



**TOLEDO SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

**TRANSPORTATION  
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021**

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# Mission

The Toledo School District is committed and designed to provide a comprehensive instructional program from kindergarten through the completion of high school. Student learning is accomplished through a quality educational system by dedicated, caring staff working in partnership with students, parents, and the community.

Our mission is to provide opportunities and meaningful experiences to empower students to achieve their goals.

**“Each child. Each day. Each classroom”**

# Goals

"Where safety is our job"

**Department goal:** The Transportation Department strives to create a safe and enjoyable climate on our buses. Our children are this nation's greatest resource, and their safety must be our highest priority.

**“Believe that you as a driver have the ability to send your passengers into school with a good attitude and ready to learn, with few exceptions.”**



# Acknowledgements

This revision of the Transportation Employee Handbook is based on previous versions and excerpts from handbooks from other school districts and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Therefore, it is only right that all those involved in the development of this handbook over the years be acknowledged. Unfortunately, no comprehensive list of those individuals exists. Isaac Newton said: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Likewise, those who worked on this handbook have been able to stand on shoulders of those giants in the field of student transportation.

## FOREWARD

Knowledge is a key ingredient to becoming a professional school bus driver, para and mechanic on the Toledo Team. You will find numerous references throughout this handbook that will assist you as we strive to maintain a safe and efficient transportation operation.

In addition to the comprehensive training you have received at the beginning of your career, you will find included in this handbook only a few of the rules and regulations you live by as a school district employee. The complete rules and regulations can be found in reading WAC 392-144, WAC 392-145, RCW's, District Policy and Procedures Manual and the Washington State School Bus Driver's Handbook.

The management and the employees of the Toledo School District Transportation Department, commit to holding the following values and expectations as important foundations for positive relationships in the workplace.

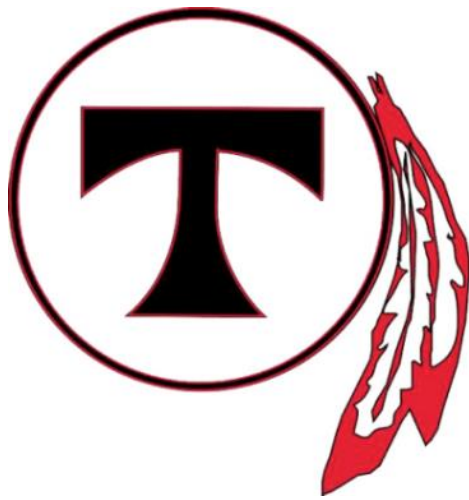
- Treat each other with respect and dignity.
- Believe in and support a workplace free from retaliation and/or harassment.
- We are committed to fostering personal responsibility and accountability.
- We are committed to addressing conflict in a positive, constructive and professional manner to improve harmony in our workplace.

# Introduction

School bus drivers are the most visible representatives of any school district. This district is no exception. Drivers have contact with a hundred or more students, and are observed by hundreds of other drivers on any given day. It is imperative that drivers maintain a professional attitude in their interactions with students, parents and family members, and other school district personnel. Just as important is to maintain professional driving skills and habits.

School bus drivers are expected to set examples by our driving skills. Not only are we expected to be professional commercial vehicle drivers, we are also expected to be safe, competent drivers with skills worthy of the cargo we are charged with transporting. Those who are observing your driving are members of the community, a large portion of which are also parents whose children we transport. They have every right to expect exemplary driving skills from a school bus driver.

The school bus is an extension of the classroom, and school bus drivers do teach. We are teaching students many lessons while we have them in our care. We teach interpersonal skills, acceptance of others, self-control, and the idea of actions and related rewards or consequences. We are the first school representative a student sees in the morning and the last they see at night. These students come from varied backgrounds, some desirable, some not so desirable. The bus driver becomes a “constant” for the student. A driver with a smile and greeting in the morning may be the first positive attention that student has received since they departed the bus the previous day. Believe that you as a driver have the ability to send your passengers into school with a good attitude and ready to learn, with few exceptions. This is the importance of a professional attitude. It will foster good relationships with students, district staff, and your colleagues in the transportation department.



# **SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS**

**Failure to comply with the rules, regulations, laws and directives in this section may result in professional misconduct per Washington Administrative Code and cause the suspension and or revocation of a driver's authorization to drive for the Toledo School District and may result in discipline up to and including termination.**



# Initial Requirements

Applicants for bus driver must meet these initial requirements to be considered for employment (WAC 392-144-101):

- Have at least five years of experience as a licensed driver of a passenger car.
- Submit to a criminal record check which shows that no offenses have been committed which would be grounds for disqualification of an authorization. (RCW 28A 400, WAC 392-144-103).
- Satisfactorily complete a school bus driver training course administered by an authorized school bus driver instructor.
- Meet all applicable continuing school bus driver requirements (WAC 392-144-102).

# Continuing Requirements

Every authorized school bus driver must continue to meet the following requirements (WAC 392-144-102):

- Maintain a valid Washington State Commercial Driver's license.
- Satisfactorily complete the annual school bus driver in-service training course.
- Maintain a valid first aid card.
- Complete and submit to the school district an annual disclosure form of crimes against children and other disciplinary actions (RCW 43.43.834 (2), WAC 392-144-103).
- Every authorized school bus driver must continue to meet the following physical requirements:
  - a) Be physically able to maneuver and control a school bus under all driving conditions.
  - b) Be physically able to use all controls and equipment found on state minimum specified school buses.
  - c) Be physically able to perform daily routine school bus vehicle safety inspections.

- d) Have sufficient strength and agility to move about in a school bus as required to provide assistance to students in evacuating the bus. The driver must be able to move from a seated position in a sixty-five passenger school bus, or the largest school bus the driver will be operating, to the emergency door, open the emergency door, and exit the bus through the emergency door, all within twenty-five seconds. A school district may develop and implement an alternative assessment of physical strength and agility. The alternate assessment must be submitted by the school district superintendent for review and approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- e) Have a current, valid medical examiner's certificate. Medical certificates are not valid for more than two years. Certificates can be required more often by the medical examiner. The physical examination must be conducted by a medical examiner listed on the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners.

## **Driver Credentials**

Drivers shall keep their license, first aid card and medical examiner's certificate with them at all times. It is the responsibility of each driver to maintain credentials. If a driver allows a credential to expire (license, medical examiner's certificate, first aid card), the driver will be relieved from their driving duties without pay pending the renewal of their credentials. Drivers must also provide the Transportation Department copies of their driver's license, first aid card and medical examiner's certificate to be placed in their respective personnel file.

