lanes of traffic. This does not include crossing the roadway, highway, or private road with the assistance of a traffic control signal or with the assistance of a crossing guard."

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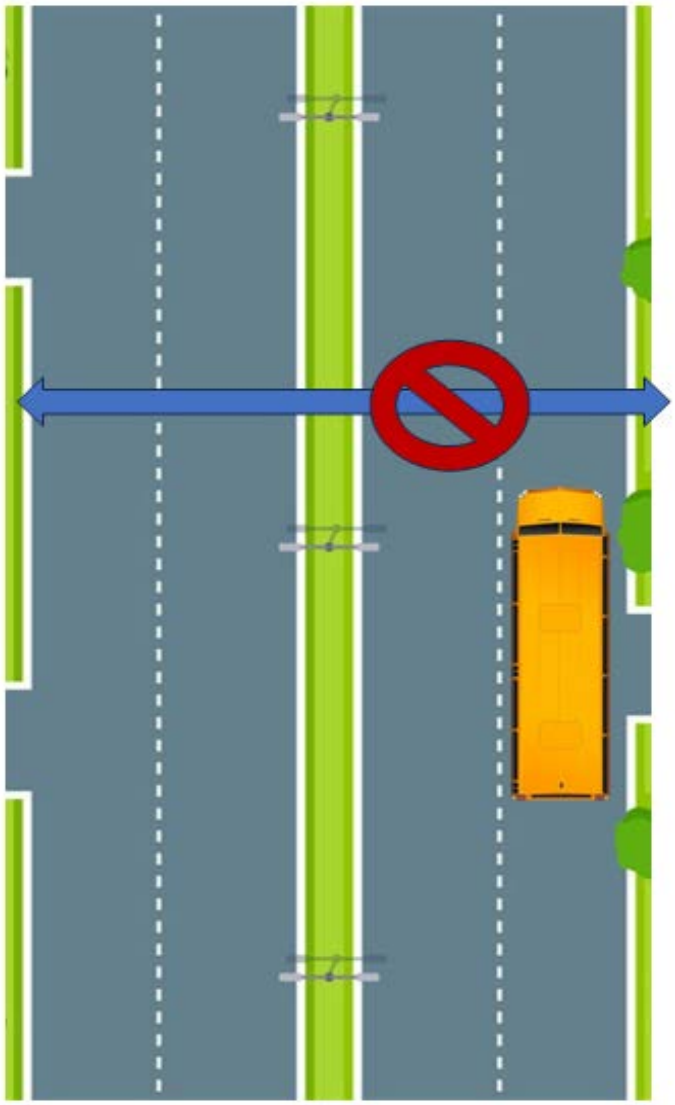
School Bus Stop – PROHIBITED STOP – Median



School Bus Stop - Student Crossing

Prohibited – Median

"If students are required to cross a roadway, highway, or private road on which a student stop is being performed, they are prohibited from crossing a roadway, highway or private road constructed or designed to permit three or more separate lanes of vehicular traffic in either direction or with a median separating multiple lanes of traffic. This does not include crossing the roadway, highway, or private road with the assistance of a traffic control signal or with the assistance of a crossing guard."

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Field and Activity Trips

An activity trip is an exciting and unique experience for our students. Most activity trips involve bus transportation, and it is crucial that transportation providers are aware of the potential challenges. Issues such as selecting the wrong route, running out of fuel, or arriving late can arise. Additionally, problems may occur with students due to insufficient food or rest stops. The best way to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip is through pre-planning.

Most activity trips will take the driver outside the local school district, charter school, or service provider service area. If issues arise, the driver may have a harder time obtaining assistance. Consequently, problems take on a more critical nature. Without proper planning, minor issues can escalate into major problems.

Most school transportation operators drive the same streets and roads every day. One potential challenge arises when a rural driver is asked to operate a vehicle in a different environment, such as in a metropolitan area like Denver or Colorado Springs. The same challenge applies to drivers who may be familiar with city driving but are asked to navigate mountainous terrain. Therefore, route planning is essential.

New Activity Driver Training

As a new activity driver, you will undergo training sessions that contrast local area hazards with those typically found in urban settings. Driving during a trip differs from navigating a standard route. Although the hazards may vary, your awareness, requirements, and defensive driving strategies will largely remain consistent.

Training school transportation vehicle operators before an activity trip is crucial for ensuring the safety and well-being of students. This training helps drivers understand their responsibilities, develop safe driving practices, and learn how to manage potential risks and emergencies. It also equips them with the skills to effectively manage student behavior and address any challenges that may arise during the trip.

Some things that you may encounter during your training:

- Maneuvers that you may encounter in the city (e.g., parallel parking or tight turns).
- Basic map reading, stress-relieving techniques, and emergency procedures.

- Information on traffic signs, multi-lane highway usage, and light rail trains.
- Hours-of-service and how they pertain to you as a driver.
- How to read and fill out your trip sheet/documentation.
- How to fill out a vehicle report form and your mileage sheet.
- Maneuvers for mountain driving (curves, pitch, and grades)
- Driving on mountainous terrain
- Simulated or actual adverse weather driving
- Railroad crossings

Trip Planning

The State of Colorado faces many diverse geographical challenges, ranging from the plains to the mountains, along with rapidly changing weather conditions and wildlife. Therefore, school transportation vehicle operators need to be prepared for anything that might arise. Be sure to consult with your transportation director to confirm that you have all the trip details and to ask questions.

Departure Times and Locations

When the school transportation department schedules a trip, they do their best to estimate the clock-in, departure, arrival, and return times. As a driver, it is especially important that you try to maintain the estimated time schedule. Know the exact location and time you will pick up the students who will be transported on the trip.

Now we know that there are times when you might leave the pick-up location late through no fault of the driver. If you are running late, there should be enough time built into the transport schedule to give you a few minutes of flexibility. DO NOT SPEED!!! If the sponsor is late and tells you to "get us there on time," do your best, but do not violate the law or risk your license because the sponsor was delayed. If you are the driver and the sponsor, and you are running behind, just breathe. It is better to arrive alive and late than not at all.

If this is your first time at the location, you may consider looking online to view where the entrances and exits are to the facility.

Plan Your Route

Technology today can give you excellent directions and maps. Determine the route you plan to take, considering road conditions, tolls (who is expected to

pay for the toll), traffic congestion, weather, hazards, tunnels, etc. Have an alternate route in mind, just in case you need to use it.

Additional Stops

Determine with the trip advisor or sponsor if there will be any additional stops for food and restroom use on your way to the event or your return trip. Follow your school district, charter school, or service provider policy when permitting students to eat in school transportation vehicles. Some suggestions are not to permit canned beverages or soda fountain beverages that do not have sealable lids. Ensure your passengers know where the trash container is and request that they use it. For your comfort and the comfort of your passengers, it is suggested that there should be no more than 90 minutes between stops.

Drop-off and Pick-up Locations at the Event

Before you arrive, ask the trip advisor/sponsor where they would like to unload students and the exact location and approximate time you need to be there to load students. These times are often not set in stone, as an athletic event may take longer than expected because it went into overtime. Make sure you are there on time and waiting for your students with a vehicle that has already had a pre-trip inspection and the heat/air conditioning is already on. Do not make them wait for you!

Where Will You Park?

Finding adequate parking can be a nightmare, depending on the size of the vehicle you are driving. Will there be a charge for parking? Will the location support your vehicle's weight? Is there easy access in and out of the parking spot? Could you get pinned in? Can you properly secure the vehicle? Some events will have a designated area for school transportation parking.

What is Expected of the Driver?

Is the driver expected to stay at the destination? Be available if threatening weather is a possibility. Is the driver welcome to accompany the group? Make sure you give the trip advisor/sponsor your phone number or a means to contact you in the event of an emergency prior to leaving the destination site. Agree on the exact time the driver should return to depart. Refer to your school district, charter school, or service provider policy regarding the expectations of the driver and vehicle once you arrive at your activity destination.

Returning to the School District, Charter School, or Service Provider

Do not leave until all passengers are onboard! Make sure that there is a student count completed and all students are onboard the vehicle before departing.

Once you return to the school district, charter school, or service provider, and the students are unloading, be polite and ask them to clean up as much trash as possible. Ensure that all students have exited the vehicle and that they haven't left any personal belongings inside. Adhere to your district or charter, or service provider policies regarding fueling, paperwork, and, of course, the cleanliness of the vehicle.

One of the most common complaints from operators is that when they were preparing for an activity trip, they arrived to find that the previous driver had left the vehicle in an unsatisfactory condition. There was trash on the floor, empty drink bottles and cans, and food spilled on the seats and floor, while they had to depart in just a few minutes. Put yourself in their position; is that how you would want to find a vehicle that you were planning to use? Even if your school district, charter school, or service provider does not require you to clean the vehicle, please be courteous and pick up as much as possible.

Chaperone or Sponsor Responsibilities

If you are transporting students and have a sponsor, co-sponsor, or chaperone onboard, they are responsible for maintaining order on the vehicle and accounting for students. As the driver, your first responsibility is to maintain safety and control of the vehicle.

Oftentimes, students who are not familiar with ridership rules may be excited and have outrageous behavior due to the nature of the trip. Review the school district, charter school, or service provider procedures regarding student management during special trips. A student roster is highly suggested.

Sponsors should assist with the following items.

- Keeping the vehicle clean
- When the destination has been reached, make certain all passengers know which vehicle and at what time they are to board for the return trip.
- Check that no passenger boards the vehicle at any time unless authorized by you or a sponsor. Only authorized passengers can ride in a school transportation vehicle.

Make sure your chaperone/sponsor knows what their responsibilities are. Double-check your school district, charter school, or service provider policy, but the policy may include the following.

Communicating

- Trip plans
- Special student needs
- Providing passenger information and requests
- Assisting in maintaining passenger control

Supervising

- Rest stops
- Food stops
- Field trip activity
    - Assembly of students and headcounts
    - Passenger instructions

Behavior Problems and Concerns

Concerns may arise while on a field trip due to the nature and length of the trip. Unless adequate plans are made and precautions are taken, passenger behavior problems will arise. The following conditions should be identified:

Fatigue

Trip organizers and drivers should plan enough rest and comfort stops to avoid fatigue-related problems. It is recommended that there be approximately 90 minutes between stops.

Excitability

Trip organizers and drivers should recognize that passengers may get excited due to the nature of the trip. An opportunity should be provided for students to vent some of this excitement before an effort is made to restrain them. The group leaders or chaperones should manage problems arising from this situation.

Discomfort

The driver should be alert for conditions that may lead to a student's discomfort. The temperature of the bus should be closely monitored, and sufficient fresh air should be provided to the passengers.

Rules and Guidelines

Trip organizers and drivers should discuss guidelines to be followed during the trip. Some school districts, charters, or service providers provide written guidelines to trip organizers for review before booking trips. The group leader or chaperone should discuss these guidelines with passengers before the trip begins.

Driving into a crowded city or an unfamiliar area can be a daunting experience for a small-town or rural school bus driver. However, it doesn't have to be. Rural districts, charter schools, or service providers can assist their employees in overcoming this anxiety with three simple strategies.

