

Administrative Procedure 563

SAFE OPERATION OF SCHOOL BUSES

Background

The safe transportation of students on school buses is of utmost importance.

Procedures

1. When transporting students, the operator is required to have his/her seat belt fastened, the bus headlights on and the doors closed.
2. School buses must be equipped with and have operational amber flashing warning lights, red stop lights, strobe lights and a stop sign arm as per Canadian Standards Association (CSA) regulations.
3. School buses must stop at all uncontrolled railway crossings. The operator will follow all procedures as set by the S Endorsement Program.
4. The operator will activate the alternating flashing amber lights prior to slowing down the school bus for the purpose of stopping to load or unload passengers. During loading and unloading, the alternating flashing red lights and the stop arm must be activated and emergency brake engaged.
 - 4.1 If a municipality passes a bylaw indicating that the eight-light warning system and stop arm are not to be activated within the limits of the municipality, the operator is to comply with the bylaw.
5. The Division permits the use of video surveillance systems on Division buses. (Refer to Administrative Procedure 181 – Video Monitoring Devices).
 - 5.1 Parents and students will be informed of the possible use of video monitoring devices on the bus.
 - 5.2 Only individuals authorized by the Superintendent or designate will have access to the video monitoring devices.
 - 5.3 Video recordings will only be released to outside agencies in conformance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) Act.
 - 5.4 Any recorded information will be securely stored and accessible only to individuals authorized by the Superintendent or designate.
6. All school buses will be equipped with a communication device, as approved by the Division. Mobile phones are not to be used unless the bus is fully stopped and secured in a safe location and only in case of emergencies.

7. School buses may be equipped with GPS and / or scanning systems, as approved by the Division.
8. The Division allows school bus drivers to transport their own pre-school children on the bus. The following procedures must be followed:
 - 8.1 The Transportation Department must be notified.
 - 8.2 If under six (6) years of age and eighteen (18) kg or forty (40) lbs, the child must be in a legally approved child restraint seat which is properly tethered as per the manufacturer's suggestion. The school bus must still meet CSA standards.
 - 8.3 In case there is a need to evacuate, at no time will a driver have more than one (1) child restraint seat in the bus with a child in it.
 - 8.4 If the child is over 40 lbs, they may sit as a regular passenger on a school bus.
 - 8.5 The behaviour of the driver's child must be consistent with the Divisions procedures for all children riding a school bus.
 - 8.6 At any given time the school bus contractor and/or the Transportation Manager may monitor the safety, security and behaviour of the child.
 - 8.7 There will be no charge for the child as they do not qualify as an ineligible or eligible student. Once they are of school age and considered eligible or ineligible, based on Alberta Education funding, the same procedures, fees and forms will apply as apply to all students in Black Gold Regional Schools.

Reference: Section 45, 51, 52, 53, 60, 61, 113 School Act
Traffic Safety Act
Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation 121/2009
Student Transportation Regulation 250/98 (Amended AR 125/2005)
Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation 304/2002
Vehicle Equipment Regulation 122/2009
Administration Procedure 181 – Video Monitoring Devices

Reference: Section 20, 60, 61, 113, 116 School Act