



400.1(7) Procedures

Policy 400.1: Student Transportation

400.1(7.1) **Driver Roles and Responsibilities**

7.1.1 **Driver Conduct**

School bus and special transportation drivers are professionals and should conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times when carrying out their duties.

7.1.2 **Dress**

- a) All drivers must maintain a neat, orderly appearance. Sweatpants, clothing with racist/sexist images or statements, or clothing containing logos such as those advertising alcohol or cigarettes are not considered appropriate attire.
- b) In accordance with Occupational Health and Safety legislation, drivers shall wear safety vests as required by the district.

7.1.3 **Smoking**

In accordance with Nova Central School Board policy smoking is not permitted in schools, at work sites/bus depots/maintenance depots, in special transportation vehicles, on buses or on school grounds by any NCS D staff or by any members of the student body or general public.

7.1.4 **Language**

Drivers shall not use profanity or make racist, sexist or other inappropriate comments while on duty.

7.1.5 **Issues with students, parents/guardians or other individuals**

- a. If a driver has a concern or complaint regarding a parent or other individual, they shall take the matter up with their foreman/school administrator.

- b. Issues with students shall be addressed in consultation with the school administrator and following student disciplinary procedures.

7.1.6 Personal Use of School Buses

- a. Employees with Nova Central School District shall not use a school bus for personal reasons at any time.
- b. Contracted bus drivers shall not use a school bus for personal reasons during the hours when they are providing transportation services for the district.
- c. Buses are not permitted outside of their normal bus route without appropriate authorization by the Manager of Student Transportation or the Manager of Administrative Services.
- d. Passengers except for students, except as authorized by Nova Central School District, shall not be permitted to travel on a school bus.
- e. Where necessary, the Manager of Student Transportation or his/her designate shall approve arrangements for a NCS D bus driver employee to park his/her assigned bus at their place of residence.

7.1.7 Maintaining Order and Control

The school bus and special transportation vehicles are regarded as an extension of school property. Drivers shall be responsible for maintaining order and control when students are:

- a. Getting on the bus or in the vehicle
- b. Riding the bus or in the vehicle
- c. Getting off the bus or out of the vehicle.

7.1.8 Daily Checks of School Buses

a. Pre-trip Checklist

- i) The bus driver must complete a *Daily Pre-trip Inspection Report* including their record of duty status and the condition of their bus as outlined in the report.
- ii) The school bus driver must submit the original pre-trip inspection report forms to the bus foreman at the end of each week.

b. End of Run/Child Checks

Each bus driver is required to do a thorough walk through of the bus at the end of each run, checking for any children who may be left on the bus, any belongings left on the bus or identifying any issues with the bus interior (eg. broken window, torn seat).

7.1.9 **Substitute Bus Drivers**

A substitute school bus driver for the district is a person who has qualified to drive a board-owned school bus but who has not been appointed as a permanent school bus driver with the district.

a. ***Applicable legislation/policies/procedures***

Substitute drivers must follow all applicable legislation, policies and procedures with respect to the operation of a school bus.

b. ***Orientation***

All new substitute drivers are required to participate in an orientation session as established by the bus foreman or Manager of Student Transportation.

c. ***Bus checks***

Substitute drivers shall complete pre-trip inspection checklists, end of run/child checks and conduct reports for students where appropriate.

7.1.10 **Contracted Drivers**

All contracted operators and drivers are required to follow provincial legislation and applicable district policies and procedures pertaining to student transportation, unless otherwise negotiated with the district.

7.1.11 **Bus Driver Assignment on Board-Owned Buses**

The bus foreman or Manager of Student Transportation shall assign NCS D school bus driver employees to particular routes and buses, based on the most efficient and effective use of human and other resources for student transportation. From time to time, drivers may be assigned to different routes based on operational requirements.

7.1.12 **Professional Development**

a. ***Regular Bus Drivers***

All regular bus drivers shall participate in training or professional development sessions sponsored by Nova Central School District as required by the bus foreman, Manager of Student Transportation or Manager of Administrative Services. The costs for such participation shall normally be covered by the district.

b. ***Substitute Bus Drivers***

Substitute bus drivers are encouraged to participate, where possible, in training or professional development offered for regular bus drivers. Such participation shall normally be at the cost of the

substitute driver, unless otherwise identified by the district.

c. **Contracted Drivers**

Private contractors who provide transportation services for Nova Central School District are encouraged to participate, where possible, in training or professional development offered for NCS D regular bus drivers. Such participation shall normally be at the cost of the contracted operator or driver, unless otherwise identified by the district.