- The first helpful activity is to have a driver lesson plan that addresses the topic of a trip to an unfamiliar, busy city.
- The second is to have resources available for the actual trip.
- The third is to set up a process to gather feedback from drivers who make these trips, building resources and helpful tips for future reference.

When the trip is completed, fill out a district/charter or service provider activity/field trip report, or the documentation required by district/charter or service provider procedures. Items may include mileage, a student list, the actual number of passengers, time of departure and return, and any problems encountered, which can be included on the form.

Resources for the Trip

It is always important to check all available resources before going on an activity trip.

- Call ahead to the destination and ask about parking options for larger vehicles.
- Plan multiple routes in case of unexpected detours or inclement weather delays.
- Obtain information regarding road closures.
- Create an “Over-the-Road” packet. This should include the Emergency Services List from CDE.
- Per school district, charter school, or service provider procedures during the winter months, carry a bag of salt or sand to help provide traction in an emergency.

- Per school district, charter school, or service provider procedures, consider having extra tools, hoses, belts, bolts, flashlights, etc., which could be used in case of a minor breakdown.
- Review the school district, charter school, or service provider procedures regarding securing the school transportation vehicle when unattended.
- Use stress-relieving techniques and take unscheduled rest breaks if needed. For instance, stop and secure the bus, get out, and walk around outside. The back is particularly vulnerable to injury when driving or working around school buses. A few factors include sitting for lengthy periods of time, the vibration of the vehicle, having to lean over seats to put up windows, and lifting and pushing heavy objects such as wheelchairs. All of these contribute to the driver's susceptibility to back injuries. A little care can go a long way toward keeping drivers on the job and out of pain.
- While driving, sit up straight in the seat with your back and legs at a 90-degree angle. There should be a slight gap between the top, the front portion of the seat bottom, and the back of the leg. Change position or shift weight every 15 to 20 minutes. Lean forward to operate the door mechanism. Practicing these posture habits will help keep your back healthy and happy.
- Build a library of additional resources that you can use.

Storage of Large and Oversized Equipment

The equipment must be stored or secured to reduce the danger to a minimum in case of an emergency stop or a crash. The driver must make a reasonable and prudent determination that all carry-on items are properly managed to minimize the danger to all others.

Store band instruments and other sizable items in the storage compartment under the bus, if so equipped. If there is no under-storage area, make sure the items are stored and secured away from the front and rear doors, are not stacked above seat back height, and are out of the aisle.

Other options may include an equipment truck, a cargo van, or a second bus as an equipment bus.

1 CCR 301-26, 17.0 Transportation of Miscellaneous Items

17.1 A school transportation vehicle operator shall ensure that all carry-on items are properly handled to minimize the danger to all others.

17.2 All baggage, articles, equipment, or medical supplies (except those held by individual passengers) shall be secured in a manner that assures unrestricted access to all exits by occupants, does not restrict the driver's ability to operate the bus and/or protects all occupants against injury resulting from falling or displacement of any baggage, article, or equipment. Oxygen cylinders that are medically necessary meet this standard if they are securely attached to a wheelchair, or otherwise secured in the vehicle and do not impede access to any exit. School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall use reasonable care in determining the number of cylinders that may be safely transported at one time.

17.3 All chemicals and cleaning supplies carried on a school transportation vehicle must meet the following precautions:

17.03(a) Container is non-breakable;

17.03(b) Container is labeled with contents;

17.03(c) Pressurized aerosols are prohibited;

17.03(d) Container is secured in a bracket, or in a closed compartment in the driver's area or a compartment on the exterior of the bus; and

17.03(e) Containers and quantities of products are no more than 32 ounces in size.

17.4 Interior decorations shall not be located within the driver's area (including the space in front of the front barriers, the step-well, dash, walls and ceiling, the windshield, the entry door, the driver's side window, and all windows in front of the front barrier), the first two passenger windows on both sides of the vehicle or all windows on the rear of the vehicle. Other decorations within the passenger compartment shall not:

17.04(a) Cover any required lettering;

17.04(b) Impede the aisle or any emergency exit;

17.04(c) Hang from the walls and/or ceiling.

17.5 Per the effective date of these rules, school transportation vehicles owned or leased by the district, charter school, and service provider that are used for student transportation shall not have the windows obstructed in any way by advertising, decorations, or vehicle wraps.

17.05(a) Exception: Tint applied by the vehicle manufacturer to industry standards.

17.05(b) Exception: Route identification is permitted per 1CC 301-26, rule 17.04 of these rules.

1 CCR 301-26, 18.0 Maximum Driving Time for School Transportation Vehicle Operators

18.1 School transportation vehicle operators, including small-capacity vehicle operators, shall not drive (nor shall the school districts, charter schools, or service providers permit or require operators to drive):

18.01(a) In excess of 10 hours or after being on-duty 14 hours until completing 10 hours off-duty. This would include on-duty time for all employers. Ten hours off-duty may be consecutive or accumulated in two or more periods of off-duty time, with one period having a minimum of six consecutive hours off-duty.

18.01(b) After being on-duty for more than 70 hours in any seven consecutive days.

18.01(c) In case of emergency, an operator may complete the trip without being in violation if such a trip reasonably could have been completed absent the emergency.

18.2 In lieu of section 18.00 of these rules, a school district, charter school, or service provider may comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R. 395.

18.3 Definitions:

18.03(a) Day - Means any 24-consecutive hour period beginning at the time designated by the school district, charter school, or service provider.

18.03(b) On-duty time - Includes all time worked for all employers, including all driving and non-driving duties.

18.03(c) Off-duty time - School transportation vehicle operators may consider waiting time (whether compensated time or not) at special events, meal stops, and school-related events as off-duty if the following criteria are met:

18.03(c)(1) The operator shall be relieved of all duty and responsibility for the care and custody of the vehicle, its accessories, and students, and

18.03(c)(2) The operator shall be at liberty to pursue activities of his/her choice, including leaving the premises on which the bus is located.

18.4 All school transportation vehicle operators shall document that they are in compliance with this section, hours of service.

18.04(a) An operator's daily log, or equivalent, shall be completed for the trip in the operator's own handwriting when the trip requires a scheduled or unscheduled overnight stay away from the work reporting location.

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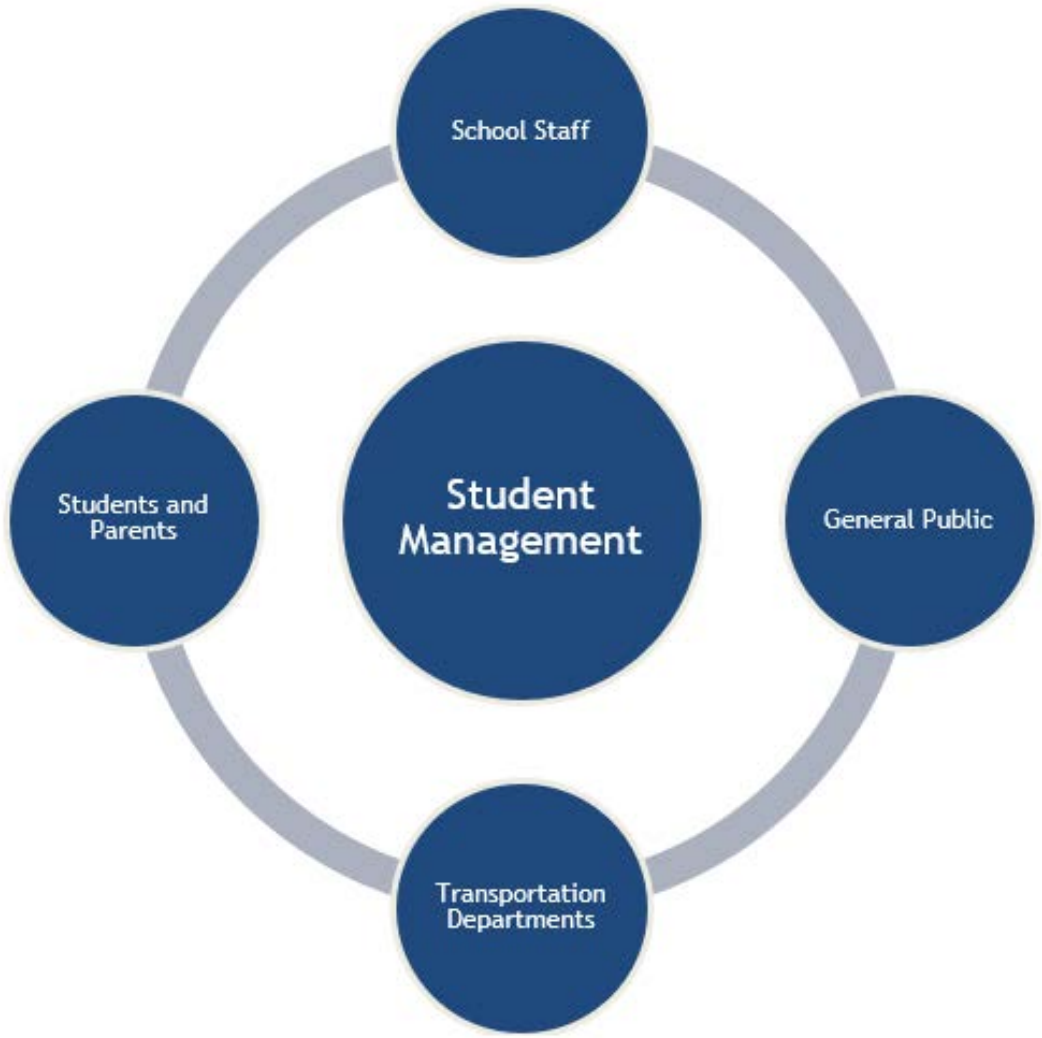
Unit Nine – Student Management

For the school bus driver to operate the bus safely, the students and passengers must behave in a controlled manner. The school bus must be viewed as an extension of the classroom. The driver's management of students will involve a wide range of child psychology, adolescent behavior patterns, and student management techniques. Unlike teachers, whose classroom environment is more defined and contains only one specific age group, school bus drivers will interact closely with various age groups, including elementary, middle/junior high, and senior high. Student management will include the following interdependent segments.

Each segment should communicate the needs and problems to find viable solutions for all involved.



The Roles

School Staff

Schools should include instruction programs to enhance student safety at bus stops and on vehicles. When disagreements or conflicts arise, school staff can intervene to mediate the situation and help find a solution. Staff members can communicate with drivers of school transportation vehicles, school administrators, and other professionals to ensure a coordinated approach to student management.

All school staff should be familiar with school district/charter or service provider policies on student discipline, rules and regulations for student behavior, misconduct procedures, and special trip sponsor procedures.

1 CCR 301-26, 4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.6 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that documentation outlining transportation-related services and requirements, including required use of Child Safety Restraint Systems and medical and behavioral information as it relates to student transportation, is available to applicable school transportation vehicle operators and paraprofessionals prior to providing transportation services.

4.06(a) Any paraprofessional assigned to support IDEA-eligible students must be appropriately and adequately prepared and trained to implement relevant provisions of a student's individualized education program, which may include behavioral intervention, Personalized Learning Systems (PLS), or individualized health care plans pursuant to 34 C.F.R., 300.156.