All credentials must be with you at all times when driving. Failure to be able to present your credentials upon request or provide them to the Transportation Department may result in disciplinary action up to or including suspension and/or dismissal.

# Disqualifying Conditions

There are many conditions that will result in a school bus driver's authorization being denied, suspended or revoked. A complete list of disqualifying conditions is found in WAC 392-144-103. Below is a list of the most common reasons for disqualification:

- Having your personal driving privileges revoked or suspended as a result of a moving violation or having your commercial driver's license disqualified, suspended or revoked in the preceding five years.
- Having three or more speeding or driving too fast for conditions tickets or other serious motor vehicle violations including any alcohol related offence within the preceding five years.
- Having refused a drug or alcohol test or had a positive drug or alcohol test.

# Professional Misconduct

Professional misconduct means a documented instance of an authorized school bus driver failing to comply with the provisions of WAC 392-144, WAC 392-145 or RCW 46.61 while operating a school bus that puts your passengers, the public or co-workers at risk. Professional misconduct can result in the revocation of your school bus driver authorization. (WAC 392-144-020 (12))

Only an administrator of the employing school district can report a charge of professional misconduct to OSPI. Typically, OSPI will require a pattern of behavior with more than a single incident of professional misconduct before the school bus driver authorization is revoked. However, a single occurrence may result in a suspension of the authorization for an act resulting in significant risk of personal injury.



# Reporting Requirements

Every school bus driver must notify the Director of Transportation in writing within 20 days of charges for any conduct not meeting the standards set forth in WAC 392-144-103. The school bus driver shall also notify the Transportation Supervisor immediately of disqualifying traffic convictions or license suspension or revocation orders issued by Department of Licensing. The written notification must include the driver's name, their driver's license number, court of jurisdiction, and case number. (WAC 392-144-140)

If a school bus driver fails to follow the reporting requirements for violations of WAC 392-144-103, it is an act of professional misconduct and constitutes grounds for the driver's authorization to be suspended or revoked by the Superintendent.

Also under federal law and the Commercial Motor Vehicle Act Reporting Requirements are as follows:

- Notify employer of suspensions, revocations, or cancellations of license, or of disqualification from operating a commercial motor vehicle, before the end of the business day following the day you received notice of the action.
- Notify employer in writing within 30 days of ALL traffic convictions, commercial or private.
- Notify Department of Licensing of all "out-of-state" traffic convictions.

Section 1.4 of the Commercial Drivers Guide covers reporting requirements and consequences.

**All notification requirements apply 12 months a year, including summer months.**

Policy requires that you notify the Transportation Supervisor or designee as soon as practical if you are stopped by law enforcement while driving any district-owned vehicle (bus, van, or car).

# Drug and Alcohol Testing

The federal department of Transportation and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NTSA) have adopted rules regarding procedures for transportation workplace drug and alcohol testing programs (49C.F.R. part 40). These rules apply to every person who operates a commercial motor vehicle including all school bus drivers. In compliance with these rules, Toledo School District participates in Pre-Employment Testing, Post Accident Testing, Random Testing, Reasonable Suspicion Testing, Return-To-Duty Testing and Follow-up Testing. The district reserves the right to drug/alcohol at any time, including non-reportable collisions/accidents.

Post-accident drug and/or alcohol testing shall be done as soon as practicable following an accident if:

- The accident involved the loss of human life
- The driver received a citation under state or local law for a moving violation if the accident involved:
  - Bodily injury to any person who, as a result of the injury, immediately receives medical treatment away from the scene of the accident.
  - One or more motor vehicles incur disabling damage as a result of the accident, requiring the motor vehicle to be transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other motor vehicle.

After an accident, a school bus driver must remain available for testing until notified by supervisory staff. Failure to remain available may result in a refusal to be tested, which is treated as a positive test.



# Substitutes

Substitute driving has been called the most difficult job in student transportation. Sub drivers are often driving an unfamiliar route, in an unfamiliar bus, with unfamiliar students.

Because of the extra challenges that sub drivers face, they will find that some additional preparation will help them complete their route with the minimum amount of stress. Regular route drivers can make their job easier if they do their part to ensure that route directions are current and provide all necessary information. How route data is maintained varies from district to district, but one thing is constant – neither the school staff, students, parents, nor the subs want the school bus late due to poor route instructions.

It is important to remember that substitute drivers are authorized school bus drivers and are held to the the same standards and must follow and/or meet all requirements, policies and directives as all regular drivers.

The sub driver may want to take actions to address the challenges they will face which may include:

- Arriving early to become familiar with the route and bus assigned.
- Being sure to check in with the Supervisor before and after the route in case there are any changes. This is important and sometimes critical.
- Leaving the bus in a condition that is consistent with your district's procedures.
- Keeping notes on each route you drive. The notes will help you remember the idiosyncrasies of a route the next time you are assigned to drive it.

When a substitute is assigned an am or pm run only by the Transportation Supervisor in the work day, the substitute is guaranteed a minimum of two hours. The same guarantee applies for any other contracted route if it is the only assignment for that work day. If an am and pm run and/or any combination of other contracted routes are assigned in the same work day, the substitute will receive those assigned hours.



# **SCHOOL BUS DRIVER REQUIREMENTS**

**Failure to comply with the rules, regulations, laws and directives in this section may result in professional misconduct per Washington Administrative Code and cause the suspension and or revocation of a driver's authorization to drive for the Toledo School District and may result in discipline up to and including termination.**

# General School Bus Driver Requirements.

- School bus drivers shall wear a properly adjusted seat belt whenever the school bus is in motion.
- School bus drivers shall immediately report any suspected malfunction or needed repair of the school bus in their charge.
- A school bus driver shall only allow individuals authorized to operate the school bus with passengers on board. No person except the driver shall be allowed to sit in the driver's seat.
- Except in accordance with district policy no school bus driver shall leave the driver's seat without first securing the school bus by setting the parking brake, placing the transmission in the manufacturer's recommended position, shutting off the engine, and removing the key from the ignition switch. The keys shall be kept in the driver's or other authorized school official's possession.
- All school bus drivers shall meet the qualifications established in chapter 392-144 WAC prior to transporting students.
- Except in accordance with district policy, a school bus driver shall not use a personal electronic device for personal communications while operating a school bus, except for the use of such devices to report illegal activity, summon medical or other emergency help, or prevent injury to a person or property, as permitted under RCW 46.61.667.
- Except in accordance with district policy, a school bus driver shall not distribute anything edible to students riding the school bus or any other school district vehicle. (WAC 392-145-031, September 1, 2016)





