

# **Joliet Public SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **BUS DRIVER HANDBOOK**



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Revision 08/20

## DISCLAIMER

This handbook is not a contract of employment. Employment is contracted yearly. Any individual may voluntarily leave employment or may be terminated by the school district at any time and for any reason. Any oral or written statements or promises to the contrary are hereby expressly disavowed and should not be relied upon by any prospective or existing employee. The contents of this handbook are subject to change at any time at the discretion of the school district and/or school board.

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### EXPECTATIONS

Pupils are under the control of the driver for an appreciable length of time each day. Students will learn from the driver and the transportation environment. The driver has the opportunity to teach valuable lessons in citizenship by being fair and firm with pupils. In some cases, especially on the secondary level, the driver may spend more time daily supervising a pupil than any one teacher.

The bus driver is one of the most publicly observed of all school employees. To begin with, the school bus is as conspicuous as a fire engine and as scrutinized as a police car. It also has the school district's name written on its side.

It is important that the driver does not criticize the school administration or governing board. Nor does he or she criticize members of a community or the officials whose duty it is to see that laws are properly enforced. The driver should refrain from questionable conduct and speech. The school bus driver should be courteous and tolerant toward other motorists. As a professional bus driver, we are continually ambassadors of goodwill and the bright beginning of a school day. A driver should control his temper and not quarrel with pupils. All employees who work around students serve as role models and that model must be projected as one that is positive in nature.

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS**

The school bus driver is the most important element in the safe transportation of students. To ensure the safety of students transported on school buses, bus drivers must meet certain minimum qualifications.

To qualify as a school bus driver a person must:

1. Be at least 21 years of age.
2. Have a high school diploma or GED.
3. Possess a valid Class A, B or with a "S" endorsement/air brake endorsement
4. Demonstrate sufficient strength, agility, hearing and visual acuity to exercise safe control over the school bus and passengers at all times. All bus drivers must pass a pre-employment agility test administered as part of the SDE bus driver certification process. The agility test requirements are as follows:
  - a. The student driver did climb and descend the front steps of a passenger bus without pausing
  - b. The student driver did open and close a manually operated full size bus entrance door without difficulty while seated in the driver's seat
  - c. The student driver did activate the brake pedal with the right foot in 3/4 of a second or less after removing the right foot from the throttle pedal
  - d. The student driver did move from a seated position in the driver's seat of a full size bus to the rear of the bus, open the emergency door and exit the bus all within 20 seconds.
  - e. The student driver did operate the driving controls using both arms simultaneously and quickly. For example, activate master panel switches or shift gears while keeping one hand on the steering wheel of a full size bus traveling twenty-five (25) miles per hour.
  - f. The student driver demonstrates ability to perform steering, shifting.
    - Ninety-degree (90°) left hand turns
    - Ninety degree (90°) right hand turns
    - Straight ahead
    - Irregular surface maneuverability at appropriate speeds
    - Backing ability using mirrors only
    - Spatial awareness
  - g. The driver must be able to perform preventative maintenance checks

NOTE: Full size bus for ability testing purposes means a 59, 65 or 71 passenger school bus. Activities (e.) and (f.) are completed only after (a. - d.) are successfully completed.

5. Have hearing that shall not be impaired to the extent that it would interfere with the safe operation of the bus.
6. Have no known medical history or clinical diagnosis of any condition that could be detrimental to the safety of the student who will be transported.
7. Have an acceptable driving record with no convictions.
8. Must be insurable by the current insurance carrier.
9. Receive ACE bus driver certification during a one-day training course, which includes classroom instruction, agility testing and behind-the-wheel driving.
10. Not currently use illegal controlled substances or engage in the illegal use of prescription drugs.
11. Have a satisfactory employment record.
12. Pass a fingerprint background check.
13. Pass a pre-employment drug test and participate in random testing.
14. The local school board may require additional qualifications, such as drug testing or a physical examination following an offer of employment.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS**

It is the responsibility of the school bus driver to operate the school bus in a safe and efficient manner and to abide by all state traffic laws, State Board of Education regulations and local school board regulations.

