



2022-23 School Bus Drivers Handbook

FOR

Employees with Commercial Driver's License Driving a School Bus

This manual contains transportation policies and procedures for the Blackford County School Corporation, and is intended to be used by school bus drivers. It is essential that all bus drivers thoroughly understand the contents of this manual. Other personnel, who are periodically involved in transportation-related issues, will find this manual to be a helpful resource.

Blackford County School Corporation Transportation Department

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About Our Schools

Mission

Empowering students to maximize their potential.

Goals

CONNECT

At BCS, we believe in the power of relationships. As the saying goes, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Our staff members teach more than content and curriculum, they teach students – unique individuals with their own histories, personalities, strengths, challenges, and futures. We aspire to lead with care, compassion, acceptance, and humility. We respect our students and stakeholders, and we are committed to interacting in ways that foster respectful and trusting relationships among all who are a part of the BCS family. Because of our connections with and care for each other, we will work hard, struggle, have fun, celebrate, and inevitably succeed, together.

INFLUENCE

Our faculty and staff members aren’t just employees, they are leaders of young people charged with positively influencing the lives of their students and one another. Likewise, we expect our students to serve as positive influences in the lives of their peers, their schools and community, and in the lives of the adults they work with each day. We prioritize collaboration, cooperation, and commitment over control, coercion, or compliance. We value teamwork, effective communication, supporting each other, and a general culture of care. We realize students and staff have unique gifts and talents, and we believe ALL can contribute to their worlds in meaningful and positive ways.

ACHIEVE

Through meaningful relationships, creative leadership, and real-world opportunities for growth and achievement, we aspire to challenge, encourage, and motivate our students to pursue their individual and collective potential. Whether it’s in the classroom, on the athletic field, or in performance related activities, we believe in the importance of accountability. We commit to holding students and ourselves to high standards when it comes to work ethic, behavior, discipline, perseverance, and growth and achievement. We understand that worthwhile accomplishments rarely come easily, and we believe that BCS students (as well as faculty and staff members) can and should achieve at levels equal to or above that of other schools or corporations. By focusing on the daily habits and behaviors that result in high levels of achievement and by embracing the concepts of “do today well”, growth mindset, and giving one’s personal best, we believe that BCS students will be prepared to maximize their present and future success.

EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

We recognize that for our corporation to operate safely, effectively, and efficiently, members of the BCS community must abide by thoughtfully crafted, systemic, and common-sense policies and procedures. With the “pursuit of what’s best” for our students, staff members, and stakeholders in mind and to ensure compliance to applicable laws and mandates, members of the BCS community must observe certain policies, protocols, and procedures as established by the state of Indiana, the IDOE, the BCS board of trustees, the BCS superintendent, and building level administration.

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Statement of Purpose and Policy

This Driver Handbook is designed to provide accurate and timely information on Blackford County School (BCS) policies relating to school bus drivers and their jobs. Information is presented in the following categories:

- Statement of Purpose
- General Qualifications and Conditions for Employment
- Employee Benefits
- General Use of the Bus
- Bus Operations
- Transportation of Students
- Security and Threat Awareness
- Usage Guide

This handbook is intended to provide BCS Bus Drivers policies and procedures with more detailed information and guidance on the application of school policies, practices, and procedures. Additional school policies pertaining to drivers and students may be found in the Substance Abuse Policy and in the student handbook.

This handbook contains a set of basic performance expectations for drivers and staff. All employees are expected to perform at a high level consistent with their job responsibilities, represent the School in a manner consistent with our professional identity, and treat others with dignity and respect.

This handbook also contains transportation policies and procedures for the BCS, and is intended to be used by school bus drivers. It is essential that all bus drivers thoroughly understand the contents of this handbook. Other personnel, who are periodically involved in transportation-related issues, will find this handbook to be a helpful resource. The policies and benefit plans referred to in this Handbook are intended to be ongoing, however, BCS reserves the right to amend, modify or terminate these plans at any time. If there are any discrepancies between the information contained in this handbook, DOT, BMV, and the legal policies, which describe the policies in detail, the policy documents will prevail.

Any questions and or clarifications can be directed to:

Blackford County School Corporation 2392 N SR 3

Hartford City, IN 47348 Telephone: (765)349-7554

Section 1 | General Qualifications and Conditions for Employment

1.01 Certification

School bus drivers must possess a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with a passenger endorsement, an Indiana School Bus Endorsement and an ISSBC Standard Certificate (Yellow Card) in order to transport school children on a school bus.