# Driving Requirements

- School bus drivers shall observe all driving regulations set forth in the laws of the state of Washington relating to the operation of motor vehicles (chapter 46.61 RCW, Rules of the road).
- Backing a school bus is prohibited unless an adult flagman assists or an emergency exists, authorized by the Transportation Supervisor or designee or prior approval (approved school bus turn a rounds where backing is required and on the route sheet).
- School bus drivers shall yield the right of way to emergency vehicles.
- The speed of a school bus shall not be allowed to exceed the legal truck speed or any other applicable posted speed limit.
- When it is necessary to overtake and pass a slow moving vehicle, school bus drivers shall take reasonable action to assure that no third vehicle is drawing near. There shall be a visual road clearance of at least eight hundred feet on the road surface.
- All school buses shall slow down to ten miles an hour or less before making a ninety degree right or left turn.
- All school buses shall be operated with the headlights on when carrying passengers or traveling on a public roadway.
- All school buses shall be operated with the doors closed when carrying passengers or traveling on a public roadway. (WAC 392-145-050)

## Strobe Lights

Strobe lights are to be used only under the following conditions when one or more students are on board:

- The bus is in motion in inclement, sight obscuring conditions, including but not limited to rain, fog, snow, and smoke;
- There is a need to improve the visibility of the bus when stopping, standing, or starting onto a highway;
- There is limited visibility caused by geographic hazards such as winding roadways, hills, trees, buildings, etc.
- The strobe lamp must not be activated solely because of darkness.

# INTERIOR LIGHTS

When transporting students in the early morning or in the evening when it is dark the rear most dome lights must remain on. At no time should any other interior lights be on while transporting students.

# RAILROAD CROSSINGS

The following requirements apply to drivers of school buses during rail road crossings:

- School buses shall stop at all railroad crossings except where:
  - Traffic is controlled by a police officer or flagger.
  - A functioning traffic control signal is transmitting a green light.
  - The tracks are used exclusively for street car or industrial switching purposes.
  - The Utilities and Transportation Commission has approved the installation of an “exempt” sign.
  - The crossing is abandoned and is marked with a sign indicating it is out-of-service.
- School bus drivers shall use simultaneously flashing amber hazard lamps within two hundred feet prior to stopping for a railroad crossing.
- The bus driver shall open the door and driver window to listen for approaching trains.
- Drivers shall take reasonable action to insure that passengers are quiet and shall turn off all noise making devices such as fans and radios while listening for approaching trains.
- Drivers shall not proceed until the door is closed, visibility is clear and the school bus can safely proceed across and completely clear the railroad crossing.

A school bus driver receiving a ticket for failing to make a proper stop at a railroad crossing will have their CDL suspended for 60 days. (WAC 392-145-070) (WAC 392-144-103 (2)) (RCW 46.61.350 (3))

# School Zones

All Toledo school bus drivers are to observe the 20 miles per hour in posted school zones from 7 AM to 5 PM on school days in and out of the district except in the following circumstances:

- If the school zone is on an arterial and is controlled by amber flashing lights.
- If the school zone is controlled by flashing amber lights.

# Turnarounds

Backing a school bus is one of the most dangerous maneuvers that a driver can make. The size of the bus creates a large barrier to visibility. As a result, there is a general prohibition against backing the bus at any time (WAC 392-145-050 (3)). Ideally, routes will be established in a way that backing turnarounds are not necessary. In those cases where a turnaround is necessary, the backing maneuver should be for a short distance only or at a “T” intersection. All regular route school bus turnaround locations are required to be authorized by a school district administrator. (Also see bullet under “Driving Requirements”)

If students are to be loaded or unloaded at a backing turnaround, they should be loaded before backing, and unloaded after backing. Always check for pedestrians when backing, and back to the least traveled portion of the roadway.

# Pre-trip and Post-trip Requirements.

The following are requirements to assure safety and security of the school bus during operation:

- Motor fuel shall not be put into the tank while the engine is running or while passengers are on the school bus. School bus drivers, prior to commencement of any trip, shall assure that the school bus has sufficient fuel to prevent the school bus from running out of fuel.
- School bus drivers, prior to commencement of any trip, shall assure that the mirrors, windshield and rear window(s) of the school bus are clean.

- Prior to commencement of and during any trip, with passengers aboard, every school bus driver shall ensure there are no articles in the following areas that could impede normal movement, visibility, or emergency egress: The service entrance step well; the entire main aisle from front to rear; the aisles or passage ways to any emergency door; the entire shelf area between the rearmost passenger seats and the rear emergency window (if so equipped).
- Tools and other miscellaneous articles shall be carried in appropriate compartments. They shall not be carried loose upon the floor or dashboard area of the school bus.
- School bus drivers shall be certain that all brakes, lights, stop signs, warning signal lamps, and other safety devices are working properly before starting on any trip and shall assure that the school bus is equipped with a fully stocked first-aid kit, three reflective triangles, a body fluid clean-up kit and a fire extinguisher certified to be in good working order.
- School bus drivers shall check the latch, safety lock, and warning system for all emergency exits prior to each trip and no school bus shall be operated with passengers aboard unless all the emergency exits are functioning properly.
- At the end of each trip or route segment, the school bus driver shall thoroughly check the school bus to ensure that no students are left on the school bus and place the “Bus Empty” sign in the rear window.
- School bus drivers will sweep the interior of their bus at the end of each trip or route segment.
- School bus drivers will check for any damage to seats or the interior of their bus at the end of each trip or route segment.
- School bus drivers will make sure all garbage is picked up and garbage receptacles are emptied and new liners are placed in the receptacles.
- Additionally, the school bus driver shall take reasonable action to ensure that any articles left behind by students are safe, secure, and dealt with according to district policy.



# Daily Vehicle Inspection Reports

When any Transportation Department Vehicle is used, for any reason, a Daily Vehicle Inspection report must be filled out. This is a federally required legal document. It is legal proof that you performed a pre-trip and post-trip inspection and evaluated the condition of the vehicle when you left and returned to the yard. It reports the number of on duty hours, miles and the vehicle's condition and activity. It is also your record of the days driving and pay activity. Your signature is required after performing each pre and post-trip inspection.