General Public

The public is required to adhere to the Colorado State Statutes, which aim to ensure the safety of school-age children as both pedestrians and users of Colorado's transportation systems.

The schools and the transportation department should establish a public information program. The goal of communicating with parents and the public

is to clarify district/charter or service provider policies and procedures regarding safe student transportation.

Transportation Department

Supervisor or Director of Transportation

The supervisor or director should create opportunities for cooperative problem-solving that encompass all levels of school district/charter or service provider staff, parents, and students. Rules for students and school bus drivers must be established and enforced consistently. Awareness of new techniques, equipment, child psychology, and children's behavioral patterns is essential. A training program, including both pre-service and in-service components, should be developed, implemented, and continually reviewed.

School Transportation Vehicle Operator

The school day for transported students starts and ends with the school vehicle. As the driver, it is essential to show self-control and professionalism while having a plan to encourage proper behavior. Consistency is key to achieving success. The school vehicle driver holds responsibility for all passengers' health, safety, and welfare. Any inappropriate behavior from students will necessitate a collaborative response from the driver, transportation department, and school administrators. Drivers should prioritize the safety of the students above all else. No student should hinder the operator's ability to drive safely, and it is crucial to ensure that all passengers enjoy a safe and pleasant journey.

Discipline on school transportation vehicles is probably the biggest problem confronting school transportation vehicle drivers today. The attitude of the driver should be consistent using the following:

- Firm - Be prepared to follow through. Avoid giving a directive that you cannot enforce.
- Fair - Be consistent in disciplining students.
- Friendly - Be approachable to the students while keeping in mind that you, the driver, are in charge.

Understanding the principles of child psychology can help prevent problems before they arise. Ignoring the conduct violations of one student may lead to a loss of respect from the other students.

Be careful to find a happy medium between being too lenient and too strict. Both extremes can negatively impact the morale of the school bus riders. Loud talking on the bus poses a challenge that requires considerable patience, but complete silence creates an unhealthy atmosphere. Issuing a directive alone does not complete the teaching process; a directive must be patiently and consistently repeated.

Understand that each driver works within an educational system dedicated to training the minds of students. Too often, students are expected to be finished products with adult attitudes, but this simply isn't the case. Aim to foster morale and cooperation with the students riding in your vehicle. Over time, improving student morale will greatly assist in managing the most disruptive students. When students realize that improper conduct is unacceptable, offenders will think twice before engaging in behaviors that cause them to lose prestige among their peers.

When speaking to an offender, use a friendly tone but maintain a firm voice. There should be no anger involved. Avoid letting personal problems affect your mood or judgment while interacting with the students. If discipline is necessary, move the student to a seat near the front. Never make a student walk home by putting them off the bus. Highlight the disciplinary action that will be taken and clarify that if the behavior is not corrected to an acceptable level, the student may lose their privilege of riding the bus.

It seems the undisciplined riders set the pace for the majority.

Think before you act!

Tips on Maintaining Discipline:

- Be firm, fair, and friendly!
    - Have a sense of humor!
    - Have a positive attitude!
    - Be assertive!
- Be sincere in your work.
- Set firm, clear, concise rules.
- Never give a directive that you cannot enforce.
    - Do not give a directive that you do not intend to enforce.
- Do not pick on every little thing.
    - Commend good behavior
- Set a good example.
    - Look for good qualities.

- Be consistent!
- Keep your statements aimed towards the positive – "Do this," "Try this."
    - Avoid the negative, "Don't do that!"
- Offer choices with the possible consequence
- Keep your cool, don't let anger and frustration creep in.
- Know the school district, charter school, or service provider policies for reporting disruptions or disciplinary issues.
- Never strike a student
    - Know the school district, charter school, or service provider policies for physically restraining a student.
- Speak to any troublemakers alone.
- If the students do not listen, stop the vehicle.

Do not become a constant mirror watcher – the safety of your students and the vehicle requires your attention on the road.

Students and Parents

Students of all age groups are obligated by the expressed privilege granted by the Board of Education to ride on a school transportation vehicle and obey and conform to the safety and behavioral rules of the school district, charter school, or service provider.

The parents of the students are obligated to instruct their children to cooperate with the school bus driver in accordance with the safety and behavioral rules of the school district, charter school, or service provider.

The key to ensuring a safe, well-regulated vehicle is for students to create an atmosphere that enables the driver to focus on safe driving. The school transportation vehicle driver maintains a standard of uniformity when enforcing the rules set by the school district, charter school, or service provider. While school district, charter school, or service provider rules may vary, they should align with state regulations. The set of rules should be concise and limited to 10 rules.

Students should follow directions the first time they are given. The rules should be posted at the front of the bus. A copy of the rules should also be sent to each student and parent/guardian, including a form to be returned with both signatures indicating that the rules were read and understood.

Sample School Transportation Vehicle Rules

- Students are required to follow the driver's instructions.
- Students should arrive at the stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled stop time.
- Before crossing to go home, establish eye contact with the driver.
    - Cross 10 feet in front of the bus
    - When the signal is given, stop again at the corner of the bus and look both ways.
    - Look back up at the driver and cross after the signal has been given, and it is safe to do so.
- Stay seated, facing the front, while the vehicle is in motion.
- Students shall not open or close windows without permission from the driver.
- Students shall not throw anything outside of the vehicle windows.
- Keep heads, arms, and hands inside the bus.
- Keep hands and feet, and belongings to yourself.
- Use of drugs and/or alcohol, exiting the rear door, inflicting bodily harm, vandalism, and littering are strictly prohibited.
- Use your quiet, classroom voice.
- Students must be quiet at all railroad crossings.

Reporting Unacceptable Behavior

Each district/charter and service provider should have a policy and procedure for reporting unacceptable behavior. Student behavior that is inconsistent with desired safe behavior is reported as either major or minor incidents. Student misconduct forms are filled out by the driver and returned to the transportation supervisor or designee for initial screening. The driver should report behavior only after attempting to solve the problem within his/her own capabilities. The transportation supervisor or designee determines whether the reported misbehavior will be identified as minor or major.

Student Due Process

Student due process refers to the fair procedures and rights students have when facing disciplinary actions, ensuring a just and equitable process. It's a legal concept that guarantees students the right to be treated fairly by school officials.

- Have a set process or procedure
- Make sure all processes or procedures are written down.

- Make sure all drivers, students, and parents are familiar with the process or procedure.

Consequences

Any course of action or consequences in student management must be uniform but flexible enough to fit the conditions and circumstances of the violation and the individual(s) involved. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- A student was warned by the driver (driver-to-student conference)
- Assigned seat
- Parents notified (per district/charter or service provider policy)
- Assignment of students to "remedial tasks" at school or on the bus. Follow the district/charter or service provider policy or procedure.
- Principal, parent, student, driver conference.
- Withdrawal of transportation services.

Good behavior should be rewarded. Do something that the students enjoy and that is age-appropriate.

Rewards may include:

- Verbal praise
- Note to parents: We always send notes home for bad behavior. Wouldn't it be nice to send one of the praises?
- First in line or first off the bus
- Special seat (window, next to a friend)
- Awards (e.g., smiley face stickers, color sheets, certificates, etc.)

Always follow your school district, charter school, or service provider procedures when disciplining or rewarding students.

Bullying

Bullying is an act of repeated aggressive behavior to hurt another person, physically or mentally, intentionally. It comprises repeated acts over time that involve a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful individual or group abusing those who are less powerful. The power imbalance may be social power and/or physical power. The victim of bullying is sometimes referred to as a target. Bullying is characterized by an individual

behaving in a certain way to gain power over another person. Bullying may be emotional, physical, or verbal.

Refer to your school district, charter school, or service provider's Safe School Plan for information on bullying.

Types of Bullying

There are three types of bullying:

Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:

- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Taunting
- Threatening to cause harm

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:

- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public
- Can include cyberbullying

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching
- Spitting
- Tripping/pushing
- Taking or breaking someone's things
- Making mean or rude hand gestures

Harassment

Harassment Definition

HARASSMENT occurs when speech or actions are severe, widespread, or aimed at specific individuals, which disrupts a student's educational opportunities,

severely affects their well-being, significantly infringes on their rights, or intimidates them due to their identity.

It's widely recognized by both children and adults that the school bus is among the top places where bullying occurs. Bullies typically select areas with minimal adult supervision to target their peers. With no teachers or parents to oversee their conduct, and the bus driver often constrained in their ability to enforce school rules (especially while driving), the bus can turn into a breeding ground for bullying and other negative behaviors.

Likewise, children are limited in their ability to escape bullying on the bus, meaning the bully has their target right where they want them. As a result, many bullies choose the bus as the primary location to torment their victims.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment Definition

“Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other sex-based verbal or physical conduct where (1) submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of the individual’s education; or (2) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual’s education by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.” (Letter of finding by Dr. Battles, West Hartford Board of Education, June 8, 1993).

The school bus is a unique environment in which verbal abuse and harassment can easily take place. A student being harassed has no place to escape unwelcome behavior. It is essential for the school transportation vehicle operator and paraprofessional to be aware of such behavior and take appropriate action. Any form of harassment described below is impermissible, and by law, the school district/charter or service provider must take action to stop it. No student should be subjected to behaviors that are intimidating, offensive, or threatening. Such behaviors may be identified as harassment based on:

- Gender
- Ethnic background
- National origin
- Race
- Disability

Review the District/Charter and Service Provider Policy Regarding Sexual Harassment. Remember that both boys and girls can be victims of sexual harassment. When students encounter inappropriate sexual behavior, assume it is unwelcome, even if the student does not show it. Keep in mind that even if the student being harassed appears unaffected or acts as though they are not, other students on the bus may be suffering from the inappropriate behavior. Students can feel uncomfortable and may dread getting on the bus.

The following procedures outline how to address any form of harassment.

Step 1: Identify the Harassment

Some examples of verbal and physical harassment or sexual harassment are:

- Conveying rumors or making suggestive comments about a student's sexual activity or orientation.
- Calling students names of a sexual nature.
- Obscene gestures (e.g., male students grabbing their own genitals)
- Use of sexually explicit language
- Sexual molestation
- Creating graffiti that uses explicit language or sexual language to describe and degrade another student.
- Unwelcome touching, pinching, hitting, hair pulling, or restraining of other students.
- Threatening unwanted sexual activity
- "Sexting" or taking and sending pictures of an indecent nature is also a form of sexual harassment and can be prosecuted as child pornography. Sexting refers to the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photographs, primarily via mobile phones. The term gained popularity around 2005 and combines the words sex and texting.
- Offering students money to perform sexual acts and other sexual propositions nature.

Step 2: Take Action

When sexual harassment has been identified, it is necessary to accurately document what happened and immediately report the incident(s) to the appropriate district/charter or service provider administrator. An investigation by the district/charter or service provider administrator should follow a report of sexual harassment.

The following is a list of what should be reported:

- Age of victim(s)
- Details of conduct that were observed or were told
- How long has the conduct been going on, according to the information they have?
- How long did an incident last?
- Whether the victim is subjected to the same activity repeatedly or if the offender varies their approach.
- Whether or not others joined in the harassing conduct.
- Whether the conduct is directed at one student or more than one.
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of everyone who has spoken with you about the misconduct.
- Any information that will facilitate a thorough investigation and fair assessment of what happened and any actions that need to be undertaken.