The process for obtaining licensure is:

1. Complete an on-line application from the BCS Web Page, it must be BCS approved.
2. Complete an on-line criminal background check, it must be BCS approved.
3. Provide needed paperwork for BCS to obtain a BMV Driving record, it must be BCS approved.
4. Pass a pre-employment drug and alcohol screen as provided by BCS Substance Abuse Team.
5. Register for the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse and sign a consent allowing BCS to complete full and annual limited queries.
6. Pass a DOT/CDL physical examination from a qualified physician as directed by the Blackford County School Corporation, return the completed physical form to BCS Bus Barn.
7. Receive a completed BCS Physical Fitness Form by above certified medical professional, return the completed physical fitness form to BCS Bus Barn.
8. Pass the written DOT/CDL general examination, passenger endorsement, and air brake endorsement at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, you will then receive your CDL Permit.
9. ELDT (Entry Level Driver Training) completed skills training will be submitted to the state by the driver trainer.
10. Pass the DOT/CDL skills test at a certified CDL testing site, Drivers may use a Corporation owned bus as long as a driver, currently employed by the Blackford County School Corporation, accompanies the trainee to the test site. BCS also offers paid training to facilitate successful completion of CDL skills tests. (This will not be paid until after hire and will be included in the first check received.)
11. Successfully complete the 3 day pre-service school bus driver safety education training, presented by Division of School Traffic Safety and Emergency Planning.
12. Pass a drug and alcohol screen as specified on the DOT/CDL physical form.
13. Observe a properly licensed school bus driver for four (4) hours and drive a school bus under the supervision of a properly licensed school bus driver for eight (8) hours (All previous requirements must be met prior to this, The Transportation Department will assign a driver and trainer).
14. Complete driving requirements to be certified by BCS Bus Driving Trainer.
15. Present a valid Class A or B CDL with P and S endorsements.

1.02 Minimum Personal Competencies for a School Bus Driver

Drivers of school buses in the State of Indiana must meet the following minimum standards:

1. Must be of good moral character.

2. May not use intoxicating liquor during school hours.
3. May not use intoxicating liquor to excess at any time.
4. Cannot be addicted to or use any narcotic drug.
5. Driver must be at least 21 years of age; monitor must be at least 18 years of age.
6. Must hold a valid CDL, issued by the State of Indiana along with P & S endorsements.
7. Must possess the following physical characteristics:
 - a. Possession of full normal use of both hands, both arms, both feet, both legs, both eyes, and both ears.
 - b. Freedom from communicable disease that (1) may be transmitted through airborne or droplet means; or (2) requires isolation of the infected person under Indiana law.
 - c. Freedom from any mental, nervous, organic, or functional disease, which might impair his ability to properly operate a bus.
 - d. Visual acuity with or without corrective aids, of at least 20/40 in each eye, a minimum field of vision of 150 degrees, and depth perception of at least 80%.
 - e. Ability to climb and descend the bus service steps in forward facing position.
 - f. Ability to exit the bus via the rearmost emergency door from a seat belted position in the driver's seat.
 - g. Quick reaction time between accelerator and service brake.
 - h. Ability to open and close the bus service door.
 - i. Ability to operate 1 hand control on each side of the steering wheel while the bus is in a safe forward motion.

(References: IC 20-27-8-1 and 575 IAC 1-8-1 et seq.)

1.03 Selection and Hiring

Any person interested in becoming a school bus driver for BCS and have met the criteria listed in 1.01 and 1.02 of this handbook will be interviewed by members of the BCS Transportation Department. Any intentional misstatement of facts regarding qualifications for employment shall be grounds for dismissal. The Blackford County School Corporation is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities, or hiring practices. Any questions can be addresses to the:

Director of Transportation

2392 North State Road 3

Hartford City, IN 47348

1.04 Drivers' Responsibilities

1. The driver shall cooperate with the Board, and school administrators in operating his route on a satisfactory schedule. If school is closed early for any reason, then the driver, at the direction of the administration of the school, shall be at the school to take the pupils home at such time as the administration of the school shall direct. Reference: BCS Board Policy 3685
2. School bus drivers shall comply with all laws, rules and regulations governing the operation of motor vehicles on the highways of the state. Also, drivers are to comply with all regulations described in a corporation handbook as prepared by the director of transportation approved by the superintendent and board of trustees. Reference: BCS Board Policy 3685

