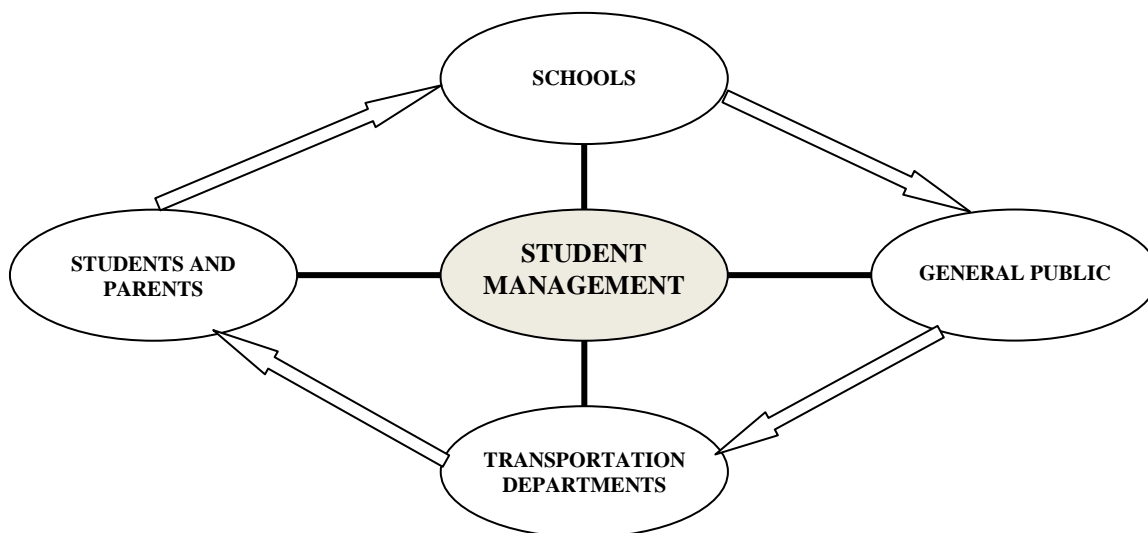


UNIT TEN – STUDENT MANAGEMENT

The objective of student management is to ensure a safe bus ride by allowing the driver's attention to be on operating the vehicle. In order for the school bus driver to safely operate the bus, it is essential that the student passengers behave in a controlled manner. The school bus must be looked upon as an extension of the classroom. Student management for the driver will encompass a wide variety of child psychology, adolescent behavior patterns and student management techniques. Unlike the teacher, whose classroom environment is more defined and with only one specific age group, the school bus driver will be in close contact with a variety of elementary, junior high and senior high age groups. Student management will encompass the following interdependent segments of the community.



Each of these segments should communicate both needs and problems in order to find solutions.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOLS

Schools should include programs of instruction to improve the student's safety at school bus stops and on the bus.

All school staff should be familiar with school district policies on student discipline, rules and regulations for student behavior, misconduct procedures, and special trip sponsor procedures.

1 CCR 301-26, 4204-R-208.00 – Medical and behavioral information shall be provided to transportation prior to the first day of service.

THE ROLE OF THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Supervisor of Transportation - The supervisor should provide avenues for cooperative problem solving which includes all levels of school district personnel, parents, and students. Rules for students and school bus drivers should be established and administered uniformly. An awareness of new techniques, equipment, child psychology, and behavioral patterns of children is important. A training program, including pre and in-service, should be developed, implemented, and constantly reviewed.

School Bus Driver - The school day for the transported student begins and ends with the bus. The driver needs to exhibit self-control, professionalism, and have a plan to establish appropriate behavior. Consistency is absolutely necessary for success. The school bus driver is responsible for the health, safety, and welfare of all passengers. In supervising the students, inappropriate student conduct will require the combined efforts of the driver, the transportation department, and school administrators. Drivers should have the attitude that driving a safe bus is most important. A student should not prevent the operator from driving a safe bus. The other passengers must be assured of a safe and pleasant bus ride.

Discipline on school buses is probably the biggest problem confronting school bus drivers today. The attitude of the driver should be consistent using the following:

- **Firm** - Be prepared to follow through. Avoid giving a directive that you cannot enforce.
- **Fair** - Be consistent in disciplining students.
- **Friendly** - Be approachable to the students, while keeping in mind that you, the driver, are in charge.

Understanding the principles of child psychology will help avoid trouble before it begins. Overlooking the violations of conduct of one student will cause you to lose the respect of the other students.

Be careful to strike a happy medium by not being too lenient or too harsh. Both extremes are equally poor for the morale of the school bus riders. Loud talking on the bus is a problem that requires much patience, but absolute silence is not a healthy atmosphere. Issuing a directive does not complete the teaching process. A directive must be patiently and constantly repeated.

It seems the minority (undisciplined) riders set the pace for the majority.

Be aware of the fact that each driver is working for an educational system whose job is training the minds of students. Too frequently students are

expected to be finished products with adult attitudes and this simply is not the case. Strive to build morale and cooperation with the students on the bus. In the course of time, the student morale will be a great help in controlling the worst offenders. When students discover that improper conduct is not acceptable, offenders will hesitate to do these things which cause them to lose prestige among their fellow students.