## Instructions for Filling out the Daily Vehicle Report

The daily vehicle report is filled out during the course of a route as each activity is performed. Times, miles and student counts are entered as each portion of the route is completed. If a driver should use more than one vehicle in a day, a new Daily Vehicle Report must be used. If the vehicle is used by another driver during the course of the day, use separate report forms.

- Print your full name, current date, vehicle number and route number.
- Fill and initial the Daily Vehicle check out portion immediately while performing the pre and post-trip inspection. This is your documentation the pre-trip was done. Check each individual box and enter amounts where applicable.
- For each run, enter the time you leave the yard and the time you return to the yard as well as your departing and return mileage. Student counts are entered for each group of students transported. Make as accurate a count as possible when the group is at the school either loading or unloading. This information is used to show you are within the capacity rating of your vehicle information for routing decisions and for state reporting for transportation funding.

Turn the Daily Vehicle Inspection form in at the end of the week for regular full time drivers. If you drive a spare bus or trip bus, turn the Daily Vehicle Inspection form in daily or at the end of your trip.

# Maintenance Request

A maintenance request form must be filled out whenever work needs to be performed on a vehicle. Write up a request if you have discussed the problem with the mechanic.

In order for the work to be done, enter the vehicle number (not the route number), the odometer reading, the date and your name and list what the problem is. Turn the request into the mechanic or Transportation Supervisor.

If during a pre-trip you find repairs are needed and are not sure the vehicle should be taken on the route, discuss the problem with the mechanic before leaving the yard. If you feel the vehicle is not safe, request another vehicle from the mechanic or Transportation Supervisor.

If the requested repair is not completed within five (5) working days, fill out a second maintenance request form and turn it in directly to the Transportation Supervisor.



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# Miscellaneous District Requirements

These requirements are based on Toledo School District Policies and Directive for basic safety reasons for our drivers, staff, students and the public.

- No student or child will be allowed in the Transportation Compound while drivers are conducting pre-trip or post-trip inspections, cleaning the bus, fueling of buses or any time buses are being moved. The only exception will be staff children, however, they shall have a supervising parent or adult with them during these times, no exceptions.
- Five (5) MPH in the Transportation Compound
- Keep buses parked in stalls during pre-trip and at all other times except during fueling and cleaning. This allows free flowing traffic through the compound.
- All moving buses in the parking lot will yield the right of way to backing buses. Backing buses must use hazard lights and honk before backing.
- Back out one bus length only for sweeping and cleaning of buses.
- Buses leave the compound in line-up order for afternoon routes according to placement parking at the buildings.
- All private cars must park side by side in designated parking spots in the parking lot.
- Employees are not allowed to park in the motor pool area during a work shift.
- Buses are only to be used for school business only.
- No spouses, friends or children, are to ride the bus on the routes or extracurricular trips unless permission is first granted by the Transportation Supervisor. Parents/guardian need prior permission to ride any of the buses.
- No smoking, alcohol or firearms are allowed on the bus or school property.
- No long boards or Kendamas are allowed in the passenger area of the school buses, no exceptions. All Skate boards must be secured in or strapped down to the backpack.
- Only musical instruments that can safely fit onboard the passenger area of the bus may be transported on the bus.
- Unplug ear phones while loading and unloading: Have student stow cell phones, earplugs and all wires etc. away in pockets during the loading/unloading process.
- Drivers will not allow their assigned school bus to fall below one half tank of fuel and will sign up on the fuel log to make sure their bus is properly fueled.

# Designated Bus Stops

Bus stops are placed in the safest possible location and within the guidelines of WAC 392-145-030(5) regarding the location of the bus stop. Bus stops are established by the Transportation Supervisor and are not to be changed without authorization. Drivers must be constantly aware of changing conditions at bus stops. If the stop becomes unsafe for any reason, it should be reported to the Transportation Supervisor for evaluation. Buses should be stopping at least one bus length from any intersection. This will allow vehicles room to observe the school bus, and comply with the signals and sign.



## Route Sheets / Maps

For the department to operate at maximum safety for both students and substitute drivers, it is imperative that regular route drivers keep route sheets and maps up to date. The route sheets will include accurate times, stop locations, and adequate directions, as well as a listing of any hazards that a substitute driver need be aware of.

A route sheet of all regular routes is provided. All changes (times, bus stop locations etc.) must be pre-approved and initialed through the office prior to being put into the master route book or run on the route. The route will be flagged for update. Once the update is complete, a new route sheet will be put in the driver's box. Until the update is received, the route will be run according to the route sheet contained on the master route or until the Transportation Supervisor alerts the driver to make a change. Drivers do not have the authority to change or modify their route. Nor will drivers make any promises that a stop will be changed or modified. If you are requesting a new bus stop or have a concern in regard to a bus



stop (including, visibility-location-temporary construction-etc.) a Concern and Bus Stop Request Form needs to be submitted to the office for approval.

Alternate bus stops for inclement weather shall be placed on a winter route sheet for those routes that have District mandated winter routes.

## **Loading and Unloading Passengers**

Students shall not be allowed to disembark the bus at other than their regularly designated bus stop, per WAC 392-145-015(7), The only exception to this policy is a bus pass validated by the school office presented to the driver describing the request for variance. If a student does not have a Bus Pass, contact needs to be made with the building by sending student back in for a Bus Pass or via the radio to Dispatch to obtain permission to allow the student to depart the bus at a bus stop other than the designated bus stop. If the address does not match your route sheets you are not allowed to create a new bus stop, contact base for further instruction. In urgent situations a phone call can be made by the transportation office to request or confirm variance, but only when necessary.

Occasionally, parents will approach the bus and ask to retrieve their students at the school or at a stop other than the regular stop. At the school, do not release the student, send the parent into the office and call base. At a stop, do not release the student, the driver will call base on the radio and advise them of the request. Staff will check with the school office to ensure that this is a parent or guardian allowed to retrieve the student. The parent should be notified that this is not a normal procedure, and that variances to a student's transportation should be pre-arranged through the pass process.

New students often ride the bus for the first time in the afternoon, home from school. Drivers must know the designated bus stop for each student on the bus prior to departing the school. If for any reason, the driver is unsure of the correct stop, the school should be contacted either directly or through dispatch, and the proper stop determined.



## Bus Stop Safety

Loading and unloading of passengers shall be performed in strict accordance with WAC 392-145-060, and standard procedure for loading and discharging students. In the eight-light system sequence, drivers shall not control the red flashing lights and stop sign by way of the door. The override switch will be used, and students not allowed to disembark the bus until the driver is certain that it is safe. The driver has the primary responsibility for students while they are loading the bus, on the bus, and while disembarking the bus and crossing the roadway.