3. Disciplinary incidents should be discussed early with the principal and action planned before the situation becomes critical. Building principal assigns discipline. The bus driver reports disciplinary issues to the Transportation Coordinator either verbally or by completing a Bus Conduct Report form. Transportation Coordinator submits a Bus Referral in Skyward. The driver and building principal receive notification of a submitted referral. The principal will either assign disciplinary action or contact the transportation department to view bus video or to obtain more information before assigning discipline. When discipline is assigned in Skyward, the driver will receive a notification through their school email.
4. Refusal to transport children or other punishment should be administered in cooperation with the school authorities and enforced by the driver. **In no case shall a driver put a pupil passenger off the bus except at his regular station or at the school.**
5. Each day, during the school term, unless excused by the Corporation, the driver shall operate his/her assigned bus over the route or routes upon the schedule fixed by the Transportation Department. The driver shall faithfully and personally perform the work requirements unless excused by the Corporation, who, in such event, shall designate a substitute driver.
6. The Corporation may, at any time, require any driver to submit to an additional physical examination by a licensed Indiana Physician selected by the Corporation. The Corporation will pay the cost of required additional physical examinations as described in IC 20-27-8-6.
7. The Corporation may, at any time, require an additional drug and alcohol test. Refer to SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY for employees with CDL in Compliance with BCSC Board Policy Series 3625, BCS Board Approved: 12/20/2011.
8. The driver agrees to abide by the provisions of all Indiana Statutes, and the rules and regulations of the State School Bus Committee as they may be amended, pertaining to safety in the operation of school buses and school transportation including a "School Bus Driver Performance Standards and Measures" test every 2 years on the anniversary date of the drivers DOT Physical in accordance with Indiana Law 575 IAC 1-8 (Shown in Appendix 1).
9. The driver shall keep order and maintain discipline among the children while in the school bus or along the route, being firm but polite, impartial and fair, and see that no child is imposed upon or mistreated while in their charge and shall use every care for the safety of the children under their charge as well as emphasize the need for safe and orderly habits while riding the bus.
10. The driver will be able to demonstrate to students and student helpers their student responsibilities in the event of an emergency. Each driver shall be able to perform all the emergency procedures that could be used to prevent an accident, before it occurs, or after it happens.
11. The school bus shall be kept clean both inside and out by the driver, who shall also be responsible for determining and reporting to the Transportation Department when his/her bus is not in sound operating condition. Needed service and mechanical repairs shall be reported to the Fleet Mechanic and the proper maintenance request form completed.
12. Routes and areas to be covered shall be established by the Transportation Department and are subject to change. Additional stops or transferring of students may also occur.
13. Drivers will semi-annually be submitted for a Driver's License Check through the BMV at no cost to the driver. Negative changes in a driver's driving record could be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment at BCS.
14. Drivers must abide by the following SAFETY RULES:
 - a. No school bus driver shall leave the bus while students are aboard.
 - b. No school bus driver shall leave a bus with the engine idling for an extended period of time. No school bus shall be operated until all children are seated and the doors are closed.

- c. No pupil shall occupy a space forward of the rear of the driver's seat or the space forward of the white line that is marked on the aisle floor at the front of the bus.
 - d. Drivers are required to be secured in their seats by seat/shoulder belts at all times while operating a school bus, no exceptions!
 - e. Every bus shall have clearly posted at, or near, the front a sign stating that it is a violation of the laws of the State of Indiana for a bus to be operated with school children occupying the prohibited area.
 - f. No assistance shall be given by any school bus driver to any other vehicle on the road. The only exception in providing aid would be by calling, via radio, the Transportation Office and informing them of the situation.
 - g. No unauthorized persons shall be permitted to ride in any school bus at any time except as provided by law.
 - h. No school bus driver shall permit any other person to drive his/her bus, occupy the driver seat, tamper with the engine or any controls, excepting such persons as are approved by properly authorized school authorities.
 - i. All school bus drivers shall stop at preferential highway intersections.
 - j. All school and activity buses must stop at all "At Grade" railroad crossings, whether carrying passengers or not.
15. Drivers will establish favorable working relationships with other drivers, community members, maintenance personnel, teachers, students, principals, and the total school staff. Build respect and confidence of parent and child and school. Show interest in parent organizations and student activities. Exhibit an overall positive image as loyal representatives of the Corporation. Try to use good judgment and tact in all encounters.
16. Failure of a driver to comply with the terms this handbook and Corporation policies, including all terms and conditions incorporated by reference, shall be cause for dismissal at the option of the Corporation.

1.05 Dress Code

While performing assigned duties, bus drivers are highly visible to students, professional staff, and the public.

Drivers are expected to be dressed and groomed in a manner appropriate for the school environment. Footwear must enable a driver to operate a bus safely and allow for rapid movement in emergency situations.

Therefore, open-toe shoes, shoes without backs, and high-heels are prohibited. Questions regarding the appropriateness of attire should be addressed to the Transportation Department.

1.06 Use of Drugs and Alcohol

The operation of a school bus is considered to be a safety-sensitive function. A driver is considered to be performing a safety sensitive-function during any period in which he/she is actually performing such a function or preparing to perform such function. Substances that interfere with a driver's ability to safely operate a school bus may not be used during a time, before or during assigned duties. No employee may perform a safety-sensitive function or operate a school vehicle within six (6) hours of consuming alcohol. Consumption of any alcoholic beverage during a period of time prior to operating a school bus, where the effects of such consumption will result in impaired job performance is prohibited. The same standard applies to controlled substances and any over-the counter medication that will or may impair mental or motor function. Refer to SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY for employees with CDL in Compliance with BCSC Board Policy Series 3625, BCS Board Approved: 12/20/2011.