When speaking to an offender, speak in a friendly manner but with a firm voice. There should be no anger involved. Do not let personal problems reflect themselves in your mood or judgment while dealing with the students. If discipline is necessary, move the student to a seat near the front. **Never put a student off the bus to walk home.** Emphasize the disciplinary action that will be taken and that if it is not corrected to an acceptable level, the student may have his privilege of riding the bus taken away.

Think before you act

Tips on maintaining discipline:

1. Be friendly. Have a sense of humor.
2. Be sincere in your work.
3. Set firm, clear rules.
4. Never give a directive you do not intend to enforce.
5. Do not give a directive you cannot enforce.
6. Do not pick on every little thing. Commend good behavior.
7. Set a good example. Look for good qualities.
8. Be firm, fair, and friendly.
9. Be consistent.
10. Say "do this," rather than "don't do that." Be positive.
11. Offer choices with the possible consequence.
12. Keep your "cool."
13. Have a positive attitude.
14. Know district policies for reporting problems.
15. Be assertive: the driver is in charge.
16. Never strike or touch a student.

Don't become a constant mirror watcher. Safe driving requires your attention to be on the road.

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Students of all age groups are obligated by the expressed privilege granted by the Board of Education to ride the public school bus, to obey, and conform to the safety and behavioral rules of the school district.

The parents of the students are obligated to instruct their children to cooperate with the school bus driver in accordance with the safety and behavioral rules of the school district.

Parents often do not accept the fact that their child has misbehaved at school or on the bus.

THE ROLE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The public must obey the Colorado State Statutes. Also, they are to promote the safety of school-age children as pedestrians and transportation users of the roads of Colorado.

The schools and the transportation department should provide a program of public information. The objective of communicating to the parents and general public is to state district policies and procedures for safe student transportation.

STUDENT SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR RULES

The key to a safe, well-regulated bus is for the students to provide the school bus driver with an atmosphere that will allow the driver to direct special attention to safe driving. The school bus driver provides the students a standard of uniformity when applying the rules of the district. District rules may vary, but should be consistent with state regulations. The set of rules should be brief and limited to no more than 10 rules.

Students should follow directions the first time they are given. The rules should be posted in the front of the bus.

A copy of the rules could be sent to each student, parent/guardian with a form to be returned with both signatures indicating the rules were read and understood.

Sample Bus Rules:

1. Students are required to follow the bus driver's instructions.
2. Students should arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled stop time.

3. Before crossing, establish eye contact with the driver. When safe signal is given, it is safe to cross.
4. Cross 10 feet in front of the bus.
5. Stay seated, facing the front while the bus is moving.
6. Students shall not open or close windows without permission.
7. Heads, arms and objects must be kept inside the bus at all times.
8. Keep hands, feet and belongings to yourself.
9. Any behavior which jeopardizes the safety of the passengers or driver, is prohibited.
10. Use of drugs, alcohol, exiting rear door, inflicting bodily harm, vandalism, and littering are prohibited.
11. Use your quiet, classroom voice
12. Obscene or foul language or gestures will not be tolerated.
13. Students must be quiet at railroad crossings.
14. Respect others.

REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

Each district should have a policy and procedure for reporting unacceptable behavior. Student behavior that is inconsistent with desired safe behavior is reported as either major or minor incidents. Student misconduct forms are filled out by the driver and returned to the transportation supervisor or designee for initial screening. The driver should report behavior only after attempting to solve the problem within his/her own capabilities. The transportation supervisor or designee determines the decision whether the reported misbehavior will be identified as minor or major.

Student due process:

- Have a set process or procedure.
- Make sure it is written.
- Make sure the driver, student riders, and parents are familiar with the policy.

BULLYING

Bullying is an act of repeated aggressive behavior in order to intentionally hurt another person; physically, or mentally. It comprises repeated acts over time that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power with the more powerful individual or group abusing those who are less powerful. The power imbalance may be social power and/or physical power. The victim of bullying is sometimes referred to as a target. Bullying is characterized by an individual

behaving in a certain way to gain power over another person. Bullying may be emotional, physical, or verbal.

Refer to your district's Safe School Plan for information on bullying.

CONSEQUENCES

Any course of action, or consequences, in student management must be uniform but flexible enough to fit the conditions and circumstances of the violation and the individual(s) involved. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Student warned by driver. (driver to student conference)
- Assigned seat.
- Parents notified. (per district policy)
- Assignment of student to "remedial tasks" at school, or on the bus. Follow district policy or procedure.
- Principal, parent, student, driver conference.
- Withdrawal of transportation services.

Good behavior should be rewarded. Do something the students like, and which is appropriate for the age level. Rewards may include, but are limited not to:

- Praise.
- Note to parents.
- First in line, first off the bus.
- Special seat. (window, next to a friend)
- Awards, e.g., smiley face stickers, etc.

Do not provide edible treats to students as a reward. There may be allergies the driver is not aware of. The parents may not approve of a certain type of treat.