400.1(7.2) **School Bus Operations**

7.2.1 **Cleaning**

Bus drivers shall maintain their buses in a clean and tidy condition, in accordance with district guidelines.

7.2.2 **Installation of equipment and accessories on Buses**

Bus drivers shall ensure that:

- a. Equipment or decorations are not installed on his/her assigned bus without the approval of the foreman.
- b. Garbage cans are not attached to doors or located in bus aisles.
- c. Stickers or decals are not attached to the inside or outside of the bus without the approval of the bus foreman.

7.2.3 **Routine maintenance**

Routine maintenance of school buses shall be performed by qualified mechanics, in accordance with district guidelines.

7.2.4 **Two-way communication**

All buses and special transportation vehicles shall be equipped with two-way communications equipment, normally in the form of a two-way radio or cell phone. This equipment is required for work-related communications with school or depot staff and for use in emergency situations.

7.2.5 **Video Surveillance on buses**

Video surveillance on buses shall be permitted in accordance with policy and procedures on video surveillance developed by Nova Central School District.

7.2.6 **Transportation of cargo**

In accordance with the Highway Traffic Act, Section 9, any cargo that is carried on a school bus in Nova Central School District shall be secured in a manner that is separated from the passenger compartment or cannot come into contact with passengers in an accident.

- a. Items permitted to be carried on a bus are items that can be held on the lap, between the legs or can be stowed under the seat in front of the student (eg. bookbags).
- b. Items not permitted to be carried on a bus without being properly secured are luggage, hockey/duffle bags, sharp items, large pieces of musical equipment, large animals, etc.

7.2.7 **Bus idling**

Bus drivers shall ensure that:

- a. Buses are not left idling when the driver is not on his/her assigned bus.
- b. Idling is kept to a minimum.
 - i) Recommended idling time during winter months is 15 minutes, except when starting the bus first thing in the morning.
 - ii) Maximum recommended idling time during spring, summer or fall months is 5 minutes, except in extreme weather conditions.

400.1(7.3) **Student Transportation During the School Day**

7.3.1 **Bus Schedules**

- a. **Travel time**
Student transportation routes shall be designed where possible to minimize student travel time.
- b. **Arriving at School/Leaving School**
School administrators shall arrange for appropriate supervision of students who travel by bus or special transportation, when they are arriving at school or leaving school, as per the normal school schedule.
- c. **School Opening and Closing**
 - i) In the case where buses are serving more than one school, or where bus drivers are making double runs to pick up and drop off students, school administrators shall cooperate with each other and the Manager of Student Transportation or the Manager of Administrative Services in the establishment of staggered hours and the opening and closing of each school.
 - ii) School administrators shall consult with the Manager of Student Transportation or the Manager of Administrative Services when changing the opening and closing hours for

their schools, if any students are bussed to their school.

7.3.2

Bus Routes

The Manager of Student Transportation or his/her designate shall establish or confirm school bus routes prior to the commencement of each school term.

- a. Bus routes shall not be changed or altered without the approval of the Manager of Student Transportation or his/her designate.
- b. Bus routes shall not be established for any side roads unless
 - i) Distance and student numbers warrant it AND
 - ii) A safe turn-around for a bus exists.

7.3.3

Bus Stops

- a. All new Bus stops shall be established in accordance with the Department of Education's Student Transportation Policies and where appropriate, in consultation with local municipalities, service districts and/or police.
- b. Bus stops shall not be changed or altered without the approval of the Manager of Student Transportation or his/her designate.
- c. Bus stops shall be established, taking into account practical considerations such as the location of students/families, and distances. The guidelines for establishing bus stops are:
 - i) A maximum of four (4) stops in 1.6 kilometres, unless otherwise authorized by the Manager of Student Transportation or his/her designate.
 - ii) The safety of students and the safe operation of the school bus shall be primary considerations when establishing bus stops including the volume of traffic, visibility of the bus stop in both directions, etc.
 - iii) Students may be required to walk approximately 0.5 kms or more to the closest bus stop.
- d. Existing bus stops shall be reviewed regularly and may be eliminated if
 - i) Student/family numbers do not warrant having a bus stop in that location

- ii) There are safety concerns with the location
- e. School administrators, in consultation with the Manager of Student Transportation, shall communicate to students and parents/guardians information regarding any changes to bus stops, and prior notice of the change shall be provided where possible.