### **PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Job functions shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Conduct a thorough pre-trip (using the district's Daily Bus Inspection form) and post trip inspection of the school bus.
2. Keep exterior mirrors clean and adjusted at all times.
3. Perform a minimum of two school bus evacuation drills each school year utilizing appropriate emergency procedures per semester.
4. Know, recognize and obey road signs and signals by meanings, shapes, sounds, and colors.
5. Keep interior of the bus clean.
6. Maintain routes and schedules as planned by the local school board.
7. Report any hazards along the existing route to appropriate school officials.
8. Exercise the effective defensive driving skills of self-control, alertness, foresight and good

judgment at all times while operating the school bus.

9. Maintain discipline on the school bus without jeopardizing safety while driving.
10. Remain alert at all times to hazards, including but not limited to poor weather conditions, other vehicles, road conditions and trains at railroad crossings.
11. Complete all reports on bus discipline, bus maintenance and any other reports required by the local school board.
12. The driver shall not, at any time, permit pupils to stand in the stepwell or loading area or where the pupil would likely fall out of the bus, if the rear emergency door was opened, or where the driver's view is obscured.
13. At such time, as required by law and/or the school district, the employee agrees to one mandatory drug test as part of the hiring process. In addition to the mandatory test, the employee agrees to random test(s) and post accident testing and to be tested if recommended by the driver's supervisor.
14. Follow instructions of the local supervisor for the use of cameras and other surveillance equipment.

Local school boards may supplement the minimum bus driver job description and responsibilities as deemed necessary for safe and efficient student transportation.

### **DAILY BUS INSPECTIONS**

In bus driver training school you were given instruction on how to conduct a morning check of your bus before starting the engine. This inspection also included checking several items while the bus was warming up. Those items have been prepared as a checklist for you to indicate that this is done on a daily basis. In the space next to each item, initial each day that you check each item. Your transportation supervisor will check this form periodically. For any days that you do not initial in the appropriate place, it will be assumed that you did not check the item on that day. Continued failure to conduct the inspection could result in termination. Failure to maintain proper fluid levels which results in engine failure, could also be reason for termination. This form will be turned in at the end of the month prior to receiving a paycheck. A sample is included at the end of this handbook. Additional copies are available from your local supervisor.

### **SCHOOL VEHICLE POLICY**

#### Use of School Vehicles

All vehicles owned by the Joliet Public School District shall be used for school related business only. No vehicle shall be authorized for personal use of any employee.

### **SCHOOL BUS SAFETY**

Safety in all activities is foremost in providing educational opportunity for our students. It is the intent of the Board of Education, the Administration, as well as the staff of the Joliet Public School District, to provide a safe environment and insure the well being of all the students prior to, during, and following any school activity.

Toward this end the Board gives due concern to school bus safety. Safe boarding, riding, and departure of the bus shall be emphasized at every opportunity to all students of the schools by the administration, teaching staff, as well

as school bus drivers. The district shall comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations of the State Board of Education that govern pupil transportation. The following guidelines shall be adhered to in relation to activities of the transportation department:

1. All buses meet the minimum specifications approved by the State Board of Education and are well maintained and clean.
2. Each bus driver has a valid bus driver's certificate. Each driver operates the bus according to all specified safety procedures to ensure optimal safety of passengers.
3. A district staff member is designated to supervise and evaluate all aspects of the transportation program, with emphasis on safety, bus driver performance, preventive maintenance, and efficient purchasing.
4. Basic safety rules for boarding, riding, and departure of the school bus shall be taught all riders at the beginning of the school year. Administrators, teaching staff, transportation supervisors, bus drivers, or any other qualified staff member or consultant shall conduct this.
5. The bus drivers and transportation supervisor(s) will be responsible for training Bus Safety Patrol for each bus. This training will be at the beginning of the school year with review, as needed, during the school year.
6. The bus driver, under the supervision of the local transportation supervisor, will conduct a bus evacuation drill each semester.
7. The transportation supervisor and/or principal will inspect each bus weekly for cleanliness, safety, and operational needs.
7. It is the responsibility of the local transportation supervisor and the principal to require that the buses be kept in a safe, clean, and operable condition at all times.
9. Maintenance of optimum efficiency and safe conditions for each vehicle of school transportation will be an ongoing process, of which all staff shall be aware and make contribution.
10. Vehicles, which are utilized on field trips, athletic trips, etc. and are left unattended by the driver shall have ignition keys removed to a safe place.
11. Safety equipment required on all school buses shall be operable and shall equal state regulations for such vehicle.

#### **ACCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION**

The Director of Insurance and Transportation will investigate all accidents. Accident report forms will be sent to State Department of Education, insurance company, and other agencies as required by law.

#### **PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT**

1. Notify law enforcement, 911, and emergency response teams (ambulance, fire, etc.)
2. Notify school
  - a Supervisors, Russ Salo 406-530-4044 or Dale Limberhand 406-818-1003

- b. Superintendent Allison Evertz 406-426-8541
- c. K-8 Principal Clark Begger 406-694-6122

3. Supervisors will make appropriate phone calls to insurance providers.

- Do not discuss the accident with anyone other than Law Enforcement personnel.
- Do not admit blame or accuse the other driver of guilt.
- Your priority is the safety of your passengers.
- Do not release students into care of anyone without permission from a School Administrator.

### **CDL LICENSE FEES FOR DRIVERS**

Federal and state regulations mandate that drivers of vehicles transporting school children be certified under the Commercial Driver's License, commonly known as "CDL Licensing." This program is administered by the Montana Department of Public Safety and includes testing, receipt of fees, and issuance of the license upon successful completion of the program requirements.

The payment of the fee(s) is necessary prior to the issuance of the license. The Joliet Public School District will pay a part of the fee for a commercial license that restricts the individual to driving school buses only. If the individual wishes to obtain a commercial license that entitles him/her to operate commercial vehicles, in addition to school buses he/she must pay the additional cost for the extra entitlements.

Whenever an individual is hired for employment as a bus driver, the district will pay the difference between a regular drivers license and a CDL for the commercial license (with the school bus endorsement) with the understanding that all training hours and testing hours paid at the wage of \$10.20 per hour along with licensing fees, will be reimbursed to bus driver after a completion of service of one year (12) months. Documentation will be provided from bus driver to clerk. Otherwise, upon resignation or termination of said person, the initial fee(s) paid by the district for the CDL license will be withheld from his/her remaining salary as repayment to the district for such expenditure.

Effective August 1, 2016, the Joliet School Board will compensate school bus drivers for the actual expense for renewing a Commercial Driver's License to drive a school bus. Documentation of renewal must be presented to the Superintendent before payment will be submitted to the Board for approval.

Exception(s) to this policy may be made by the Board of Education as warranted.

Employees wishing to utilize this program will be issued a copy of this policy, will sign it in the presence of a witness, and will return it to the District Transportation Department for recording.

### **MOTOR VEHICLE RECORD CHECK**

The MVR for all new drivers will be verified prior to employment. Thereafter, the record will be evaluated on an annual or as needed basis. The MVR will be evaluated on a five-point scale.

The following point system will be used to evaluate each citation or incident listed on the MVR.

<b>Incident</b>	<b>Incident Value</b>
1. Moving violation	1
2. Accident involvement	1

3. Speed (less than 20 mph over speed limit)	1
4. Any combination of two accident involvements or moving violations in a twelve (12) month period	1
5. DUI or other alcohol or drug related violation	5
6. Reckless vehicle operation	5
7. Driving under suspension or revocation	5
8. Excessive speed (20 mph over limit)	5
9. Leaving the scene of an accident	5
10. Assault with a motor vehicle	5

Any driver with four or more points during a 36-month period will not be considered for employment or continued employment. Our insurance carrier may also complete an evaluation. Failure to meet their standards for a safe driving record will disqualify a driver for employment.