Step 3: Follow Up

- Continue monitoring the situation.
- Report to the appropriate administrators if efforts to end the harassment are not working. Remember, the bottom line is that the harassment must be stopped.
- It is not easy to get students to listen to and obey the bus rules. What works for one school, age group, or student may not work for another. They are all different and should be treated on an individual basis.

Taking Control of Your Vehicle

Your attitude will demonstrate to the students that you are serious and in charge. If you allow them to believe they have outsmarted you, you have lost authority. When students are able to provoke you, it indicates a significant safety concern.

Convey the rules at the beginning of the year or the first opportunity. Let the students know what the expectations are for behavior on the bus. Always follow through with the consequences that have been presented. Always approach the students with the behavior that is expected. Do not approach the behavior that is not wanted. Using a positive approach is far more successful than a negative approach.

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Unit Ten – First Aid Information

First aid is the immediate and temporary care given to the victim of an accident or sudden illness until medical service can be obtained.

At some point, all drivers will find a need to administer first aid. The objective of first aid is to save lives and prevent further injury. Therefore, knowing and understanding the principles of basic first aid is necessary.

Drivers must understand what **not to do** as well as what **to do**.

This unit is designed to provide information on the fundamentals of first aid. Bus drivers should not administer any first aid beyond that in which they have been trained.

The most noticeable indicators of an emergency are abnormal sights, odors, noises, and personal appearances or behaviors. An emergency or serious illness may be difficult to recognize. When assessing if there is an emergency, often those who are injured the most will be the quietest. If you have any reason to suspect that something may be wrong, check the injured or ill person.

Common sense and a few simple rules are the keys to effective first aid. Some of the important ideas to remember when rendering first aid are:

- First aid is not a substitute for medical care. Call your school district, charter school, or service director point of contact and/or the emergency services number (911) as soon as you identify a need for first aid care.
- First aid procedures apply only to the immediate, temporary need for care.
- Only accepted first aid procedures should be used in all cases.
- Remain calm!
    - Children will react to your anxiety, which can make the situation worse.
    - Reassure the victim that you can help.
- Ask a conscious victim if you can assist them.
- Use common sense and a reasonable level of skill.
    - Do not exceed your scope of practice and training!!

Injuries to victims vary in severity. The individual in control must make sound decisions about which victims need care first.

C.R.S. 13-21-108 – Persons Rendering Emergency Assistance Exempt From Liability – Good Samaritan Law

(1) Any person licensed as a physician and surgeon under the laws of the state of Colorado, or any other person, who in good faith renders emergency care or emergency assistance to a person not presently his patient without compensation at the place of an emergency or accident, including a health care institution as defined in section 13- 64-202 (3), shall not be liable for any civil damages for acts or omissions made in good faith as a result of the rendering of such emergency care or emergency assistance during the emergency, unless the acts or omissions were grossly negligent or willful and wanton. This section shall not apply to any person who renders such emergency care or emergency assistance to a patient he is otherwise obligated to cover.

(2) Any person while acting as a volunteer member of a rescue unit, as defined in section 25-3.5-103 (11), C.R.S., notwithstanding the fact that such organization may recover actual costs incurred in the rendering of emergency care or assistance without compensation at the place of an emergency or accident shall not be liable for any civil damages for acts or omissions in good faith.

(3) Any person, including a licensed physician, surgeon, or other medical personnel while acting as a volunteer member of a ski patrol or ski area rescue unit, notwithstanding the fact that such person may receive free skiing privileges or other benefits as the result of his volunteer status, who in good faith renders emergency care or assistance without other compensation at the place of an emergency or accident shall not be liable for any civil damages for acts or omissions in good faith.

Your First Aid Kit

Drivers need to know the location of the first aid kit and its contents. Before departing on any trip, ensure you have found your kit's location and inspected it to confirm it contains the necessary items. Then, if an emergency arises, they will not waste valuable time searching for the first aid kit or items they know are not included in it.

Everyone should, unless they have been disabled, in the case of an emergency, use the first aid kit and administer first aid whenever it is apparent that death or severe and/or permanent injury to others may follow.

No medication, however, should be administered without a physician's directive.

Bloodborne Pathogen Protection

Many people fear acting in an emergency. They may be worried about contracting a disease from the injured person. Individuals providing first aid need to follow some basic steps to protect themselves from bloodborne pathogens (infectious diseases, bacteria, or viruses) found in the body fluids of others. Your employer is required to give you more detailed training in bloodborne pathogen procedures.

You must use universal precautions if a fluid is wet, warm, and NOT yours.

Following basic guidelines can help reduce disease transmission when providing first aid:

Have a first aid kit in the vehicle and stocked with protective equipment and supplies such as disposable gloves and biohazard bags.

Before providing care, use protective barriers such as a face mask, eye protection, non-latex disposable gloves, or a clean, dry cloth between the victim's body fluids and yourself.

- Cover any cuts, sores, scrapes, and skin conditions you may have.
- Avoid contact with blood or body fluids when possible.
- Do not eat, drink, or touch your mouth, nose, or eyes when giving first aid.
- Do not touch objects that may be soiled with blood or body fluids.
- Dispose of any materials contaminated with blood or body fluids as directed by your school district, charter school, or service providers' bloodborne pathogen policy.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after you give first aid, even if you wear disposable gloves.
- Be prepared by having protective equipment.

For more detailed information regarding first aid procedures, contact your school district or charter school nurse or visit the CDE School Nursing and Health website located at: https://www.cde.state.co.us/shs/snh_home.

Notice that the rule requires small-capacity vehicle activity operators to receive only first aid information.

1 CCR 301-26, 5.0 School Transportation Vehicle Operations Requirements

5.2 ***School transportation vehicle route operators (transporting students to and from school or from school to school) driving vehicles with a capacity of 15 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), including Type A Multifunction Bus and Small-Capacity Vehicles, shall meet or exceed the following requirements:***

5.02(j) ***The operator shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions, within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the operator holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate, it will meet the requirements of this section. Operators shall receive first aid training and/or recertification training every two years thereafter.***

5.3 ***School transportation vehicle operators, other than route operators, driving vehicles with a capacity of 15 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), including Type A Multifunction Bus and Small-Capacity Vehicle, shall meet or exceed the following requirements:***

5.03(h) ***The operator shall be given and/or have access to first aid information, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions.***

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Addendum

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COLORADO
Department of Education
School Finance and Operations Division

Certification of Receipt and Understanding

I, _____ (Please Print) certify that I have been given and/or have access to the Colorado Department of Education Type A, Multifunction and Small Vehicle Route/Activity Operator Guide 2025.

I hereby certify that I have read and understand the Colorado Rules for the Operation, Maintenance and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles 1 CCR 301- 26.

I understand that I am responsible, pursuant to these rules, to operate a school transportation vehicle within the Rules set forth in 1 CCR 301-26 and the laws of the State of Colorado as applicable to my job responsibilities.

I understand that I am required to receive training and provide all the documentation required per the School Transportation Vehicle Operator Requirements indicated in 1 CCR 301-26, 4204-R-5.00 that are applicable to my job responsibilities.

Driver Signature _____ Date _____

School District/Charter School/Service Provider _____

Trainer(s) Name _____ Date _____

Trainer(s) Signature _____

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Driver Matrix

COLORADO
Department of Education
School Finance and Operations Division

	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned 16 or more passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned Type A Small Capacity 15 or less passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Multifunction 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Multifunction 16 or more passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Type A Multifunction 15 or less passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District/Charter/ Third-Party Owned Less than 12 Passengers GVWR less than 26,0012 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Motorcoach 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.
Required Background Check	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Required License	CDL	CDL	Valid Operator	CDL	CDL	Valid Operator	Valid Operator	CDL
Required CDL Class	B	C	N/A	B	C	N/A	N/A	B
Required CDL Endorsements and Restrictions	"P" Passenger "S" School Bus "M" Restriction	"P" Passenger "S" School Bus "M" Restriction	N/A	"P" Passenger "S" School Bus "M" Restriction	"P" Passenger "S" School Bus "M" Restriction	N/A	N/A	"P" Passenger "S" School Bus "M" Restriction
Require MVR Pre-Employment and Annually	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-Employment D & A Testing	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes
FMCSA D & A Clearinghouse	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes
Required D & A Substance Abuse Training	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes
Required FMCSA D & A Random Testing	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes
Required Medical Form	USDOT Physical	USDOT Physical	STU-17	USDOT Physical	USDOT Physical	STU-17	STU-17	USDOT Physical

	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned 16 or more passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned Type A Small Capacity 15 or less passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Multifunction 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Multifunction 16 or more passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Type A Multifunction 15 or less passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District/Charter/ Third-Party Owned Less than 12 Passengers GVWR less than 26,0012 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Motorcoach 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.
Required Performance Evaluation & Pre-Trip	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually	Yes, Prior to Transporting Students & Annually
Required Signed Job Description	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Required CDE Annual Written Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach Test	Yes, Type A/MF/Small Capacity/Route/ Activity Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach Test	Yes, Type A/MF/Small Capacity/Route/ Activity Test	Yes, Type A/MF/Small Capacity/Route/ Activity Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach Test
Required CDE Guide Certificate of Receipt	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach	Yes, Type A/MF/Small Capacity/Route/ Activity Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach	Yes, Type A/MF/Small Capacity/Route/ Activity Tes	Yes, Type A/MF/Small Capacity/Route/ Activity Test	Yes, School Bus/ MF/Motorcoach
Required Confidentiality Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Required Mountain & Adverse Weather Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Required Mandatory Reporting Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned 16 or more passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ROUTE District Charter Third-Party Owned Type A Small Capacity 15 or less passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Multifunction 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Multifunction 16 or more passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Type A Multifunction 15 or less passenger GVWR less than 26,001 lbs.	ACTIVITY District/Charter/ Third-Party Owned Less than 12 Passengers GVWR less than 26,0012 lbs.	ACTIVITY District Charter Third-Party Owned Motorcoach 16 or more passenger GVWR greater than 26,001 lbs.
Required First Aid/CPR/Universal Precautions Training	Yes, Every Two Years	Yes, Every Two Years	Yes, Every Two Years	Yes, Every Two Years	Yes, Every Two Years	Yes, Must be given Information	Yes, Must be given Information	Yes, Every Two Years
Required Annual Six Hour In-Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	District/Charter/ Contractor Policy	Yes
Required Pre-service Training Documentation prior to 2/7/2022	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Required Pre-service Training Documentation after 2/7/2022	ELDT Syllabi ELDT BTW Certificate ELDT Theory Certificate	ELDT Syllabi ELDT BTW Certificate ELDT Theory Certificate	Yes	ELDT Syllabi ELDT BTW Certificate ELDT Theory Certificate	ELDT Syllabi ELDT BTW Certificate ELDT Theory Certificate	Yes	Yes	ELDT Syllabi ELDT BTW Certificate ELDT Theory Certificate
Proper Use and Maintenance of CSRS Training	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable
Proper Wheelchair Securement Training	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable
Required Special Needs Training per 1 CCR 301-26, 5.6	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable	If applicable

COLORADO
Department of Education
School Finance and Operations Division

Colorado Rules for the Operation, Maintenance, and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles – Eff. May 15, 2025

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Colorado State Board of Education

COLORADO RULES FOR THE OPERATION, MAINTENANCE, AND INSPECTION OF SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES

1 CCR 301-26

1.0 Statement of Basis and Purpose

1.1 Colorado law provides for the State Board of Education to adopt and enforce regulations governing the safe operation of school buses and school transportation vehicles used for the transportation of students pursuant to C.R.S. 22-51-108 and 42-4-1904.