400.1(7.4) **Special Transportation**

7.4.1 **Eligibility**

- a. Special transportation may be provided for students who are unable to walk to school or ride a regular bus, as certified by an Educational Planning/ Instructional Support Services Program [ISSP] Team and a qualified physician and approved by the Department of Education. Students with special needs may be eligible if:
 - i) They have physical disabilities that prevent them from accessing the regular school bus.
 - ii) They have been identified as having behavioural disorders, developmental disabilities, or pervasive developmental disorders such as autism and are unable to walk to school or, for safety reasons, cannot access the regular school bus.

7.4.2 **Type of Transportation**

- a. Special transportation shall be provided two times a day (to school/other location and from school/other location), unless special circumstances are approved through the Department of Education.
- b. Special transportation shall not be approved for less than four weeks.
- c. Special transportation may be provided to a student's local school or to a centralized program.
- d. Travel by regular school bus with a student assistant or by board-owned special needs bus shall be the first options considered for transportation of students with special needs.
- e. If a board-owned regular or special needs school bus are not options, transportation for

a student with special needs may be contracted by Nova Central School District. Contracted transportation may include private buses or passenger vehicles.

- f. Special transportation shall be provided in a way which both benefits the student and maximizes transportation efficiencies.

7.4.3

Requesting Special Transportation

- a. An application for special transportation shall normally be initiated by an Individual Support Services Planning (ISSP) Team or an Educational Planning Team, on behalf of the parent/guardian.
- b. The parents shall be required to complete a *Consent for Release of Information form* and to have a qualified physician complete the medical certificate.
- c. The ISSP or Educational Planning Team shall complete the proper application form
- d. The Team shall forward the completed package, including consent form and medical certificate, to the Senior Education Officer – Student Support Services at the district office for review and recommendation to the Department of Education.

7.4.4

Approval of Special Transportation

All special transportation is approved by the Department of Education, through the School Transportation Division.

- a. If special transportation is approved for an individual student, the Senior Education Officer –Student Support Services and The Manager of Administrative Services shall determine the most appropriate method of transportation, and the duration, in accordance with the time approved by the Department of Education.
- b. The Manager of Administrative Services shall arrange transportation as required. Contracted transportation services shall be arranged in accordance with the *Public Tendering Act* and district purchasing policies and guidelines. Parents are permitted to bid on contracts to provide transportation services for their children.

7.4.5

Expectations of Parents/Guardians

When providing special transportation, Nova Central School District is responsible for arranging the pick up of students at a designated location and dropping them off at the same location.

The parents/ guardians are expected to:

- a. Have the child in a designated place on time and supervise them at that location until they are picked up.
- b. Assist the child in boarding and be available to assist them to get out of the vehicle when he/she returns home.
- c. Notify the driver in advance if the child will not be attending school.
- d. Provide the driver with any appropriate information regarding the care and supervision of their child while enroute.

7.4.6

Expectations of Special Transportation Providers

Special transportation providers are responsible for the safe transport of students with special needs to and from school/another location, as approved by the Department of Education. Special transportation providers are expected to:

- a. Follow the terms of the contract as negotiated with Nova Central School District.
- b. Work cooperatively with the parents and school staff to meet the needs of the student
- c. Establish an emergency plan in consultation with school staff and parents.
- d. Notify the school administrator or parents if they experience vehicle or other problems and are going to be late picking up or dropping off the student.
- e. Assist parents/guardians with getting the student in or out of the vehicle, where appropriate.
- f. In the event that there is no one at the designated stop when dropping off the student, the driver may need to wait until the parent/guardian arrives. However, in cases where this happens more than once, it is expected that the driver shall report the matter to the school administrator for follow-up.

400.1(7.5) **Bus Safety**

7.5.1 **Bus stop supervision and safety**

- a. The responsibility for the safe and timely arrival of students at a school bus stop, and the student's safe return home from a bus stop, rests with the parent or guardian. Parents shall be encouraged to limit the time that students spend at the bus stop and to arrange for supervision of their children at the bus stop where appropriate.
- b. Students who are identified as causing vandalism or exhibiting inappropriate behaviour at a bus stop may lose their bus riding privileges.