1.07 Drug and Alcohol Testing

Any person who holds a CDL and operates a school bus, is subject to Corporation policies regarding drug and alcohol use, and to pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, return-to-duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing. All testing shall be done in accordance with USDOT-approved procedures. Employees selected for random testing will be notified by the Transportation Department and advised where to report for testing. Failure to report for, pass, or submit to such testing is grounds for immediate dismissal. Refer to SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY for employees with CDL in Compliance with BCSC Board Policy Series 3625, BCS Board Approved: 12/20/2011.

1.08 Confidentiality

Information derived through driver drug testing is protected health information and will not be made part of the employee's personnel file or disclosed to any other party without the driver's written consent, unless required by law. Employees may obtain copies of their tests for alcohol or controlled substances by contacting the Transportation Department.

1.09 Use of Tobacco

The Blackford County School Corporation prohibits the use of any form of tobacco on school property, including school buses. Drivers and other school employees in violation of the policy are subject to disciplinary action and possible termination of employment. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action as specified in their student handbooks.

1.10 Physicals and Performance Standards

Every two (2) years, drivers with a CDL license are required to undergo a physical examination from a licensed physician and submit the completed DOT/CDL physical form to the Transportation Department to be forwarded on to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles. ** Please note that some drivers may have to renew physicals yearly dependent upon medical conditions**. Drivers are welcome to go to any certified physician that is able to do a CDL Physical. In addition to a CDL/Physical, drivers will also be expected to pass the School Bus Driver Physical Performance Standards and Measurements.

1.11 Annual Safety Meeting/In-Service Meetings

School bus drivers are required to attend an online annual safety meeting, sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education. Information regarding the meeting will be mailed to your school email address (typically in May). **ASM training must be completed prior to December 31 each year to keep an active yellow card.** The Transportation Department will also be conducting an in-service meeting each year (approx. 4 meetings per year). Failure to attend will result in an unpaid day and possible disciplinary action.

1.12 Driver Availability during the Day

Although it rarely happens, the unexpected early dismissal of students from one or all schools in the Corporation might be necessary, particularly during adverse weather. Other reasons for dismissal include electrical or mechanical problems with a building and crisis situations, such as fires and bomb threats.

1.13 Chain of Command

School bus drivers report to and are under the direct supervision of the Transportation Director, who in turn, reports to the Superintendent. Building administrators will work cooperatively with the Transportation Department, and are responsible for:

1. Supervision of Children at Loading/Unloading Zones
2. Addressing Student Conduct Issues
3. Enforcement of Traffic Regulations on the School Site
4. Communication with Parents and Students Regarding Student Behavior, Safety and Schedules
5. Conveying Information About Overcrowding, Unsafe Conditions, Etc. to the Transportation Department

Section | 2 Employee Benefits

2.01 Employee-At-Will

Employees are employed at the will of the school corporation and are subject to termination at any time, for any reason not prohibited by law, with or without cause or advanced notice, except for an employee who is under a contract that specifically exempts the employee from Indiana's employment at will doctrine.

2.02 Insurance, Retirement, Workers Comp, and Absences

BCS Corporation provides insurance benefits to eligible employees. Please see the classified manual for the desired school year.

2.03 Bus Driver Incentives

Bus driver incentives are available and listed in the classified manual for the desired year.

2.04 Classified Manual

All employees will be provided and sign for a classified manual at the time beginning their employment at BCS.

Section 3 | General Use and Care of School Buses

3.01 School Buses

A person may not operate or permit the operation of a school bus on a highway in Indiana for private purpose or a purpose other than transportation of eligible students to and from school except when the school board permits use for:

1. Student Field Trips
2. Athletics
3. Mechanical Repairs
4. Local, State, or National Emergency when requested by any Governmental Authority

Only properly licensed route drivers and mechanics, employed by the Corporation, may operate Corporation-owned vehicles. The assignment of buses to drivers is the responsibility of the Transportation Department. - (Reference: IC 20-27-9)

3.02 Cleanliness

Drivers are responsible for keeping the interior and exterior of their assigned buses clean at all times. Drivers should work cooperatively with teachers, coaches, and students to ensure that passengers assume responsibility for keeping the interior free from litter during regular routes, extra-curricular and athletic trips. The State Police are very adamant that buses be kept clean. The bus should be swept and trash removed regularly, and the driver's area cleared of clutter and dusted frequently. Windows should be washed as needed and kept clear of debris that may obstruct visibility. Cleaning supplies are available through the Transportation Department.