1.2 The purpose of these rules is to adopt and enforce regulations governing the reasonable and adequate standards of safety for the operation, maintenance, and inspection of school transportation vehicles that promote the welfare of the students and afford reasonable protection to the public. These rules are designed to align with federal laws and standards, state laws and standards, reflect current industry practices, and incorporate recommendations from school districts, charter schools, and service provider transportation professionals.

1.3 The Commissioner, or designee, may provide an exemption to the Rules for the Operation, Maintenance, and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles to the extent the Commissioner finds an exemption to be appropriate.

2.0 Applicability of Rules

2.1 These rules and regulations apply to the operation, maintenance, and inspection of all public-school transportation conducted by:

2.01(a) A school district, charter school, or service provider for routes (home to school, school to school, and school to home); and

2.01(b) A school district, charter school, or service provider for activity trips (school-related events).

2.01(c) As used in these Rules, "service provider" means a company or individual that exclusively transports students from home to school, school to school, and school-related events that is hired by a school district or charter school.

2.2 These rules are intended to include:

2.02(a) Private motor vehicles used exclusively to carry members of the owner's household.

2.02(b) Transportation arrangements not authorized by the school district, charter school, or service provider, including but not limited to sharing of actual gasoline expense or participation in a car-pool;

2.02(c) The operations of vehicles in bona fide emergencies consistent with policies of the local board of education;

2.02(d) Transportation conducted by an individual for activity trips (school-related events), including parent volunteers and coaches or teachers using a private motor vehicle; or

2.02(e) Transportation provided by a company or individual as part of their operation as a common carrier (RTD, taxi, limousine, etc.) or transportation network company operating pursuant to C.R.S. 40-10.1-602, under the jurisdiction of the US Department of Transportation or the Public Utilities Commission; except that such service providers (other than public transit) that are contracted to provide route transportation carrying 12 or more students per route shall comply with these Rules without regard to the operator's status as a common carrier.

2.3 These rules shall not preclude a school district, charter school, or service provider from establishing a more rigid standard or policy when deemed

necessary by the local board of education or service provider.

3.0 Non-Compliance

3.1 CDE will perform periodic School Transportation Advisory Reviews (STAR) of school districts, charter schools, and service providers to evaluate and assist with compliance with these rules.

3.01(a) CDE will provide school districts, charter schools, and service providers with written notification of the STAR findings.

3.01(b) Upon receipt of the written notification of STAR findings, school districts, charter schools, and service providers shall respond in writing to outline corrective actions if necessary.

3.2 CDE shall revoke or suspend the certificate for a school transportation annual inspector, school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, CDE ELDT hands-on trainer, or inspection site under the following circumstances:

3.02(a) A school transportation annual inspector, school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, CDE ELDT hands-on trainer, or inspection site does not meet the requirements outlined in these rules: or

3.02(b) School transportation annual inspections, school transportation entry-level driver instruction, or hands-on training and tests have not been properly conducted.

4.0 School District, Charter School, and Service Provider Responsibilities

4.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall outline job responsibilities and develop job qualification standards for each school transportation vehicle operator and school transportation paraprofessional, annual inspector, and school transportation entry-level driver instructor, consistent with federal and state regulations. A copy of these requirements shall be provided to each school transportation vehicle operator, annual inspector, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, and paraprofessional upon employment. A signed copy shall also be maintained in the applicable qualification file.

4.2 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain separate files for each school transportation vehicle operator, school transportation paraprofessional, school transportation entry-level driver instructor, and school transportation annual inspector with written documentation evidencing all listed requirements indicated in Rule 5.00, Rule 6.00, Rule 7.00, and Rule 8.00, as applicable. Training documentation shall include the trainer's name, date of the training, description of the training, duration of each topic covered, and the signature of all attendees.

4.02(a) If a school transportation vehicle operator, school transportation paraprofessional, or school transportation annual inspector works for more than one school district, charter school, service provider, or operator of an inspection site, each employer shall maintain a file with documentation in accordance with this rule.

4.3 Pursuant to 49 C.F.R., Part 382, school districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that all employees required to possess a commercial driver's license (CDL) are enrolled in the Federal Motor Carrier Administration Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, and in a US DOT-approved drug and alcohol substance abuse testing program. Supervisor Reasonable Suspicion Training is also required**.**

4.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall not permit a school transportation vehicle operator to transport students while the operator's ability or alertness is so impaired, through fatigue, illness, or any other cause, as to make it unsafe for the operator to transport students.

4.5 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have written emergency procedures and/or contingency plans to be followed in the event of a traffic accident, vehicle breakdown, unexpected school closing, unforeseen route change, or relocation of a student stop in an emergency.

4.6 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that documentation outlining transportation-related services and requirements, including required use of Child Safety Restraint Systems and medical and behavioral information as it relates to student transportation, is available to applicable school transportation vehicle

operators and paraprofessionals prior to providing transportation services.

4.06(a) Any paraprofessional assigned to support IDEA-eligible students must be appropriately and adequately prepared and trained to implement relevant provisions of a student's individualized education program, which may include behavioral intervention, Personalized Learning Systems (PLS), or individualized health care plans pursuant to 34 C.F.R., 300.156.

4.7 Pursuant to 49 C.F.R., Part 380, 380.601, effective February 7, 2022, school districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that all entry-level school transportation operators required to possess a commercial driver's license (CDL) receive pre-service training in compliance with the FMCSA theory and behind-the-wheel training curricula via an entity listed on the FMCSA Training Provider Registry (TPR).

4.8 Service providers shall register with the Colorado Department of Education, School Transportation Unit, certifying that only school transportation vehicles meeting or exceeding Colorado Minimum Standards will be leased, rented, or used in contracted service to a school district, or charter school, providing transportation from home to school, school to school, and to school-related events in Colorado. There shall be no fee to register. Service providers are required to renew their registration every five years.

4.9 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall require all transportation directors or other supervisory position(s) responsible for direct oversight of any aspects of transportation personnel, training, record keeping, fleet operations and maintenance, general operations, and policies to attend the CDE New to Transportation Class within the first 12 months of employment.

4.10 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall conduct background checks pursuant to Section 22-32-122(4) C.R.S. or Section 22-32-109.8, whichever is applicable, on all supervisors, trainers, drivers, paraprofessionals, technicians, and dispatchers. Additionally, backgrounds may be checked through driving records, and employment history as applicable.

4.11 School districts, charter schools, and service providers are encouraged to utilize cameras on school transportation vehicles. When cameras are in use, districts, charter schools, and service providers should develop policies and procedures for reviewing, storing, retaining, and requesting access to the recordings.

5.0 School Transportation Vehicle Operations Requirements

5.1 School transportation vehicle operators driving any vehicle with a capacity of 16 or greater passengers (counting the driver) shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

5.01(a) The operator shall possess a valid commercial driver's license (CDL) with the proper class and endorsement for the size and type of vehicle(s) to be driven and the associated Medical Examination Report required pursuant to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R. 391.43.

5.01(b) The operator shall be a minimum of 18 years of age.

5.01(c) School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall obtain a motor vehicle record of each operator prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. Upon review, the reviewer shall initial the motor vehicle record.

5.01(d) The operator shall be given and/or have access to the CDE School Bus/Multifunction Bus/Motor Coach Bus Operator Guide prior to transporting students. A copy of the Certificate of Receipt, signed by the operator, shall be placed in the driver qualification file.

5.01(e) The operator shall receive a minimum of six hours of in-service training annually. A portion of this annual in-service requirement may occur during the school year.

5.01(f) The operator shall successfully pass a CDE School Bus/Multifunction Bus/Motor Coach Bus Operator written test for the current school year prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.

5.01(g) The operator shall successfully pass a driver performance test, including a pre-trip inspection, prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. This test shall be conducted in a vehicle that is similar in type and size to the vehicle the applicant is assigned to operate. School districts, charter schools, and service providers have the option to re-test at their discretion.

5.01(h) The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.

5.01(i) The operator shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions**,** within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the operator holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate**,** it will meet the requirements of this section. Operators shall receive first aid training and/or recertification training every two years thereafter.

5.01(j) The operator shall receive training regarding the proper use of physical restraints and intervention of students, the proper use and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS)**,** and proper wheelchair securement when the operator is engaged in transportation involving these systems and devices, prior to transporting students.

5.01(k) Effective February 7, 2022, entry-level commercial operators shall have a copy of their training certificate(s) and training syllabus from a training provider listed on the FMCSA Training Provider Registry (TPR) placed in their qualification file, indicating that they have passed all required FMCSA pre-service training.

5.2 School transportation vehicle route operators (transporting students to and from school or from school to school) driving vehicles with a capacity of 15 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), including Type

A Multifunction Bus and Small-Capacity Vehicles, shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

5.02(a) The operator shall possess a valid driver's license. A commercial license is not required for this class of vehicle.

5.02(b) The operator shall be a minimum of 18 years of age.

5.02(c) The operator shall annually complete the CDE Vehicle Operator's Medical Information Form (STU-17). Any yes annotations shall require a doctor's release.

5.02(d) School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall obtain a motor vehicle record of each operator prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. Upon review, the reviewer shall initial the motor vehicle record.

5.02(e) The operator shall be given and/or have access to the CDE Type A Multifunction Bus/ Small-Capacity Vehicle Route Driver Guide prior to transporting students. A copy of the Certificate of Receipt, signed by the operator, shall be placed in the driver qualification file.

5.02(f) The operator shall receive a minimum of six hours of in-service training annually. A portion of this annual in-service requirement may occur during the school year.

5.02(g) The operator shall successfully pass a CDE Type A Multifunction Bus/Small-Capacity Vehicle Route Operator written test for the current school year prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.

5.02(h) The operator shall pass a driving performance test, including a pre-trip inspection, prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. This test shall be conducted in a vehicle that is similar in type and size to the vehicle the applicant is assigned to operate. School districts, charter schools, and service providers have the option to re-test at their discretion.

5.02(i) The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter training

pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.

5.02(j) The operator shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions**,** within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the operator holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate**,** it will meet the requirements of this section. Operators shall receive first aid training and/or recertification training every two years thereafter.

5.02(k) The operator shall receive training regarding the proper use of physical restraint and intervention of students, the proper use and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS)**,** and proper wheelchair securement when the operator is engaged in transportation involving these systems and devices, prior to transporting students.

5.3 School transportation vehicle operators, other than route operators, driving vehicles with a capacity of 15 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), including Type A Multifunction Bus and Small**-**Capacity Vehicle, shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

5.03(a) The operator shall possess a valid driver's license. A commercial license is not required for this class of vehicle.

5.03(b) The operator shall be a minimum of 18 years of age.