7.5.2 **Getting on and off the bus**

- a. Bus drivers shall activate red flashing lights and stop signal arms at all bus stops where students are getting on or off a school bus.
- b. Bus drivers shall activate red flashing lights and stop arms when picking up and dropping off students on school parking lots, except when other arrangements are approved by a bus foreman.
- c. Bus drivers shall apply the air brakes on their buses at all times when picking up and dropping off students.

7.5.3 **Bus Safety Educational Programs**

School administrators shall determine the need for, and feasibility of, a bus safety program. They may consult with the Manager of Student Transportation or Manager of Administrative Services for additional information on such programs.

7.5.4 **School parking lots**

School administrators are encouraged to consult with the appropriate bus foreman or Manager of Student Transportation or his/her designate in the development of an appropriate plan for their school parking lots, and the picking up and dropping off of students. Where a safety concern is identified, the implementation of an interim or long-term plan to address the concerns shall be approved by the Director of Education.

7.5.5 **Kinderstart/pre-school students**

As per Transport Canada Guidelines and Regulations, pre-school aged children under the age of five shall not be permitted to ride on school buses.

7.5.6 Seating capacity

School buses are operated at maximum capacities as indicated by Department of Education policies.

For a 72-passenger bus, these capacities are:

- a. 72 students for grades k-6 or a mixed load of grades K-12.
- b. 63 students for grades 7-12.

7.5.7 Assigned seating

School administrators shall determine whether seating plans/assigned seats are appropriate for their school bus runs. In the case of buses that serve more than one school, school administrators must consult with each other in the implementation of assigned seating. Seating plans may be valuable for identification purposes in an emergency, and for curtailing discipline problems and damages.

7.5.8 Bus monitors

School administrators shall determine the need for, and feasibility of, a bus monitor program. They may consult with the Manager of Student Transportation or Manager of Administrative Services for additional information about such programs.

400.1(7.6) Student Behaviour and Discipline on the Bus

The school bus is considered an extension of school property and students are required to take responsibility for their behaviour and conduct and to contribute to safety on the bus.

7.6.1 Expectations of students

Students' behaviour on the bus can directly affect their safety and the safety of others. When students ride the bus they are expected to:

- a. Follow the instructions and directions of the bus driver at all times.
- b. Remain seated while the bus is in motion and not obstruct the aisle.
- c. Refrain from making loud noises, swearing, throwing objects, changing seats or otherwise distracting the bus driver.
- d. Refrain from throwing things out the window or putting hands, arms, head or other body parts out of the window.

- e. Refrain from damaging or defacing the bus or tampering with bus equipment.
- f. Demonstrate respect for others and refrain from hitting, spitting, kicking, verbally abusing or exhibiting other inappropriate behaviours towards another person.

7.6.2 Expectations of parents

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- a. Support school bus safety and the efforts of the bus driver and school staff to maintain order, discipline and control on the bus.
- b. Ensure that their children are at the bus stop on time and supervised at the bus stop when necessary.

7.6.3 Behaviour threatening the safety of other students

The bus driver is in charge on the bus and is responsible for maintaining a safe environment for the transportation of students. When behaviour by someone on the bus threatens the safety of those riding the bus, the bus driver has the authority to:

- a. Enforce the rules of safety and conduct on his/her vehicle.
- b. Stop the bus and require the individual to conduct themselves appropriately before moving the bus again; this may also involve communication with the foreman or school administrator by radio/phone.
- c. Complete a Conduct Report on the student/incident in writing, for submission to the school administrator.
- d. Request that the school administrator initiate disciplinary action with the student.

7.6.4 Disciplining students for misbehaving on the bus

Accessing transportation provided by the school board is a privilege, not a right, and as such, may be revoked by the Director of Education for safety and discipline reasons.

- a. The school administrator has the authority to: discipline a student for misconduct on a bus and suspend a student from riding the bus.
- c. When a student's riding privilege has been suspended, it becomes the responsibility of

the parent/guardian to provide the student with transportation to and from school.

400.1(7.7) **Emergencies**

7.71

Medical Emergency on the Bus

There are many forms of medical emergencies that can occur when students are traveling on a bus. This can include injury (eg. cut), sudden illness or an allergic reaction.