### **CONTROL TRAFFIC WITH THE RED LIGHTS, CONTROL STUDENTS WITH THE DOOR.**

Drivers must exercise extreme caution when approaching and leaving bus stops and school loading / unloading zones. Students should not be allowed to approach the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the door has been opened. When students are near, the bus should not be moved until mirrors are checked and the driver is **ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN** that movement of the bus is not hazardous. At all passenger stops (loading or unloading), the driver will insure that the bus does not roll during the loading or unloading process by placing the bus in neutral, setting the parking brake and keeping pressure on the service brake.

There may be times when a driver will need to load or unload at a more suitable location if an established bus stop is unsafe due to a temporary condition such as road construction, snow or ice, or any other condition affecting student's safety. If the condition continues to exist, the Transportation Supervisor should be notified and an alternate stop established and approved.

If a student must cross the road either to load or unload the student **must** wait for the driver to give them a hand signal to do so. It is the driver's responsibility to assure traffic in both directions has come to a complete stop before making eye contact and using the hand signal to cross students (this applies to all ages). The bus should move only after all passengers are aboard and seated.

## Denial of Ride to Bus Passengers

NO student shall be denied a ride from either his or her bus stop or school without first contacting base.





## Student Management

School bus passengers do not automatically know what is expected of them on a school bus or at their bus stops. Beginning with the first week of school the driver should read the district's rules and regulations for school bus riders to the students on the bus. This should be done upon arrival at school or if time allows upon loading at the schools in the afternoon. As new students ride the bus, it is the driver's responsibility to familiarize them with rule compliance and behavior expectations. An oral review should be given after winter break and again after spring break.

Drivers are responsible for the safe and orderly manner in which the students board and depart the school bus. Educating students on the safety issues of the bus is an everyday teaching process for the driver.

In compliance with WAC 392-145-011 (2), Toledo School District distributes a copy of the Bus Rules and Expectations to all students riding the bus at the beginning of each school year.

It will be the bus driver's responsibility to communicate effectively with the student and attempt to resolve discipline problems at the student-driver level, if at all possible. If the problem continues, a Student Behavior report will be written by the driver and turned into the Transportation office. A Student Behavior Report is turned into the Transportation office and a copy is sent to the respective building.

## Positive Rewards

Drivers should remember that as important as fair and consistent management of students is, positive reinforcement for those students who are complying with the rules is also important. The following ideas are provided for positive reinforcement:

- Praise – Verbal or written
  - Reward students by telling them verbally or in writing when they are properly behaving.
- Awards – Certificates
  - Document good behavior on certificates available in the transportation office.
- Positive Notes to Parents
  - Parents always enjoy receiving notes from drivers noting their student's good behavior on the bus.

Drivers must remember it is unlawful to provide students with food or drinks at any time.



# Emergency Exit Training

Emergency exit drills shall be performed three (3) times during the school year and will be conducted on school district premises in the morning when arriving at each individual school. Two (2) physical drills will be conducted; the first one within the first six weeks of school and the second within the first six weeks of the start of the second semester. The Transportation Supervisor or Designee will assign the week that the drills are to occur and all district schools will be notified so that they are aware students may be late to class as a result of the drills. A verbal drill will be conducted the last week of school prior to the Christmas break. These drills will be documented by the driver on the Emergency Exit Drill Record form.

The emergency exit drills shall include the following items:

- Instruction that in the event of an emergency, inside the school bus is the safest place to be. If the bus is in danger, however, evacuation may become necessary.
- Show the location, and demonstrate the operation of all emergency exits and kick out windows.
- Show the location and proper use of the following:
  - Fire Extinguisher
  - First Aid Kit
  - Location of Emergency Triangles
- Use of the two-way radio.
- How to set the parking brake.
- Location of ignition key and how to turn it off.



# Emergency Exit Procedures for Trips

The school bus driver shall provide emergency exit information and procedures (verbally) before starting out on any trip. The driver will complete and sign the Daily Report at the bottom of the page stating they have provided this information to all passengers.



## SPARE BUS USE

When the need arises for you to drive a spare bus, the responsibilities for that bus are the same as your regularly assigned bus. The following are additional spare bus rules:

- Fill out the bus log sheet completely and turn in immediately after each assignment.
- Clean and sweep so the bus is ready for the next driver.
- If a driver reports a bus not meeting the above requirements before taking it on a run, the last driver on the log sheet will be asked to clean the bus and another available bus can be assigned.
- The bus will be fully secured at the end of each assignment by closing all doors, windows and hatches and making sure the master switch is in the off position.

## Collisions

A bus collision can occur anytime. Professional school bus drivers must be prepared to function in an emergency situation in a way that reflects professionalism and a sense of leadership. If involved in a crash with students on board, those students

will be looking to the driver as the person who will be making decisions to protect them and resolve the matter.

Each bus should have an “accident kit” containing pavement marking crayon, pens/pencils, and all necessary forms to complete the drivers portion of the accident investigation noted below.

Drivers involved in a school bus crash, no matter how insignificant it may seem are expected to take the following steps:

- STOP THE BUS IMMEDIATELY – No matter how insignificant the happening. Report the incident to the Transportation Office (and police if after hours) giving the location and any other pertinent information.
- Evaluate the scene and take measures to prevent a second disaster.
  - Check for fuel spillage.
  - If the location of the bus is a hazard, move the bus to a safer location if at all possible (mark the tire location on the pavement prior to moving the bus.)
  - Evaluate the safety of all students. If it’s safer, leave the students in the bus.
  - Set up highway warning triangles depending on location of the bus...to prevent a second crash from occurring.
- Determine if there are any injuries. Do not move the injured unless it is necessary to prevent further injury. Notify the Transportation Office and police dispatch (if after hours) of the situation, and if there are any injuries, and any other pertinent details. [If this occurs after hours, contact the Transportation Supervisor or Designee at home using the emergency call list].
- Don’t leave the scene until released by law enforcement investigators, and/or transportation personnel.

## **Scene Behavior**

At the scene, it is important that the driver remain calm and professional. Speak ONLY to police officers, administrative or transportation personnel. Never admit fault about the crash. Speak politely to official people at the scene. Driver’s



attitude will affect the outcome of the investigation. Argumentative people may not get the benefit of the doubt as conclusions are made about cause and fault.