3.03 Parking and Storage of Buses

With authorization, a driver may keep his/her bus at home, provided such location is within the school district, affords reasonable security from damage or vandalism, and does not present safety hazard to others. When preparing to leave a bus in any location, drivers must:

1. Put the bus in Park or Neutral
2. Turn off the engine
3. Set the Air Brake or Park Brake
4. Remove the keys - Keys must be taken from the bus whenever it is parked and unattended
5. Completely close the service door, all windows, and roof hatches

3.04 Maintenance

School bus drivers are responsible for the buses assigned to them. Regular, preventative maintenance is crucial for maintaining the integrity and life of school buses. In order to ensure proper care, drivers must contact the Fleet Mechanic to schedule routine service. Please notify the mechanic when an issue occurs instead of waiting until time for your bus to be serviced. Small mechanical problems can become large mechanical problems when not corrected in a timely manner.

3.05 Weather Care

Diesel engines require special care in extremely cold temperatures. When temperatures are below 30° F, engine block heaters are to be used. For buses parked at the Bus Barn, drivers will be directed which plugs to use by the mechanic. Extension Cords can be provided for drivers who plug buses in at their homes. Please see the mechanic for an extension cord. In addition to plugging in motors, buses need to be started at least 1 hour prior to the anticipated start of routes during times of extremely cold temperatures. When extended breaks in school occur due to holidays or weather, please start your bus on a regular basis. If your bus fails to start or has mechanical issues, contact the Transportation Director or Fleet Mechanic as soon as possible.

3.06 Vehicle Idling Policy

The purpose of this policy is to eliminate all unnecessary idling by corporation school buses such that idling time is minimized in all aspects of school bus operation and to reduce vehicle exhaust that has the potential to be drawn into the building.

Vehicle exhaust from idling school buses can accumulate in and around the bus and pose a health risk to children, drivers, and the community at large. Exposure to vehicle exhaust can cause lung damage and respiratory problems. Vehicle exhaust also exacerbates asthma and existing allergies, and long-term exposure may increase the risk of lung cancer. Idling buses waste fuel and financial resources of the school corporation. This policy applies to the operation of every corporation-owned school bus, and public and private vehicles on school grounds.

The school corporation shall post signs in areas where idling is prohibited.

Public and Private Vehicles Idling Time

1. Drivers of all public and private vehicles are to turn off the engine if the vehicle is to be stopped more than 3 minutes in locations where vehicle exhaust may be drawn into the building or while on school grounds.

Corporation Vehicle Idling Time

1. When school bus drivers arrive at loading or unloading areas to drop off or pick up passengers, they should turn off their buses as soon as possible to eliminate idling time and reduce harmful emissions. The school bus should not be restarted until it is ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pick-up area.
2. School buses will not idle (on school grounds or off school grounds) for longer than five (5) minutes unless:
 - a. There are extreme weather conditions (meaning 30 degrees Fahrenheit or less) and the purpose is to warm the interior bus,
 - b. Longer idling time is necessary to facilitate the loading and unloading of students with special needs,
 - c. There are safety or emergency situations,
 - d. There are maintenance or mechanical inspection/repair issues requiring a longer time to facilitate the inspection/repair process
 - e. The bus is idling in traffic
3. Buses should not idle while waiting for students during field trips, extra-curricular activities or other events where students are transported off school grounds.
4. In colder weather, schools are directed to provide a space inside the school where bus drivers who arrive early can wait.

5. Bus schedules should be revised so that school bus caravanning can be avoided and the cleanest buses assigned to the longest routes. LEGAL REFERENCE: 410 IAC 33-4-3

3.07 Trip and Post-Trip Inspections

Drivers are required to perform pre-trip and post-trip inspections every time they operate a school bus. Pre-trip inspections are intended to identify potential mechanical or functional hazards prior to putting a bus into service with passengers. During post-trip inspections drivers should look for vandalism, excess litter, and personal items left by passengers, and for individuals who failed to disembark. An essential part of the pre-and post-trip inspections is checking to ensure that there is enough fuel for the next route/trip. Each day, drivers will complete the bus inspection portion on their daily pre-trip inspection sheets. These sheets must be submitted at the end of each month.

During your post trip inspection, you are required to visually inspect each seat within the bus or special purpose bus to determine that no passengers remain on the bus. You are required to report each incident to the Transportation Department in which a student passenger(s) is/are left on the bus. Legislation requires that School Corporations report incidents of such nature to the Indiana Department of Education.