### SCHOOL BUS CELLULAR PHONE USE

- ◆ Use of your phone while operating the school bus is unacceptable.
- ◆ IN EMERGENCY CASES ONLY: pull off the road to dial. Be careful where you stop to make calls. If it is impossible to pull off the road, ask a passenger to dial for you.
- ◆ When calling to report an emergency, be prepared to provide the closest major cross streets or off-ramps, and know your cellular phone number.
- ◆ Do not take notes or look up phone numbers while driving.
- ◆ Use your phone to call for help or report emergencies.

### ACTIVITIES TRIPS AND COMPENSATION

All activities and all training: PAY RATES are considered at \$11/hr.

MEALS paid Montana State Per Diem at \$5/Breakfast, \$6/Lunch, and \$12/Dinner.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS: time starts for bus driver when they enter the bus in the morning until the time the bus is shut off in the evening. District will not pay your hourly rate when idly sitting in a motel room for example. Any and all other arrangements are up to the Superintendent and the School Board's discretion.

### DRIVER EXPECTATIONS AND SELF EVALUATION

	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Not Meeting Expectations
	5	4	3	2	1
Maintain current CDL					
Maintain current MEC card, attend 10 hrs of ACE training per year					
Cooperate with random drug test policy					
Uphold good name and reputation of the school district					
Follow chain of command: Supervisor, Superintendent					



Do not speak for the district (to newspapers, radio/tv)					
Be on time					
Call in early if absent					
Accept reassignment					
Don't miss work without a good reason					
Don't argue with students or parents					
Follow procedures; seating chart, mileage, daily checklist, report accidents					
Treat others as you want to be treated					
Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss family or medical problems					
TOTALS (60)					



# HANDBOOK SIGN-OFF SHEET

## **Joliet Public School 2020-2021**

Receipt and Review of Bus Driver Handbook

*I have received/reviewed a copy of the  
Joliet Public School Bus Driver Handbook and agree to the terms outlined.*

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT: As an employee with the school district, I may have access to student records. Student records contain confidential information protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. 99). Any confidential information contained in student records is to be used exclusively for professional purposes. I understand that the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may apply to records that I view in the course of my employment/internship with the school district. By signing this agreement, I agree to keep any and all information that I learn about students confidential and will not disclose confidential information obtained from student records.

The terms of this agreement remain in effect during and after my employment with the school district. Violation of the terms of this confidentiality agreement can result in termination of employment with the school district or other forms of discipline the district deems appropriate under the circumstances.

**Bus Driver Printed Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bus Driver Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# DAILY BUS INSPECTION SAMPLE

## SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE INSPECTION

### Driver's Daily Report

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ A.M. \_\_\_\_\_ P.M. \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Pre Trip: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Check list before starting bus (Circle item requiring emergency repair)

S- Serviceable U- Unserviceable

- | S                        | U                        |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tires (air pressure, lug nuts, tread, fluid leaks)                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Body (scratches, dents vandalism)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Security of fuel filler cap   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Under the hood (water, oil, belts - daily)<br>(brake fluid, battery - periodically) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency equipment (flags, flares, first aid kit,<br>fire extinguisher)            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Seats   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Windshield & windows (all glass)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mirrors (inside and outside)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn Signals  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Flashing Lights   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lights & Reflectors   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency door (buzzers, handle, latch)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Service Door  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stop Arm  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Horn  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cleanliness of the bus  |

Check list after starting bus (circle item requiring emergency repair)

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Motor (unusual noise, hard starting, odors)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Brakes (foot and park)                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Muffler and exhaust system                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Windshield wipers (blades and switches)               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gauges (amp., volt, oil, gasoline, heat, air, vacuum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Defrosters and heaters                                |

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_