5.03(c) School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall obtain a motor vehicle record of each operator prior to transporting students and annually thereafter. Upon review, the reviewer shall initial the motor vehicle record.

5.03(d) The operator shall be given and/or have access to the CDE Type A Multifunction Bus/ Small**-**Capacity Vehicle Operator Guide prior to transporting students. A copy of the Certificate of Receipt, signed by the operator, shall be placed in the driver qualification file.

5.03(e) The operator shall successfully pass a Type A CDE Multifunction Bus/Small**-**Capacity Vehicle Operator written test for the

current school year prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.

5.03(f) The operator shall annually complete the CDE Vehicle Operator's Medical Information Form (STU-17). Any yes annotation shall require a doctor's release.

5.03(g) The operator shall receive pre-service training on the type of vehicle(s) to be driven, the type of duties they may be required to perform, mountain and adverse weather training pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1902, mandatory reporter training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z), and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3, prior to transporting students.

5.03(h) The operator shall be given and/or have access to first aid information, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions.

5.03(i) The operator shall pass an initial driving performance test**,** including a pre-trip inspection**,** prior to transporting students. This test shall be conducted in a vehicle that is similar in type and size to the vehicle the applicant is assigned to operate. School districts, charter schools, and service providers have the option to retest at their discretion.

5.03(j) Prior to driving a school transportation vehicle pursuant to 1 CCR 301-26, operators shall receive training or provide verifiable experience of towing a trailer.

5.03(k) The operator shall receive training regarding the proper use of physical restraint and intervention of students, the proper use and maintenance of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS), and proper wheelchair securement when the operator is engaged in transportation involving these systems and devices before transporting students.

5.4 A school transportation paraprofessional is a person assigned to assist a school transportation vehicle operator in controlling the behavior of students on the bus and/or ensuring the safety of students getting on and off the school transportation vehicle.

5.04(a) The school transportation paraprofessional shall possess a state, government, district, charter, or service provider valid photo identification card.

5.04(b) The school transportation paraprofessional shall receive pre-service training for the type of duties they may be required to perform prior to assisting with transporting students. This shall include mandatory reporter training pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(z) and student confidentiality laws under C.R.S. 22-1-123 and 22-32-109.3,

5.04(c) The school transportation paraprofessional shall be given and/or have access to the CDE Colorado School Transportation Paraprofessional Guide prior to assisting with transporting students. A copy of the Certificate of Receipt, signed by the paraprofessional, shall be placed in the paraprofessional qualification file.

5.04(d) The school transportation paraprofessional shall have written documentation evidencing that they have received first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and universal precautions, within 90 calendar days after initial employment. If the paraprofessional holds a current first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation certificate, it will meet the requirements of this section. School transportation paraprofessionals shall receive first aid training and/or recertification every two years thereafter.

5.5 School transportation vehicle operators and school transportation paraprofessionals are required to be able to perform all essential functions, including emergency evacuations, when transporting students, as determined by the school district, charter school, or service provider job qualification standards.

5.05(a) The employing school district, charter school, or service provider has the authority to require at any time a medical evaluation or a physician release of a school transportation vehicle operator or school transportation paraprofessional for any condition that could impair the employee's ability to operate a vehicle safely, assist the student(s) as required by their position, and/or perform other required job duties, and

may take appropriate action on the outcome of such evaluation.

5.05(b) School transportation vehicle operators and school transportation paraprofessionals that have medical conditions that result in temporary loss of performance abilities shall provide return-to-work documentation from their physician, and any other requirements per school district, charter school, or service provider policy to the employing school district/service provide prior to returning to their assigned duties.

5.6 School transportation vehicle operators and paraprofessionals transporting students with special needs, when transportation is listed as a related service per the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, shall meet the following requirements:

5.06(a) Federal mandates pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 34 C.F.R. 300.323(d), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34 C.F.R., 99.3(a)(1) require transportation staff that have received confidentiality training to receive information regarding transportation as a related service on an IEP or 504 Plan, as well as other pertinent medical or behavioral information.

5.06(b) The operator and paraprofessional shall receive pre-service training specific to transporting students with special needs. Training shall include characteristics of disabling conditions, the utilization of required equipment, techniques for behavior modification and de-escalation, and legal requirements related to special education transportation, in addition to district, charter, and service provider policies and procedures before transporting students with special needs.

5.06(c) The operator and paraprofessional shall receive training on emergency evacuation procedures for students with special needs and assistive devices.

5.06(d) The operator and paraprofessional shall receive training on the operation of the power lift, and the proper placement and securement of a wheelchair or mobility device on the power lift.

5.06(e) The operator and paraprofessional shall receive training on selecting the correct securement point(s) on wheelchairs, the proper use of the wheelchair tie-down occupant restraint system (WTORS), the proper use of restraints on students, and the proper use of all Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS), including the proper maintenance and storage of all assistive and securement devices.

6.0 School Transportation Entry-Level Driver Instructor Requirements

6.1 A CDE school transportation entry-level driver instructor is a person qualified to teach either the theory and/or the behind-the-wheel curriculum, pursuant to 49 C.F.R., 380, Appendix B, C, and D.

6.2 Pursuant to 49 C.F.R., 380.605, the CDE school transportation entry-level theory instructor shall (1) possess a valid commercial driver's license with a Class B (or higher), School Bus and Passenger endorsements; and (2) have two years of verifiable experience operating a school transportation vehicle requiring a commercial operator's license with a Class B (or higher), School Bus and Passenger endorsements in the State of Colorado.

6.02(a) Exception: A theory instructor is not required to hold a CDL of the same (or higher) class, and with all endorsements necessary to operate the CMV for which training is to be provided, if the instructor previously held a CDL of the same (or higher) class and complies with the other requirements set forth in this section.

6.3 The CDE school transportation entry-level driver theory instructor shall successfully complete the CDE entry-level theory instructor program initially, and every three years thereafter, pass the CDE School Transportation Entry-Level Theory Instructor Recertification Written Test.

6.4 Pursuant to 49 C.F.R.,380.605, the CDE school transportation entry-level behind-the- wheel instructor shall (1) possess a valid commercial driver's license with a Class B (or higher), and School Bus and Passenger endorsements; and (2) have two years of verifiable experience operating a school transportation vehicle requiring a commercial operator's license with a Class B (or higher), and School Bus and Passenger endorsements in the State of Colorado.

6.04(a) Exception: A behind-the-wheel instructor who provides training solely on a range that is not a public road is not required to hold a CDL of the same (or higher) class and with all endorsements necessary to operate the CMV for which training is to be provided, as long as the instructor previously held a CDL of the same (or higher) class, and with all endorsements necessary to operate the CMV for which training is to be provided and complies with the other requirements set forth in this section.

6.5 The CDE school transportation entry-level driver behind-the-wheel instructor shall successfully complete the CDE entry-level behind-the-wheel instructor program initially, and every three years thereafter, pass the CDE School Transportation Entry-Level Behind-the-Wheel Instructor Recertification Written Test.

6.6 If any of the above requirements become invalid, the school transportation entry-level driver theory and/or behind-the-wheel instructor certificate is invalid until the requirement(s) are made valid.

6.7 An entity on the Training Provider Registry shall submit the CDE Entry-Level School Transportation Instructor Recertification Form (STU-5 and STU-6) to CDE, verifying that all applicable instructor requirements have been satisfied. CDE will then re-issue the applicable Instructor Certificate.

6.8 If a school transportation entry-level driver instructor has an expired certificate, the certificate can be recertified as follows:

6.08(a) If the certificate has been expired less than six months, then the applicable CDE School Transportation Entry-Level Driver Instructor Recertification Written Test(s) is required.

6.08(b) If the certificate has been expired between six and 12 months, then the applicable CDE School Transportation Entry-Level Driver Instructor Program Written Test(s) is required.

6.08(c) If the certificate has been expired for more than one year, then the instructor must retake and pass the applicable CDE School Transportation Entry-Level Driver Instructor Program(s).

7.0 CDE Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT) Hands-On Trainer

7.1 A CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer is a person qualified to provide appropriate training and evaluation to prospective School Transportation ELDT Instructor candidates.

7.2 CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainers shall meet the following requirements:

7.02(a) The CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer shall have maintained a CDE ELDT Instructor certificate for a minimum of two years.

7.02(b) The CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer shall satisfactorily complete the CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer instruction class.

7.02(c) The CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer shall train at least two ELDT Trainers every three years or attend a CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer class to recertify as a CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer.

7.02(d) The CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer candidate shall submit a CDE Application for Certification or Recertification of CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer Form (STU-14 New form) verifying that the above criteria have been satisfied. CDE will then issue a CDE ELDT Hands-On Trainer Certificate.

7.3 If any of the above requirements become invalid, the Hands-On Trainer certificate is invalid until the requirement(s) are made valid by retaking the training class listed in 7.02(b).

8.0 School Transportation Annual Inspector Requirements

8.1 A school transportation annual inspector is a person qualified to perform annual inspections on a school transportation vehicle to confirm the vehicle complies with CDE regulations.

8.2 School transportation annual inspectors shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

8.02(a) The school transportation annual inspector shall possess a valid driver's license with the proper class and endorsements for the size and type of the vehicle(s) to be inspected.

8.02(b) The school transportation annual inspector shall provide to the school district, charter school, or service provider a Brake Inspector Qualification Certificate Meeting the requirements

of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R., 396.25.

8.02(c) The school transportation annual inspector shall have at least two years of verifiable experience in the maintenance of light, medium, or heavy-duty vehicles.

8.02(d) The school transportation annual inspector shall successfully pass the CDE initial hands-on performance test, proctored by a certified school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester.

8.02(e) The school transportation annual inspector shall successfully pass the CDE annual inspector qualification written test initially and, every three years thereafter, pass a CDE annual inspector recertification written test.

8.02(e)(1) When the test is given in paper format, a representative of the school district, charter school, or service provider, other than a school transportation annual inspector candidate, shall grade the written test.

8.02(f) The school transportation annual inspector shall have training on the maintenance of electric vehicles prior to inspecting an electric vehicle.

8.3 A school district, charter school, service provider, or operator of an inspection site may submit a CDE application for the CDE Annual Inspector Qualification or Recertification form (STU-20) to CDE, verifying that the above requirements have been satisfied. CDE will then issue an Annual Inspector Certificate.

8.4 If any of the above requirements become invalid, the annual inspector certificate is invalid until the requirement(s) is made valid.

8.5 If a school transportation annual inspector has an expired certificate, the certificate can be recertified as follows:

8.05(a) If the certificate has been expired for less than six months, then the CDE Annual Inspector Recertification Written Test is required.

8.05(b) If the certificate has been expired between six to 12 months, then the CDE Annual Inspector Qualification Written Test is required

8.05(c) If the certificate has been expired for more than one year, then both the CDE Annual Inspector Qualification Written Test and the CDE hands-on performance test are required.

9.0 Annual Inspector Hands-On Tester

9.1 A School transportation annual inspector hands-on tester is a person qualified to proctor hands-on tests to annual inspector candidates.

9.2 School transportation annual inspector hands-on testers shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

9.02(a) The School transportation annual inspector hands-on tester shall have a current CDE Annual Inspector certificate and maintained it for a minimum of two years.