DO NOT speak to anyone from the media. You do not work for them; you have no obligation to share any information with them. If they insist on asking you questions, refer them to your supervisor as you “know nothing about what has occurred. Everything is under investigation.”

Remain calm and professional, keeping emotions under control. If there are any students on board, the driver is the example of “adult behavior”. Angry outbursts or voluble crying can only hurt the investigation and cause the students to become alarmed.

## **POST CRASH**

Complete the information exchange with the other driver, usually conducted through law enforcement on the scene. Complete a student roster, showing names and seating locations of the students on the bus at the time of the crash.

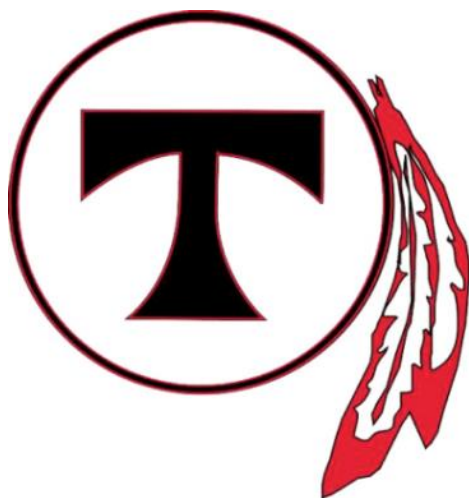
DO NOT allow any student to leave the scene until properly released by authorities. Do not let neighbors or parents take students off the bus or away from the scene, unless released by authorities.

## **Accident Prevention**

When a driver is involved in an accident, preventability of the accident will be judged by the Superintendent and Transportation Supervisor. A driver involved in an accident will be required to receive additional safety training as prescribed by the Transportation Supervisor.

If in the judgement of the superintendent or Transportation Supervisor, a driver is involved in an accident due to carelessness or negligence, the driver may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.





# **Two-Way Communication and Video Camera Procedures**

This section is district directive for the proper use of communication devices and systems by drivers and other staff members of the Toledo School District. Failure to follow this directive or other district policies that may be in place for the use of district communication devices and systems may result in discipline up to and including termination.

# Radio Etiquette

- Ensure that the two-way radio is checked as part of the pre-trip inspection routine.
- Always monitor the radio before using.
- Avoid cutting into conversations in progress.
- EMERGENCY CONVERSATIONS AFFECTING SAFETY HAVE PRIORITY.

Before speaking into the microphone, key the microphone and wait for the audible beep before speaking. This will prevent cutting off the first word(s) of your transmission.

Remember the ABC's of radio etiquette: **1) Accuracy, 2) Brevity, 3) Courtesy**. Know what is going to be said, say it, and clear the air. Avoid talking when someone else is talking (covering), one or both drivers will be unreadable. Two-way radios are for transportation business only and should be used in a professional manner. Words and voice inflections that suggest disgust, irritation, levity or sarcasm should be avoided. This will help prevent distortion and misunderstandings.

When using the radio, identify yourself to the unit you are calling, using "Route #" for communications to and from a regular scheduled route. For example, "Route 1 to Base" or "Base to Route 1". Communication between bus drivers should also use the same procedure.

When on a field trip, use "Bus #". For example, "Base to Bus 1", or "Bus 1 to Base". Communication between bus drivers should also use the same procedure. Also if multiple buses are on a trip, drivers will switch to an alternate frequency.

Wait for the unit you are calling to acknowledge your call before providing information. Once you receive an answer, then proceed with your question or information.

When conversation is completed, clear by saying your route number or bus number. Base will clear by using the FCC assigned license number. Usually the person initiating the call clears first. Both units should "clear", indicating to others that the conversation is completed.

# General Radio Use

General rules for when to call base and radio diction:

- Road closures or obstructions or any situation that will delay your arrival at school or will delay a student's arrival at his/her bus stop.
- Student illness or injury on the bus or if there is no one to receive a student (Special Ed, Kindergartener, or Pre-school)
- Use plain language when talking on the radio. Use yes, no and received instead of affirmative, negative or 10-4

## Emergency Radio Use

In the event of an emergency, drivers and others must remain off the radio unless specifically requested or called by the Transportation Supervisor or Designee. It is imperative that drivers and others follow this directive for the safety of all who may be involved in an emergency situation.

When you have an emergency on your bus that is a physical harm or life threatening situation use the Weight call system. If possible give your location, what the situation is and who is involved.

When drivers and base staff hear the Weight code these procedures will immediately go into effect:

- Base staff will close the air to all staff except for those who are directly involved in the incident.
- Drivers will stay off the radio and go to a safe location and stop their bus unless otherwise directed otherwise.
- Base will contact emergency responders and give the location of the bus involved, the type of incident, how many persons involved (if known) and contact district office.
- Base will notify other drivers when it is safe to proceed on their routes.
- Base will notify other drivers when normal radio traffic can resume.

## **Cell Phone Use**

Personal cell phones are to be turned off or on vibrate and not used when you are on duty on the school buses unless an emergency exists; this would include ear pieces and headsets as well. District phones will be provided for use on special needs buses. The Paras shall take or make the necessary calls with district phones.

## **Video Cameras**

All buses are to have the video camera in use every day. The District purchased the cameras to help you with student management and your staff development.



# Bus Maintenance

Maintenance of school buses in a safe and operational condition is a joint responsibility. The transportation mechanics are responsible for performing maintenance and coordinating repairs on the school bus fleet. The driver plays an important role in the maintenance of the bus by keeping it clean, reporting any defects or operational problems on a Bus Maintenance Request form and signing up on the fuel log. Any defect or malfunction that is a safety related item will be reported verbally immediately, and a Bus Maintenance Request form completed



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# FUELING BUS

Driver must sign up on the fuel sheet by the conclusion of the morning route. Double check with the driver if you are scheduled to take another bus on a trip, making sure it is filled prior to your departure.

## Bus Washing and Interior Detailing

Maintaining interior and exterior cleanliness of our school buses is the responsibility of the drivers. Keeping the buses clean helps reduce wear and tear on the interior and exterior of the buses and helps reduce un-necessary maintenance costs. The public also sees we are taking proper care of publicly funded equipment. Therefore, drivers are expected to maintain a clean and safe bus.

To accomplish this, drivers will be allowed up to 45 minutes once a week for washing the outside of their assigned school bus.

Drivers will be allowed up to 30 minutes every other week to detail the interior of their assigned school bus. This will include but is not limited to washing the inside of all windows, washing seats and mopping floors.