- a. When a medical emergency occurs on a bus, bus drivers are expected to assess the situation and follow emergency procedures.
- b. Depending on the situation, the driver may:
 - i) Administer first aid or CPR.
 - ii) Administer assistance as per established medical plans (eg. anaphylaxis).
 - iii) Notify the bus depot when time permits.
 - iv) Head to the nearest hospital or, if this is not appropriate or possible, radio for an ambulance.
- c. Parents/guardians are expected to:
 - i) Notify the school administrator when their child has a life-threatening allergy or illness.
 - ii) Cooperate with school staff in the development of an individual student action plan for their child, including for when they travel on the bus.
 - iii) In the case of a child with life threatening illnesses or allergies, ensure that they carry the appropriate amount of medication for all bus trips.
- c. The school administrator shall ensure that
 - i) An anaphylaxis plan and/or medical plan is established for all students with life-threatening illnesses or allergies, including for travel on a school bus.

- ii) Bus drivers are notified regarding students travelling on the bus with life threatening illnesses or allergies and are included in any training that occurs for school staff on the emergency procedures (eg. epi-pen injection).
- iii) The individual student medical/action plan is available on the bus when a student with a life-threatening illness travels on the bus.

7.72

Bus breakdown

If a bus breaks down, the driver is expected to notify the bus depot, request assistance and follow directions.

- a. Students shall be required to remain on the bus and in their seats until the situation is resolved or alternate transportation is arranged.
- b. If the bus breaks down on a highway, the driver is expected to assess the situation and take whatever action is necessary to protect the safety of the passengers and the general public, including placing flares. The school bus should be brought to a stop as far off the traveled portion of the highway as possible.
- c. If the bus cannot be removed from the highway and there is a definite risk to passengers, they should be evacuated immediately to a safer area.

7.73

Bus accident

Any contact between a school bus and a person, vehicle or object, no matter how minor, is considered an accident. In the event of an accident, the bus driver shall:

- a. Assess the situation and implement emergency procedures as necessary
- b. In the case of NCSD bus driver employees, report the accident to the school administrator AND bus depot/foreman as soon as possible. The bus depot staff person/foreman shall report the accident to the proper authorities and the Manager of Student Transportation

- c. In the case of contracted bus drivers, report the accident to the school administrator AND to the Manager of Administrative Services.
- d. Complete an accident report form as soon as possible after the accident.

7.74

Fire/explosion

In the event of a fire or explosion, the bus driver shall:

- a. Pull over and stop in a safe place.
- b. Activate the four-way hazard lights, apply the air brake and turn off ignition.
- c. Get the fire extinguisher.
- d. Assess the situation and implement emergency procedures as necessary.
- e. In the case of NCS D bus driver employees, report the matter to the school administrator AND bus depot/foreman.
- f. In the case of contracted drivers, report the matter to the school administrator AND the Manager of Administrative Services.

7.75

Bus Evacuationsa. ***Types of Evacuations***

For various reasons, it may be necessary to evacuate a school bus. This can be done in four ways:

- i) Front door evacuation only.
- ii) Rear door evacuation only.
- iii) Front and rear door evacuation.
- iv) Emergency windows and roof hatch, if equipped.

b. ***Mandatory Evacuations***

A driver must evacuate the bus when:

- i) The bus is on fire or there is the threat of fire.
- ii) The position of the bus may change and increase the danger.
- iii) There is an immediate danger of collision.
- iv) There is a hazardous materials spill.

c. ***Determining the Need to Evacuate***

In other circumstances, the bus driver is expected to assess whether or not an evacuation of the bus is necessary. As a general rule, student safety and control is best

maintained by keeping students on the bus in an emergency situation.

d. **Evacuation Procedures**

In the event of an evacuation, the bus driver or other responsible person should:

- i) Determine the best type of evacuation
- ii) If possible, place responsible students or other adults at each exit being used to help students off the bus and hold the door.
- iii) In the case of side window exits, place students or other adults outside to hold the windows open and help students out of the bus.
- iv) Lead students to a safe area.

e. **Evacuation Drills**

- a. School administrators shall ensure that bus evacuation drills are conducted for the general student population at least once per year. At schools where students do not regularly ride the bus, it is expected that bus evacuation drills will be conducted during field trips when buses are used.
- b. Bus drivers, including contracted drivers, shall cooperate with school administrators in the arranging of bus evacuation drills and participate in drills as required.