6630 Driver Training and Responsibility

School bus drivers will observe all state statutes and regulations governing traffic safety and school bus operation. The district will, at the beginning of each school year, provide each school bus driver a copy of: (a) the OSPI School Bus Driver Handbook; (b) the district's policy and procedure on the prohibition of harassment, intimidation and bullying; (c) all state and local rules and regulations pertaining to the operation of a school bus; and (d) the district's written rules for student conduct on buses.

Bus Driver Qualifications

School bus drivers shall meet the qualification requirements established by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and applicable state and federal law.

General School Bus Driver Requirements

School bus drivers shall: (a) wear a properly adjusted seat belt whenever the school bus is in motion; (b) immediately report any suspected malfunction or needed repair of the school bus in their charge; (c) only allow individuals authorized under the provisions of chapter 392-144 WAC to operate the school bus with passengers on board. No person except the driver shall be allowed to sit in the driver's seat; (d) 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; (e) All school bus drivers shall meet the qualifications established in chapter 392-144 WAC prior to transporting students; (f) 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. For the purpose of this section, operating a school bus is defined as when the school bus engine is running; and (g) Except in accordance with district policy, a school bus driver shall not distribute anything edible to students riding the bus.

Supervision of Students

When a teacher, coach or other staff member is assigned to accompany students on a school bus, such person will be responsible for the behavior of the students in his/her charge and will ensure that passengers comply with state rules and district policies and procedures for student transportation. However, the bus driver will have final authority and responsibility.

Charter Buses or Excursion Carriers or Subcontracted Carriers

Every contract between the district and a charter bus carrier or excursion carrier, or subcontracted carrier shall require a carrier profile report indicating a satisfactory rating from the Washington utilities and transportation commission before any service is provided. Supervision of children on trips under this subsection shall be designated to a specific employee of the district who shall ensure that the driver shall have not have unsupervised access to students during the trip.

Legal References

WAC 392-145-031 General school bus driver requirements
WAC 392-145-011 School district requirements
RCW 28A.160.210 School bus drivers — Training and qualifications — Rules
Chapter 46.25 RCW Uniform commercial driver's license act
Chapter 392-144 WAC School bus driver qualifications
WAC 392-145-016 Rules for students riding school buses
WAC 392-145-021 General operating requirements
49 CFR 382 FMCSA CDL Controlled substances and alcohol use and testing

Cross References

6690 - Contracting for Transportation Services

Management Resources

2018 - August Issue
Policy News, April 2007 School Bus Driver Qualifications
Policy News, October 2006 OSPI Updates Bus Driver Rules

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