

School Guidelines

Procedure 225

Revised: 10/8/2024

Statement

It is considered that school buses under contract with Tri-Board Student Transportation Services are an extension of the school system and the standards set by the individual school should be carried over to the school bus. School staff should be aware of the following guidelines to ensure students are safely and efficiently transported. Additionally, school administration should be aware of their board's transportation policy including eligibility requirements, as well as Tri-Board's application process so they can correctly inform families upon registration of their transportation options.

Procedure

Each school is assigned to one of Tri-Board's Transportation Planners who is responsible for the school's bus routes. School administration can contact their Transportation Planner with all questions or concerns regarding transportation as a starting point. Where necessary, the Planner will direct the school's inquiry to another Tri-Board staff member. All schools are provided with a list of Planner school assignments annually via the school's general email address. It is the responsibility of the school and/or school board to ensure the correct staff members receive emails sent to the general email address.

Student Discipline

Riding the school bus is a privilege requiring a certain level of safety and decorum. Severe or repeated misconduct by a student can result in a temporary or permanent loss of bus riding privileges. Behavior expectations of students are outlined in *AP 211 Responsibility of the Student*. Students are responsible to the principal (or designate) for their conduct on the school bus. School administration must be responsive to concerns brought forward by bus Drivers, Operators, or Tri-Board. The processes for communicating student behaviour and incidents are outlined in *AP 212 Student Incident Reporting*.

Returning Students to School After Hours

Tri-Board is provided with Principal, Vice-Principal, and Superintendent mobile contact information through the school board which is to be used in the event a student must be returned to the school after-hours (ex: because the student must be met at the stop and no guardian was present). School staff must be willing to meet the bus at the school to receive the student. In the event that no parent/guardian, school staff, superintendent, or school board staff can be reached, the bus driver will bring the student to the closest police station.

BusPlanner Web

Each school must have an account with BusPlanner Web to access their students' transportation details. School administration is expected to log into BusPlanner Web weekly to review upcoming changes to their routes (ex: a new student has applied for busing). Updates occur Thursday at noon. If families are not able to access their student information online via the Student Portal, the school should use BusPlanner Web to access their information and provide it to the student and/or family.

Charters and Field Trips

Schools should coordinate all field trips and charters with bus companies so as not to infringe on the afternoon departure time for any of their school buses. Buses are obligated to keep to their route times for the safety of all students, including additional runs for other schools they may service. Schools cannot ask buses to delay departure from the school due to a late-returning field trip or charter for this reason. Students on field trips who arrive at the school after their bus has departed will need to be picked up by parents/guardians. Most field trips/charters are scheduled directly with bus companies, not Tri-Board. Bus companies require the following to book a field trip/charter:

- An accurate itinerary must be provided to the bus operator at the time of the trip/excursion booking. **All contracted bus companies are obligated to adhere to home-to-school route timing and may refuse a field trip if it would infringe on this responsibility.**
- A Teacher/Supervisor must accompany students on a trip and is responsible for student discipline and supporting the driver with safety matters. The teacher/supervisor must keep a list of all students riding the bus. This list should be checked each time the group enters the bus.
- Riders are to adhere to the school's code of conduct and bus rules at all times.
- Teachers and riders should be familiar with emergency exits and bus evacuation procedures. Evacuation training is available to all schools for this reason.
- Non-essential baggage must not be carried by students, only back packs can accompany students. All other items such as sports equipment, musical instruments, props for school events etc. must be transported separately unless the school bus is equipped with luggage compartments.

Loading Zones

School administration is responsible for the safety of the school's bus loading zone. Wherever possible, the school bus loading zone should be a separate area away from staff/guest parking. Where this is not possible, school administration must ensure no vehicle comes within 3 ft of the front, back or side of any school bus (this is known as the bus's "Danger Zone"). Should the loading zone need to be reviewed, schools should contact Tri-Board's Safety Officer or their Transportation Planner. To keep the loading zone safe, schools should:

1. Supervise the school bus loading/unloading areas at the school
2. Advise Tri-Board Student Transportation Services office of any dangerous conditions in the bus loading zones, such as ice and snowbanks.
3. Report to Tri-Board Student Transportation Services any problems with routes, arrival and departure times, pupil safety, loading/unloading zones, or any concerns of any description related to transportation.

4. Ensure that students ride to and from school on their designated routes.

Bus Safety Program Participation

Most students will ride a school bus at least once during their educational experience, making bus safety a key facet of their educational wellbeing. Tri-Board facilitates a number of training programs which school administration should be aware of. It is the school's responsibility to book these programs. Tri-Board reports program participation to the school boards annually. More information on each program is available on triboard.ca.