9.02(b) The school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester shall have satisfactorily completed a CDE school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester training.

9.02(c) The school transportation annual inspector hands-on testers shall have completed a minimum of four hours of verifiable medium/heavy brake system training in the last three years or have maintained an ASE School Bus or Medium/Heavy Duty Truck or Transit Bus Brake Certification.

9.02(d) The school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester candidate shall submit a CDE Application for the Qualification/Recertification of a CDE Annual Inspector Hands-On Tester Form (STU-30) verifying that the above criteria have been satisfied. CDE will then issue an Annual Inspector Hands-On Tester Certificate.

9.02(e) The school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester shall conduct at least two hands-on tests every three years or attend a CDE school transportation annual inspector hands-on recertification training to recertify as a school transportation annual inspector hands-on tester.

9.3 If any of the above requirements become invalid, the hands-on tester certificate is invalid until the requirement(s) is made valid by retaking the tester training class in rule 9.02(b).

10.0 Pre-trip/Post-trip Vehicle Inspections

10.1 Each school transportation vehicle shall have a daily pre-trip and post-trip inspection performed and documented by the school transportation vehicle operator or other transportation employee authorized by the school district, charter school, or service provider. A daily pre-trip inspection shall be completed prior to a vehicle being placed in service. A daily post-trip inspection shall be completed at the end of the daily operation of each vehicle.

10.2 The pre-trip and post-trip inspection requirements for school transportation vehicles, other than small-capacity vehicles, shall include, at a minimum**,** all items listed on the CDE School Transportation Vehicle (School Bus/Multifunction Bus/Motor Coach Bus) – Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Requirements Form (STU-9).

10.3 The pre-trip and post-trip inspection requirements for school transportation small-capacity vehicles shall include**,** at a minimum**,** all items listed on the CDE School Transportation Vehicle (Small-Capacity Vehicle) - Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Requirements Form (STU-8).

10.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have a procedure in place to verify that students are not left on an unattended school transportation vehicle.

11.0 Inspection Site Certification

11.1 A CDE Inspection Site Certificate is required at each facility/location where annual inspections for school transportation vehicles are performed.

11.2 The inspection site shall meet or exceed the following criteria to acquire and maintain an inspection site certificate:

11.02(a) The inspection site shall be large enough to accommodate the vehicle, equipment, and tools necessary to perform the inspection.

11.02(b) The inspection site shall have a floor surface or pad adequate to safely support the maximum weight of the largest vehicle to be inspected.

11.02(c) The inspection site shall have adequate lighting and ventilation.

11.02(d) The inspection site or inspector shall, at the time of inspection, have the equipment and tools necessary to properly complete the annual inspection.

11.02(e) The inspection site or inspector shall have tools designed and calibrated to take accurate readings of appropriate measurements, such as brakes and tires.

11.3 The operator of an inspection site shall submit a request for an inspection site certificate on the CDE Application for Inspecting Site Certification Form (STU-22) that the above criteria have been satisfied.

11.4 The operator of an inspection site shall post the CDE Inspection Site Certificate at the inspection site.

12.0 Annual Inspection

12.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure all school transportation vehicles and trailers**,** pursuant to 1 CCR 301-26, have a CDE annual inspection conducted by a CDE-certified annual inspector prior to transporting students and annually thereafter.

12.01(a) Recently purchased school transportation vehicles shall successfully pass a CDE annual inspection prior to transporting students, and then annually thereafter.

12.2 Annual inspection results shall be documented on the CDE Affidavit of Annual Inspection for School Transportation Vehicles Form (STU-25).

12.02(a) A copy of the current Affidavit must be maintained inside the vehicle, and a copy must be placed in the vehicle file.

12.3 All annual inspection criteria of school transportation vehicles must meet or exceed the manufacturer's specifications. The annual inspection shall be documented and shall include, at a minimum, all fields listed on the CDE Annual Inspection and Preventive Maintenance Requirements Form (STU-26).

12.4 All annual inspection criteria of trailers must meet or exceed the manufacturer's specifications and shall include, at a minimum, all fields listed on the CDE Trailer Annual Inspection and Preventive Maintenance Requirements Form (STU-27).

12.5 During the annual inspection, all four wheels shall be pulled for a full inspection of the foundation brake system. The three exceptions are:

12.05(a) School transportation vehicles with less than 4,000 miles since the previous annual inspection shall have two wheels (one front and one rear) pulled that are different from those pulled for the previous inspection.

12.05(b) School transportation vehicles equipped with a retarder meeting the specifications outlined in 1 CCR 301-25 shall have two wheels (one front and one rear) pulled that are different from those pulled for the previous inspection.

12.05(c) Trailers, pursuant to 1 CCR 301-26-13.11, shall have 50% of the wheels pulled different from those pulled for the previous inspection.

13.0 Maintenance and Repair

13.1 School districts, charter schools, and service providers must ensure all school transportation vehicles are systematically inspected, maintained, and repaired by a qualified mechanic to ensure that school transportation vehicles are in safe and proper operating condition.

13.2 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall have a system to document preventative maintenance, reported defects, and repairs made to school transportation vehicles.

13.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain separate files for each school transportation vehicle with documentation of all annual inspections, all preventative maintenance, and all reported damage, defects, or deficiencies and the corresponding repair and maintenance performed.

13.4 Any identified damage, defect, or deficiency of a school transportation vehicle must be reported to the school district, charter schools, or service provider if it:

13.04(a) Could affect the safety of the operation of the school transportation vehicle;

13.04(b) Could result in a mechanical breakdown of the school transportation vehicle;

13.04(c) Results in noncompliance with Colorado Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles (1 CCR 301-25) and/or manufacturer's specifications.

13.5 Documentation for reported defects must include all the following:

13.05(a) The name of the school district, charter school, or service provider;

13.05(b) Date and time the report was submitted;

13.05(c) All damage, defects, or deficiencies of the school transportation vehicle;

13.05(d) The name of the individual who prepared the report.

13.6 Following a reported damage, defect, or deficiency of a school transportation vehicle, school districts, charter schools, and service providers or a representative agent must repair the reported damage, defects, or deficiencies or document that no repair is necessary, ensuring that the vehicle is in safe and proper operating condition prior to transporting students.

13.7 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall not transport students in a school transportation vehicle that is not in safe and proper operating condition. A school transportation vehicle shall be designated as "out-of-service" by a school district, charter school, or service provider, a school transportation annual inspector, or the CDE School Transportation Unit.

13.07(a) Any school transportation vehicle discovered to be in an unsafe condition while being operated on the highway, roadway, or private road may be continued in operation only to the nearest place where repairs can safely be affected. Such operation shall be conducted only if it is less hazardous to the public than to permit the vehicle to remain on the highway, roadway, or private road.

13.8 Following a school transportation vehicle being placed "out-of-service," a school district, charter school, service provider, or a representative agent must make required repairs, ensuring that the vehicle is in safe and proper operating condition prior to transporting students. In the event of being placed "out-of-service" during an annual inspection, the school transportation vehicle must successfully pass a CDE annual inspection prior to transporting students.

13.9 The preventative maintenance inspection on air drum brake systems shall include, at a minimum, that the brake rod travel has been measured and documented. The applied pressure method shall be used.

13.09(a) The inspection interval shall not exceed 4,000 miles for buses equipped with a manual slack adjuster air brake system.

13.09(b) The inspection interval shall not exceed 6,000 miles for buses equipped with an automatic slack adjuster air brake system.

13.10 The preventive maintenance inspection interval of air disc brake systems shall not exceed 6,000 miles and shall include, at a minimum, inspection and documentation of:

13.10(a) The pad thickness by checking the mechanical wear indicators.

13.10(b) The visible part of the rotors for cracks, excessive wear, damage, etc.

13.10(c) The running clearance. If the caliper has no movement or appears to move greater than the distances indicated by the manufacturer, then a full wheel removal inspection will be necessary.

13.11 The preventive maintenance inspection interval of hydraulic brake systems shall not exceed 6,000 miles and shall include, at a minimum, inspection and documentation of:

13.11(a) Proper parking brake operation;

13.11(b) Proper brake fluid level and clarity;

13.11(c) Adequate pedal reserve;

13.11(d) Proper hydraulic/vacuum assist operation; and

13.11(e) Visual inspection for brake fluid leakage.

13.12 If brake adjustment or repair is needed, the work shall be completed by or supervised by a DOT or equivalent qualified brake inspector**,** meeting the requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R.,396.25.

13.13 If maintenance or repair work is needed on an electric vehicle, the work shall be completed by or supervised by a qualified mechanic with appropriate training in the maintenance and repair of electric vehicles.

14.0 Operation of a School Transportation Vehicle

14.1 A school transportation vehicle shall not be operated in a manner that is unsafe, likely to cause an accident, or likely to damage the vehicle.

14.2 A school transportation vehicle shall not be placed in motion on a roadway, highway, or private road with the passenger entry door/service door open.

14.3 A school transportation vehicle's headlights shall be activated while the vehicle is in operation.

14.4 A school transportation vehicle shall not be fueled while students are on board, except in instances when unloading the students would present a greater hazard or peril to their safety.

14.5 Use of tobacco products as defined in C.R.S. 18-13-121(5), use or possession of illegal controlled substances, use or possession of alcohol, and use or possession of marijuana or cannabinoid product, except as otherwise allowed by law, aboard any school transportation vehicle shall be prohibited at all times.

14.6 A school transportation vehicle operator shall not consume food unless the vehicle is stopped at a safe location with the park/emergency brake set.

14.7 When a school transportation vehicle is equipped with a roof-mounted strobe lamp, the use of the strobe lamp is permitted only when the vehicle presents a hazard to other motorists, such as loading or unloading students in inclement weather, or to enhance the visibility of the vehicle when barriers inhibit such visibility.

14.8 A school transportation vehicle operator may use the strobe, in addition to the four-way hazard lamps, to warn other motorists that the vehicle is not in motion or is being operated at a speed of 25 miles per hour or less.

14.9 The school transportation vehicle operator shall use extreme caution when backing. Before backing on a roadway, or highway, or private property, the horn or audible warning device shall be sounded, and four-way hazard lamps actuated or there shall be a person outside the vehicle giving direction.

14.09(a) Backing a school transportation vehicle when students are outside of the vehicle at a student stop is prohibited.

14.10 A Type A, B, C, and D School Bus, Multifunction Bus, and Motor Coach Bus shall not be operated with a trailer or other vehicle attached while students are being transported.

14.11 School transportation small-capacity vehicles, with a manufacturer-assigned capacity of 12 or fewer passengers (counting the driver), may tow trailers while students are being transported to the extent that trailering is a necessary component of a school district or charter school-sponsored program.

15.0 Authorized Passengers

15.1 Only school district, charter school, or service provider personnel, students enrolled in a school district or charter school, law enforcement officials, or individuals who have received prior authorization from the school district, charter school, or service provider may be passengers on any school transportation vehicle.

15.2 The number of passengers transported on any school transportation vehicle shall not exceed the maximum seating capacity of the vehicle. Small vehicle capacity shall not exceed the number of safety belts as designed by the vehicle manufacturer.