3.08 Equipment

School buses may not be altered in performance or aesthetics. Indiana Law tightly regulates specifications for school bus bodies, chassis, and equipment. Inside the bus, approved equipment and supplies must be adequately secured in such a way that they do not interfere with the driver's performance or pose a safety risk to passengers.

Drivers must maintain and be proficient in the use of the body fluid clean-up kit, fire extinguisher and first aid kit.

3.09 Use of Spare Buses

Approval for the use of a spare bus must be obtained through the Transportation Department.

Before operating a spare bus, the driver must conduct a pre-trip inspection and become thoroughly familiar with the bus. When using a spare bus, drivers should remember the following:

1. Check the fuel gauge prior to leaving. Obtain fuel if necessary.
2. Report any malfunctions or mechanical problems to the Transportation Department.
3. Complete a post-trip inspection and clean up any debris left behind

3.10 Annual School Bus Inspection

The state police department shall annually inspect all special purpose buses and school buses. The inspection of a school bus must determine whether the school bus complies with the safety requirements prescribed for school bus construction and equipment in the rules of the committee. The owner of a school bus or special purpose bus shall present the school bus or special purpose bus for the inspection required at the date, time, and place designated by the state police department. This usually happens in March of each year. If the inspection required reveals that a school bus meets all safety requirements, the inspecting officer shall attach to the bus a certificate of inspection and document the certification in the state police department's school bus inspection database.

A school bus that is 12 years old must be inspected twice each year. The state police department shall issue a new certificate of inspection for the school bus with is valid for 7 months.

If a school bus has received damage in an accident, the school bus must be presented for an inspection before the school bus may be used to transport passengers until the state police department shall issue a new certificate of inspection for the school bus. IC 20-27-7-1 thru IC 20-27-7-7

Section 4 | Bus Operation – Driving

This section explains expectations and procedures for operating school buses. When in service, drivers must exercise continuous vigilance and alertness to provide for the safety of their passengers, other motorists, and pedestrians. In addition to obeying traffic laws, drivers must employ defensive driving techniques, adjust for adverse weather conditions and road hazards, and maneuver safely in traffic. Regardless of the conditions, the first priority for school bus drivers is the safety of their passengers.

4.01 Compliance with Traffic Laws

Drivers must comply with all laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of motor vehicles, including those uniquely relevant to school buses. Any traffic violation must be reported to the Transportation Department. Annually, the school corporation receives, from the State of Indiana, a driving record for each driver, wherein any moving violations are listed. Blackford County School Corporation will not pay traffic fines incurred by any driver during the operation of a Corporation owned vehicle.

1. Speed - Speed zones and posted speed limits are to be observed at all times. No school bus may be operated at a speed greater than sixty (60) miles per hour on federal or state highways or greater than forty (40) miles per hour on any county or township highway. If the posted speed limit is lower than the absolute limits noted above, or if the absolute limits do not apply, the maximum lawful speed of a bus is the posted speed limit. (Reference: IC 9-21-5-14)
2. Railroad Crossings
 - a. Approaching the crossing:
 - i. Slow down, including shifting to a lower gear in a manual transmission bus, and test your brakes.
 - ii. Activate hazard lights approximately 200 feet before the crossing. Make sure your intentions are known.
 - iii. Scan your surroundings and check for traffic behind you.
 - iv. Stay to the right of the roadway if possible.
 - v. Choose an escape route in the event of a brake failure or problems behind you.
 - b. At the crossing:
 - i. Stop no closer than 15 feet and no farther than 50 feet from the nearest rail, where you have the best view of the tracks.
 - ii. Turn off all radios and noisy equipment and silence the passengers.
 - iii. Open the service door and driver's window.
 - iv. Look and listen for an approaching train.
 - c. Crossing the track:
 - i. Check the crossing signals again before proceeding.
 - ii. At a multiple-track crossing, stop only before the first set of tracks. When you are sure no train is approaching on any track, proceed across all of the tracks until you have completely cleared them.
 - iii. Cross the tracks in a low gear. Do not change gears while crossing.
 - iv. If the gate comes down after you have started across, drive through it even if it means you will break the gate.

- d. Police Officer at the Crossing - If a police officer is at the crossing, obey directions. If there is no police officer, and you believe the signal is malfunctioning, call your dispatcher to report the situation and ask for instructions on how to proceed.
- e. Obstructed View of Tracks - Plan your route so it provides maximum sight distance at highway-rail grade crossings. Do not attempt to cross the tracks unless you can see far enough down the track to know for certain that no trains are approaching. (Reference: IC 9-21-12-5)

4.02 Loading and Unloading on Highways

When a school bus is operated on a U.S. route or state route, the driver may not load or unload a student at a location that requires the student to cross a roadway unless no other safe alternatives are available (does not apply to a location on a U.S. route or state route that is within the boundary of a city or town). On a street or highway other than a U.S. route or state route, the driver shall load and unload a student as close to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway as practicable.