If a driver has layover time or needs to make up time, this time needs to be used for washing or cleaning the interior of your assigned bus.

Clean and safe is defined as:

- Clean and clear visibility of the school bus number, route number, license plate state required stickers and the Toledo School District Logo.
- Clean and clear lights to include headlights, tail lights, marker lights, four-way amber lights, eight-way amber and red lights and any other exterior lighting system installed for safety purposes.
- Clear visibility through all windows.
- Clean mirror system.

- Clean and clear seats, floors and aisle way.
- All garbage removed from the bus.
- No food or drink items left on the bus.

Cleaning time will be time sheeted. If additional time is required for cleaning maintenance, prior approval of the Transportation Supervisor must be obtained.

## **Shuttle/Roster Bus Cleaning**

Drivers will be notified if their bus is to be used for a shuttle or roster at least two days in advance of the assignment. Drivers will be responsible for making sure the exterior, interior and under carriage of their assigned bus is clean prior to the trip date.

Drivers who used the bus for the shuttle or roster will make sure the front of the bus and windshield as well as the interior of the bus is clean upon their return from the trip. If extraordinary messes are made by the students being transported on the trip, the trip driver will document the mess and the measures taken to clean up the issue.

All time used for cleaning a bus after a trip will be time sheeted and documented on the trip form.

## **End of Year Bus Cleaning and Inspection**

These inspections are required by law, RCW 46.32.010, and are conducted in accordance with FHWA, OSPI, and WSP regulations. The Washington State Patrol conducts these inspections.

The requirements for end of the year bus cleaning in preparation for required inspections are as follows:

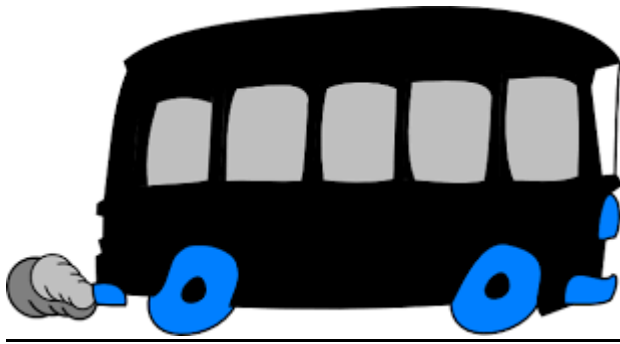
- Any damage not previously addressed needs to be reported.
- The bus exterior will be washed
- Interior windows will be washed.
- Floors, aisle way and stairs will be mopped and sealed.



- Seats will be cleaned
- Roof hatches cleaned.
- Ceiling, headliner, driver's seating area, dash, and gunnel (interior sides) areas will be washed, dusted and all tape removed.

## WASH BAY

The driver is responsible for cleaning up after themselves; dumping and rinsing out, mop buckets and mops and spraying out the wash bay of any dirt and debris.



## School Bus Idling / Emission Control

Some studies show that prolonged high-level exposures to diesel exhaust components can cause health problems. School age children can be particularly susceptible to these exposures. By putting in place idling restrictions and other preventative measures, we can improve air quality both inside and outside the bus. In our effort to comply with recommendations by the E.P.A., Puget Sound Clean Air and Northwest Air Pollution Authority, we will adopt and enforce the following practices to attempt to reduce emissions.

- Warm-up idling prior to departing bus lots will be limited to **5 minutes**. Newer diesel engines, including those in our fleet, do not need lengthy warm-up periods. "Comfort heating warm-up" will be achieved en route to

the first stop. Secondary to unnecessary emissions, this will also result in unnecessary fuel consumption.

- Upon arrival at any school for loading or unloading, bus engines should not idle any longer than one-minute. If you anticipate longer than a one-minute load/unload time, the engine must be shut down.
- Avoid parking and idling for longer than one-minute close to any building where exhaust may be drawn into HVAC systems and circulated in the interior of the building.
- The Transportation Supervisor may authorize temporary exceptions to any or all of these directions. Drivers will be notified if exceptions are made.
- Exceptions may include: extremely cold weather (<20 degrees), or servicing/repair of vehicles requiring extended periods of engine running.

## **Additional Prevention Strategies**

- Most of the buses in our fleet are equipped with Diesel Oxidizing Catalysts (DOC), which when used in conjunction with low or ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel can significantly reduce emissions.
- Increase following distances behind other vehicles, reducing emissions that are drawn into the interior of the bus.
- Utilize proper exhaust ventilation equipment in the bus shop during maintenance and repair activities requiring engines to run. Avoid modifying or shutting down air quality ventilation equipment to provide adequate air changes in the shop.
- Report suspected leaks of any kind (exhaust or any fluid leaks inside or outside the bus) using the work order system.



# Other Transportation Requirements

This section is district directive for the drivers and other staff members of the Toledo School District. Failure to follow this directive or other district policies that may be in place may result in discipline up to and including termination.

# Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

The management and the employees of the Toledo School District Transportation Department, commit to holding the following values and expectations as important foundations for positive relationships in the workplace.

- Treat each other with respect and dignity.
- Believe in and support a workplace free from retaliation and or harassment.
- We are committed to fostering personal responsibility and accountability.
- We are committed to addressing conflict in a positive, constructive and professional manner to improve harmony in our workplace.

## Other District Employment

Drivers and Paras working elsewhere in the district must be able to report in sufficient time to perform the required duties/responsibilities of their specific jobs in transportation.

## Dress Code

School bus drivers and other transportation personnel are held to the highest level of professionalism. In the past several years, ongoing evolution of regulations have required continuous training of school bus drivers in many areas. It is important to realize that as transportation personnel, we must maintain a professional appearance and attitude at all times. It is virtually impossible for a professional school bus driver to have the respect and control of the students when the driver is dressed or acts in a fashion that is similar to or below the level of the student's dress or behavior. The professional driver wears clothing that is modest, functional, and contributes to safety, public relations, and student control. *If school bus drivers are sloppy in their dress habits, it can oft be rightfully assumed that they will be sloppy in other areas of their bus driving responsibilities.*

- Keep hair and nails neatly trimmed (including facial hair), and wear jewelry that is complementing to the appearance, and not interfering with safe bus operation.
- Clothing should be clean and in good repair and good taste. More specifically properly fitting pants or shorts (paying attention to length of shorts, they should be walking type shorts in good taste).
- Toledo School District issued Shirts, Vests and/or Coat will be worn while on duty as a Toledo School Bus Driver.
- Clothing items traditionally worn as undergarments should not be visible.
- Shoes must meet applicable safety regulations. No open toed shoes, sandals, clogs, wooden soled shoes, or heels more than two inches are allowed. All footwear must be closed in the toe and heel, no “slip on” shoes (i.e. slip in sandals, etc.). Also prohibited is any footwear that could prevent the safe operation of the school bus.