15.3 Passengers shall not be permitted to stand in any school transportation vehicle while the vehicle is in motion. This does not preclude authorized persons (such as school transportation paraprofessionals) from completing their duties as required.

15.4 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall consider the size of the passengers when determining the number of passengers that can safely occupy a school transportation vehicle seat.

16.0 Safety Restraints

16.1 A school transportation vehicle operator shall have the safety belt fastened, worn correctly, and properly adjusted prior to the school transportation vehicle being placed in motion.

16.2 All passengers in a school transportation vehicle under 10,000 lbs. GVWR shall have their safety belts fastened, worn correctly, and properly adjusted prior to the school transportation vehicle being placed in motion.

17.0 Transportation of Miscellaneous Items

17.1 A school transportation vehicle operator shall ensure that all carry-on items are properly handled to minimize the danger to all others.

17.2 All baggage, articles, equipment, or medical supplies (except those held by individual passengers) shall be secured in a manner that assures unrestricted access to all exits by occupants, does not restrict the driver's ability to operate the bus and/or protects all occupants against injury resulting from falling or displacement of any baggage, article, or equipment. Oxygen cylinders that are medically necessary meet this standard if they are securely attached to a wheelchair or otherwise secured in the vehicle and do not impede access to any exit. School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall use reasonable care in determining the number of cylinders that may be safely transported at one time.

17.3 All chemicals and cleaning supplies carried on a school transportation vehicle must meet the following precautions:

17.03(a) Container is non-breakable;

17.03(b) Container is labeled with contents;

17.03(c) Pressurized aerosols are prohibited;

17.03(d) Container is secured in a bracket, or in a closed compartment in the driver’s area, or a compartment on the exterior of the bus; and

17.03(e) Containers and quantities of products are no more than 32 ounces in size.

17.4 Interior decorations shall not be located within the driver's area (including the space in front of the front barriers, the step-well, dash, walls and ceiling, the windshield, the entry door, the driver's side window, and all windows in front of the front barrier), the first two passenger windows on both sides of the vehicle or all windows on the rear of the vehicle. Other decorations within the passenger compartment shall not:

17.04(a) Cover any required lettering;

17.04(b) Impede the aisle or any emergency exit;

17.04(c) Hang from the walls and/or ceiling.

17.5 Per the effective date of these rules, school transportation vehicles owned or leased by the district, charter school, and service provider that are used for student transportation shall not have the windows obstructed in any way by advertising, decorations, or vehicle wraps.

17.05(a) Exception: Tint applied by the vehicle manufacturer to industry standards.

17.05(b) Exception: Route identification is permitted per 1CC 301-26, rule 17.04 of these rules.

18.0 Maximum Driving Time for School Transportation Vehicle Operators

18.1 School transportation vehicle operators, including small-capacity vehicle operators, shall not drive (nor shall the school districts, charter schools, or service providers permit or require operators to drive):

18.01(a) In excess of 10 hours or after being on-duty 14 hours until completing 10 hours off-duty. This would include on-duty time for all employers. Ten hours off-duty may be consecutive or accumulated in two or more periods of off-duty time, with one period having a minimum of six consecutive hours off-duty.

18.01(b) After being on-duty for more than 70 hours in any seven consecutive days.

18.01(c) In case of emergency, an operator may complete the trip without being in violation if such a trip reasonably could have been completed absent the emergency.

18.2 In lieu of section 18.00 of these rules, a school district, charter school, or service provider may comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R. 395.

18.3 Definitions:

18.03(a) Day - Means any 24-consecutive hour period beginning at the time designated by the school district, charter school, or service provider.

18.03(b) On-duty time - Includes all time worked for all employers, including all driving and non-driving duties.

18.03(c) Off-duty time - School transportation vehicle operators may consider waiting time (whether compensated time or not) at special events, meal stops, and school-related events as off-duty if the following criteria are met:

18.03(c)(1) The operator shall be relieved of all duty and responsibility for the care and custody of the vehicle, its accessories, and students, and

18.03(c)(2) The operator shall be at liberty to pursue activities of his/her choice, including leaving the premises on which the bus is located.

18.4 All school transportation vehicle operators shall document that they are in compliance with this section, hours of service.

18.04(a) An operator's daily log, or equivalent, shall be completed for the trip in the operator's own handwriting when the trip requires a scheduled or unscheduled overnight stay away from the work reporting location.

19.0 Route Planning – Student Loading and Discharge

19.1 School transportation small-capacity vehicles, Type A Multifunction Buses, and School Buses (Types A, B, C, and D) may be used to transport students**.** Multifunction Buses Type B, C, D, and Motor Coach Buses shall not be used to transport students to and from school.

19.2 The location of student stops shall consider factors including:

19.02(a) Ages of the students;

19.02(b) Visibility;

19.02(c) Lateral clearance;

19.02(d) Student access; and

19.02(e) Control of other motorists

19.02(e)(1) Student stops for Type A Multifunction Buses, and school transportation small-capacity vehicles should be located off the roadway whenever possible.

19.3 School transportation vehicle operators shall stop at least 10 feet away from students at each designated stop. The school transportation vehicle operator shall apply the parking brake and shift the vehicle into neutral or park prior to opening the service door of a bus or the passenger door(s) of a small-capacity vehicle.

19.4 The school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right of the roadway, highway, or private road as possible before discharging or loading passengers - allowing sufficient area to the right and front of the vehicle but close enough to the right to prevent traffic from passing on the right - so that students may clear the vehicle safely while in sight of the operator.

19.04(a) Exception: The school transportation vehicle operator may block the lane of traffic when passengers being received or discharged are required to cross the roadway.

19.5 Student stops shall not be located on the side of any major thoroughfare whenever access to the destination of the passenger is possible by a road or street which is adjacent to the major thoroughfare.

19.6 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall ensure that if students are required to cross a roadway, highway, or private road on which a student stop is being performed, they are prohibited from crossing a roadway, highway**,** or private road constructed or designed to

permit three or more separate lanes of vehicular traffic in either direction or with a median separating multiple lanes of traffic.

19.7 Four-way hazard lamps shall be used on private property such as parking lots.

19.8 Alternating flashing red warning signal lamps shall not be activated within 200 feet of an intersection if the intersection is controlled by a traffic control signal.

19.9 Routes shall be planned as to:

19.09(a) Eliminate, when practical, railroad crossings; and

19.09(b) Have stops be a minimum of 200 feet apart (since alternating flashing amber warning signal lamps must be activated a minimum of 200 feet in advance of the stop on the roadway on which the bus stop will be performed).

19.09(b)(1) Exception: In areas where wildlife may create a high risk of threat to students' safety while they are waiting and/or walking to a student stop, designated stops may be less than 200 feet apart upon detailed written approval by the school district board of education or governing body of a charter school (or the board's designee). A copy of the written approval shall be kept in the school transportation office, and route operators shall be given written notice of the exception and have it indicated on route sheets.

19.10 In determining the length of routes, school districts, charter schools, and service providers must make an effort to minimize student ride times while considering student educational needs, geographic boundaries, terrain, traffic congestion, and financial resources within the district. A local board of education, or the governing body of a charter school, may establish a maximum student ride time.

19.11 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-1903(2), school transportation vehicle operators are not required to actuate the alternating flashing red warning signal lamps on a school bus:

19.11(a) When the student stop is at a location where the local traffic regulatory authority has by prior written designation declared such actuation unnecessary and no passenger is required to cross the roadway**;** or

19.11(b) When discharging or loading passengers who require the assistance of a lift device, and no passenger is required to cross the roadway.

19.11(c) Further, Type A Multifunction Buses and school transportation small-capacity vehicles do not have the functionality to control traffic. In these instances, the school transportation vehicle operator shall stop as far to the right off the roadway as possible to reduce obstruction to traffic, activate the four-way hazard warning lamps a minimum of 200 feet prior to the student stop, continue to display the four-way hazard warning lamps until the process of discharging or loading passengers has been completed, and deactivate the four-way hazard lamps before resuming motion. Students are prohibited from crossing any lanes of traffic to access the student stop or after disembarking.

19.12 School transportation vehicle operators shall not relocate a student stop without the approval of the school district, charter school, or service provider.

19.13 Pursuant to C.R.S. 42-4-707, School transportation vehicle operators of School Buses, Multifunction Buses, and Motor Coach Buses, whether transporting students or not, shall apply the following procedures during the process of approaching, stopping, and crossing railroad tracks:

19.13(a) Activate the four-way hazard lamps not less than 200 feet from the railroad crossing to alert other motorists of the pending stop for the crossing;

19.13(b) Stop the bus within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail of the railway;

19.13(c) When stopped, the bus shall be as far to the right of the roadway as possible and shall not form two lanes of traffic unless the highway is marked for four or more lanes of traffic; and

19.13(d) Use a prearranged signal to alert students to the need for quiet aboard the bus when approaching railroad tracks. Turn off all noise-making equipment (fans, heater, radio, etc.)

19.14 After quietness aboard the stopped bus has been achieved, bus operators shall open the service door and operator window. The bus operator shall listen and look in both directions along the track(s) for any approaching train(s) and for signals indicating the approach of a train or on-track equipment.

19.14(a) If the tracks are clear, the bus operator shall close the service door and may then proceed in a gear low enough to permit crossing the tracks without having to manually shift gears. The bus operator shall cancel the four-way hazard lamps after the bus has cleared the tracks.

19.14(b) When two or more tracks are to be crossed, the bus operator shall not stop a second time unless the bus is completely clear of the first crossing, with at least 15 feet clearance in the front and at least 15 feet clearance to the rear.

19.14(c) Before crossing the tracks, the bus operator shall verify that there is enough space after the tracks for the bus plus 15 feet if it is necessary to stop after crossing the tracks.

19.15 School transportation vehicle operators of School Buses, Multifunction Buses, and Motor Coach Buses are not required to stop at crossings controlled:

19.15(a) Only by a red, amber, or green traffic control signal when it is in the green position**;**

19.15(b) Or when the crossing is controlled by a police officer or human flag person**;**

19.15(c) Or when the crossing is marked with an official “exempt” sign placed on the railroad crossing light post or crossbucks post.

20.0 Emergency Evacuation Drills

20.1 Emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted with students by all school transportation vehicle route operators, excluding small-capacity

vehicle operators as defined in 1 CCR 301-25, and school transportation paraprofessionals at least twice during each school year.

20.01(a) One drill shall be conducted in the fall, and the second drill conducted in the spring.

20.01(b) Substitute and Multifunction operators shall be trained on how to conduct emergency evacuation drills.

20.2 Students at school-related events shall receive emergency evacuation instruction**s** prior to every initial departure.

20.3 School districts, charter schools, and service providers shall maintain records documenting that the required evacuation drills were conducted and/or evacuation instruction was given.

21.0 Incorporation by Reference

21.1 The foregoing rules incorporate by reference several sections and appendices from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 C.F.R., Parts 380, 382, 391, 395, and 396 (as codified as of June 30, 2024). They also incorporate by reference select sections of Volume 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The foregoing rules do not incorporate by reference any later amendment or editions to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations or to the cited sections of 34 C.F.R. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and the cited sections of 34 C.F.R. are available at https://www.ecfr.gov/. They are also available for public inspection during regular business hours from the Colorado Department of Education, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, Colorado 80203.