4.03 Use of Stop Arm

Whenever a school bus is stopped on a roadway to load or unload a student, the driver shall use an arm signal device, which must be extended while the bus is stopped. Buses are NOT to move while the arm is extended. The use of the stop arm device is not necessary at designated stops off the roadway (Reference: IC 9-21-12-13).

1. Report all stop arm violations to Transportation Department so that they can complete a violation form (example found in the appendix of this handbook).
2. Please give, to the best of your abilities, as much information about the motorist, vehicle and direction of movement as possible.

4.04 Backing and Turn-Arounds

No bus shall back up on school property in the presence of pedestrians or traffic unless properly guided by an adult outside of the bus.

1. Buses shall not travel in reverse on roadways except where authorized to do so on assigned routes by the Transportation Department. In all cases, where backing is necessary and allowed, drivers must exercise extreme caution.
2. Do not turn-around on roadways and state highways if at all possible. If a turnaround is necessary at a student pick up point, then it shall be the practice to pick up the students prior to backing into the driveway. On the return trip the students should be dismissed from the bus after the turnaround is made.
3. Turn-Arounds must also be communicated and approved by the Transportation Department.

4.05 Stopping in Traffic

School bus drivers must be aware of and considerate toward the drivers of other vehicles. Adequate notice that a school bus is about to stop is important to enable other drivers to reduce their speed. When preparing to stop, to load, or to unload students:

1. Bus drivers should activate the amber lights at least 200 feet before stopping.
2. After stopping, the stop arm device and red overhead lights should be activated. A bus may not move while the stop arm is activated. The stop arm must not be retracted until all unloaded passengers have cleared the roadway and are in a safe zone.

4.06 Aid to Other Vehicle

Drivers are not to provide assistance to any vehicle, other than another school bus, as authorized by the Transportation Department or in an emergency. When such assistance is necessary, drivers must exercise caution to ensure that the bus is stopped in a safe location. If you come across an accident involving another motorist or even one of our students:

1. Please radio the Transportation Department with the exact location and a description of the vehicles involved.
2. Someone from the Transportation Department will contact the local authorities and make sure that assistance is on the way.
3. Do not allow non-passengers on your bus. If stopped by a motorist, speak to them through your window and never allow them to enter the bus.
4. If a parent stops your bus and wants to remove their child, please radio the school building where that child attends and get confirmation from a building secretary or administrator.

4.07 Use of Bus Radios

For safety and security, drivers must maintain the capacity for communication with the Transportation Department at all times when buses are in service. For this reason, sound radio function and proper use by drivers is important. The radio communications system, linking buses to one another and to the corporation buildings, is for the exchange of necessary, school-related information.

1. Perform a radio check when starting the route.
2. Radio to inform any changes in the route.
3. Since communication over this system may be heard by the general public. Caution must be exercised when the names of students or staff are broadcast via the radio. Names are to be used cautiously and personal information should never be broadcast over the radios.
4. Inform Bus Barn when your students have all been delivered ending your route for the day.

4.08 Use of Commercial Radios on Buses

The use of commercial radios can add to students' enjoyment of riding the school buses. When using these radios, drivers must ensure that volume does not interfere with their ability to safely operate the bus or supervise their students. In addition, some broadcast messages from commercial radio broadcasting systems may raise quality and content issues. Use good judgment when deciding if a station's broadcasting content is questionable for the education environment.

4.09 Use of Cellular Phones

School bus drivers are prohibited from using cellular phones or any type of wireless communication device while operating their buses or anytime they are responsible for the care and supervision of students. Communication with

other buses, schools, and corporation offices should occur using the installed radio equipment on school buses. In emergencies, cellular telephones may be used by drivers to communicate with school personnel only after the bus is parked in a safe location and all attempts to use the radio have failed.

4.10 Use of Strobe Lights

Strobe Lights are intended to draw the attention of other drivers to the location and movement of school buses, particularly in weather conditions with reduced visibility other than normal night darkness or at times of exceptional emergencies. Drivers are to use strobe lights in such conditions and are hereby authorized to use the strobe light whenever they deem necessary while driving the bus for official school business.

4.11 Aisles & Exits

School bus aisles and exits are to be kept unobstructed and clear of any items that would impede rapid evacuation. Sports equipment, coolers, large band instruments, fundraiser boxes, and other large items must be held by students or secured on seats. Balloons will no longer be permitted on the bus. During transit, students are to remain seated, with their feet facing forward.