Any driver arriving at work who is in violation of the established dress code will be sent home without pay.

## **Identification**

The identification of employees on school grounds is an important safety factor to our students and other district employees. Transportation personnel will wear their District issued attire and ID badges where it can be clearly seen by any District staff member, by the public or at all times while operating their bus and while on District property or on trips for the District.

## **Employee Accidents or Injuries**

Accidents or injuries on the job must be reported to the Transportation Supervisor, office or shop staff immediately. A written report is completed by the employee and returned to the Transportation Supervisor within 24 hours of the accident. Report all injuries even if they seem minor.

## **Late for Work**

If a driver is not at the transportation department by check in time, 15 minutes prior to departure time from bus compound, and has not notified the Transportation Supervisor that they will be late, it will be necessary to call a substitute. If a substitute driver is called, the late employee will be sent home for that shift without pay.

Para's need to report for work 5 minutes prior to the bus departure time and check in with their driver. If a substitute is called in because of a no show, the Para will be sent home with no pay for that shift.

Excessive tardiness shall be cause for discipline and possible recommendation for termination. An employee is determined tardy if they arrive later than the designated check in time.

A NO SHOW WITHOUT CALLING will be dealt with by the progressive discipline policy of the district.

## **Absences and Leaves**

When Transportation employees are unable to report to work due to illness, the employee must call the Transportation Supervisor or Designee by 8:00 PM the night before or after 5:30 AM the morning of needing to report for work. The employee must talk directly to the Supervisor or Designee. Text messages and/or voice messages will not be accepted. No calls are to be made between 8:00 PM and 5:30 AM.

When an employee is anticipating a need for time off, they are required to turn in a Request for Leave/Absence form. Submit the request to the Transportation Supervisor as soon as you become aware you need to be off. Requests will be considered in the order received. The Transportation Supervisor will do everything possible to honor your request; however the use of substitutes for covering out of town trips and illness takes first priority. The District reserves the right to deny any pre-approved leave with short notice due to the business needs of the district. It is

strongly encouraged that appointments (doctor; dental; etc) are made between runs and during off hours, as the number of substitutes available is limited.

A copy of your Request for Leave/Absence form will be returned to you with approval or denial within five (5) business days of the request.

Every time an employee is absent for any reason, a Request for Leave/Absence form must be submitted upon their return. This payroll document is used to determine the type of leave taken, on which date, and for which leave category is to be charged. This form is also used to justify the hours of pay for the substitute filling your position.

## **Inclement Weather**

During periods of severe weather conditions which may include extreme cold temperatures, excessive amounts of snow, etc. the following procedures will be initiated:

- The Transportation and District Robo call will be used to notify all Transportation personnel by the office staff in cases of either late arrival or school cancellations.
- Buses parked outside are to have air drained and be plugged in after both a.m. and p.m. routes (Transportation Supervisor will make announcement to activate).
- Chains: When it is necessary to chain up buses, the decision will be determined by either the Transportation Supervisor or the Lead Mechanic. Please use the buddy system to get your bus chained up (to avoid injury).
- Additional training will be offered to new drivers or drivers wanting a refresher course in chain installation.
- All mountain route buses and trip buses will have at least two complete sets of chains on board. This would include one set of cables and one set of irons. November 1<sup>st</sup> – April 1<sup>st</sup> unless extended by W.S.D.O.T.
- Bus routes that are affected with alternate winter bus stops shall have the alternate stops pre-approved and they shall be placed on the route.

- Plugging in Outside Buses: Make sure buses are plugged in during cold weather. After you unplug the bus, hang the cords on the hook on the post to prevent a driver from tripping over the cord.
- In inclement weather, prior to pulling into your bay knock off all excess snow from mud flaps. Sweep off back window and overhead light area. Make sure stairwell is free of snow and ice.

## Para Educators

Para Educators are a paramount piece of our Transportation Department. Paras must maintain a current First Aid card and complete the following required training:

- Complete annual in-service training as prescribed by the Transportation Supervisor.
- Complete required Washington State Training.
- Complete any other District mandated training.

The Paras are expected to meet the child at the steps and assist them. If the child needs assistance into the seat the para will be expected to lift them from the floor to the seat. Your job is not to carry the child up or down the stairs but to assist them in walking or assist the paras, teacher or parent. There may be an exception to this protocol, this will be determined on a case by case basis by the Transportation Supervisor or Designee.

Paras are expected to be actively involved with the students, helping them in anyway needed, or defusing any potential outbreaks. Also, comfort the child if they appear to be upset while providing positive reinforcement. Paras are required to assist the driver with any wheelchair and or car seat placement and tie downs. You are a team member with the driver, however, the driver has the ultimate responsibility.

All our special needs buses are equipped with seat belts. Paras need to wear seat belts while the bus is in motion per RCW 46.61.680. Personal cell phone usage while on the bus is prohibited.



Forms will be added when new forms are developed.

# TOLEDO SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received and reviewed a copy of the Toledo School District Transportation Employee Handbook on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_. I acknowledge that I have read and understand these laws, rules, policies, procedures, directives and statements made within. If I have any questions or concerns regarding this manual, I will address them to my supervisor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This page will be turned into the Transportation Supervisor and placed in the employee's personnel file at the Toledo School District office. A copy will be retained in the employee's supervisory file at the transportation department.



# Bibliography

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Marysville School District #25 (2015-16) Transportation Department Handbook, Marysville, WA

# References

Jennifer Lagadinos, Transportation Director Wenatchee School District #246

Deveri Hall, Router/Driver Trainer Wenatchee School District #246

Tim Morgan, Transportation Director West Valley (Spokane) School District #363

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Puyallup School District (2018) School Bus Driver's Handbook, Puyallup, WA

Yelm School District (Revised 2018) Student, Parent and Teacher Transportation Handbook, Yelm, WA

Toledo School District #237 Policies and Procedures

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## **Handbook Approved By:**

**Chris Rust, Superintendent Toledo School District, August 12, 2020**

**Asa Fyffe, President PSE/SEIU 1948 – Bus Driver Chapter, August 17, 2020**