Always follow district procedures when disciplining or rewarding students.

HARASSMENT

Harassment Definition: A course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such a person and serves no legitimate purpose under the United States Code Title 18 Subsection 1514(c) 1.

The same procedures for dealing with any type of harassment apply as are described below for dealing with sexual harassment.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Adapted from "Steering Clear of Sexual Harassment, Peggy A. Burns, Esq." (Available from Education Compliance Group at 303-604-6141 or www.educationcompliancegroup.com).

The school bus is a unique environment in which verbal abuse and harassment can easily take place. A student being harassed has no place to escape the unwelcome behavior. It is important for the bus driver and paraprofessional to be aware of such behavior and take appropriate action. Any form of harassment described below is impermissible, and by law, the school district must take action to stop it.

No student should be subjected to behaviors that are intimidating, offensive, or threatening. Such behaviors may be identified as harassment based on:

- Gender
- Ethnic background
- Religion
- National origin
- Race
- Disability

Sexual Harassment Definition - "Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other sex-based verbal or physical conduct where (1) submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of the individual's education; or (2) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment." (Letter of finding by Dr. Battles, West Hartford Board of Education, June 8, 1993).

Review District Policy Regarding Sexual Harassment

The school district has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for students, including the bus ride. Sexual harassment is a type of illegal discrimination and must be dealt with in such a way as to stop the behavior. Keep in mind that both boys and girls can be the victims of sexual harassment. When students are exposed to inappropriate sexual behavior, assume it is unwelcome, even if the student doesn't act like it is. Keep in mind also, that even if the student being harassed isn't affected or pretends not to be affected, other students on the bus may be suffering the effects of the inappropriate behavior. Students can become uncomfortable and actually dread getting on the bus.

Three steps the driver and paraprofessional should take:

1. Identify Sexual Harassment

Some examples of verbal and physical sexual harassment are:

- Conveying rumors or making suggestive comments about a student's sexual activity.
- Calling students names of a sexual nature.
- Obscene gestures, including male students grabbing their own genitals and/or rubbing themselves in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Sexual molestation.
- Use of sexually explicit language, like slang terms for parts of the anatomy.
- "Mooring" a student with express intent to refer to bust size.
- Creating graffiti that uses explicit sexual language to describe and degrade members of the opposite sex.
- Unwelcome touching, pinching, or restraining of students by students of the opposite sex regardless of the ages of the students.
- Exposing private parts.
- Flipping up skirts or snapping bras.
- Threatening unwanted sexual activity.
- Students' subjecting other students to continual teasing or to lewd remarks about their anatomy.
- Offering a student money to perform sex acts, and other propositions of a sexual nature.
- Off-color jokes.
- Sexually harassing drawings and other "art" work.
- Simulating sex acts.

(Steering Clear of Sexual Harassment, Peggy Burns, pg. II 15, 16)

"Sexting" or taking and sending pictures of an indecent nature are also forms of sexual harassment and are punishable as child pornography. Sexting is the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photographs, primarily between mobile phones. The term was first popularized around 2005, and is a combination of the words sex and texting.

2. Take Action

When sexual harassment has been identified, it is necessary to accurately document what has happened and to immediately report the incident(s) to the appropriate district administrator. An investigation by the district administrator should follow a report of sexual harassment. Following is a list of what should be reported:

- Age of victim(s).
- Details of conduct they observed or were told.
- How long the conduct had been going on according to the information they have.
- How long a particular incident lasted.
- Whether the victim is subjected to the same activity repeatedly or if the offender varies his/her approach.
- Whether or not others joined in the harassing conduct.
- Whether conduct is directed at one student, or more than one
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of everyone who has spoken with you about the conduct.
- Names of anyone whose names have come up in discussions about the conduct.
- Any information you have which will facilitate a thorough investigation and fair assessment of what happened, and any actions necessary to be undertaken.

(Steering Clear of Sexual Harassment, Peggy Burns, pp. 111-12-111-15)

3. Follow Up

- Continue monitoring the situation. Report to the appropriate administrators if efforts to end the harassment are not working. Remember, the bottom line is, the harassment must be stopped.
- Getting students to listen and obey the bus rules is not easy. What works for one school and age group may not work for another. They are all different. Your attitude will let the students know that you mean business and that you are in control. If you let them think they've got the best of you, you've lost control. When students can push your buttons, you have a major safety problem.

TAKE CONTROL OF PASSENGERS

Clearly convey the rules at the beginning of the year or the first opportunity. Let the students know what the expectations are for behavior on the bus. Always follow through with the consequences that have been presented. Always approach the students with the behavior that is expected. Do not approach with the behavior that is not wanted. Using a positive approach is far more successful than a negative approach.

- Smile.
- Gain their respect by staying positive.
- Tell them the rules and why they need to obey.
- When they obey, praise them.
- When they disobey, make sure you take appropriate action according to your district's policy.
- Never lose your cool.
- If they do not listen, stop the bus.
- Speak to the trouble makers alone.
- If they still do not listen, follow your school district policy.