4.12 Use of Mirrors

For bus drivers, exterior mirrors are critical tools for safely maneuvering their vehicle. During pre-trip inspections and when necessary, drivers are to ensure that all mirrors are properly adjusted and free from anything (dirt, snow, etc.) that would obstruct the driver's view. A mirror grid has been painted by the fuel pumps to help assist you with proper mirror adjustment. If you are having issues with your mirrors, please contact the Fleet Mechanic to help resolve the issues.

Section 5 | Transporting Students

For many students, bus drivers are the first school employee encountered each day. While transporting children safely to and from school and school-related activities is the primary responsibility of school bus drivers, the quality of interaction between students and drivers is critical to maintain a safe environment. As school employees, drivers are charged with the responsibility of maintaining discipline on their bus and ensuring that all of the student under their supervision are safe and afforded a reasonable standard of care.

5.01 Supervision

During regular routes, drivers are responsible to supervise students assigned to them at all times. This includes the time during which students are on the bus and during exchanges between buses. Drivers shall never leave their buses when students are present.

1. In the morning, students are to remain on their buses until the time established by each school for students to enter the building.
2. In the afternoon, drivers must be inside their buses to supervise student loading.
3. School bus drivers are not responsible for student behavior at bus stops - prior to the student boarding the bus or after the student has disembarked. Nevertheless, bus drivers should report any observed misbehavior at bus stops to the appropriate school administrators. Drivers are responsible for the safety to students during loading and unloading. That is, drivers are to ensure that traffic is stopped and that students stay clear of the danger zone and off of the roadway.

5.02 Driver Conduct when Interacting with Students

School employees are entrusted with the well-being of children by parents and the community. As drivers carry out their duties in light of this trust, they are to display a professional attitude and behavior at all times. Accordingly, school bus drivers are expected to:

1. Treat all students with respect, regardless of past behavior, socio-economic status, hygiene, race, religious beliefs, etc.
2. Periodically review behavioral and safety procedures with all students.
3. Support school personnel, showing discretion as to what is discussed with students regarding other school employees.
4. Consistently enforce expectations over time and with all students, mindful that equitable treatment is not the same as equal treatment.
5. Give verbal commands using a respectful tone and in a direct, non-judgmental manner. If necessary, drivers should repeat the same command ("broken record" tactic) until the student complies.
6. Not argue or engage in debates with students at any time. As noted above, drivers should give direct commands using an unemotional tone.
7. Talk with students away from their peers when a discussion about misbehavior is necessary.

5.03 Student Safety Guidelines

1. Set Expectations on the First Day
2. Enforce Bus Conduct Rules Consistently
3. When misconduct occurs, address it with the student privately
4. If misconduct continues make seating adjustments to allow for increased supervision
5. After the aforementioned reasonable attempts to correct behavior issues, submit a written reprimand to the transportation coordinator who will enter bus referral into Skyward. .
6. If you feel the behavior issues are not properly being addressed at the building level, please contact the Transportation Department with your concerns.

5.04 Expected Conduct of Students

To be sure students are transported safely; certain behavior is expected of all students. Any behavior that interferes with a driver's ability to operate his/her bus safely, or behavior that jeopardizes the safety or property of one's self or peers, is considered inappropriate. All students are expected to:

1. Report to their loading locations five (5) minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time.
2. Stay off roadways while waiting for their buses and remain off roadways until buses come to a complete stop.
3. Be seated and remain in their seats, facing forward, while riding.
4. Use voices that are respectful and not disturbing.
5. Keep windows closed unless permission is given by the driver to open them.
6. Keep hands and feet to themselves.
7. Carry only permissible items on the bus that can be held on their laps.
8. Ride their assign bus unless a bus pass or other arrangements have been made.
9. Not throw objects of any kind, within the bus or from the bus.
10. Put trash in waste baskets and not leave refuse on the bus.
11. Move away from the roadway and directly onto a sidewalk or toward their houses after disembarking.
12. Cross streets and roadways only in FRONT of buses and do so at least 10 feet from the front.
13. Not damage or deface any part of school buses or the property of others.
14. Not use profane, indecent, or lewd language or gestures.
15. Keep all parts of their bodies within their school buses.
16. Consume food or beverages only with permission of the driver. Other objects need to be kept out of their mouths.
17. Use electronic games and radios only with the permission of their drivers
18. Act respectfully toward their drivers and obey their drivers' directives.
19. Not be in possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons of any kind.
20. *At times, it may help students' behavior if they stay engaged in a portable game or listening to music. When approved to do so, games are to be played with the sound off and portable stereos are to be used with headphones, so as not to disturb the driver or other passengers.

5.05 Actions for Student Misconduct

Any violation of the bus rules or any behavior that distracts the driver from the road is unacceptable. If a driver is distracted or must split attention between the road and student misbehavior, a dangerous situation has been created for everyone on that particular bus. A driver may talk with a student about the behavior problem, may give the student an assigned seat, may write up the student on a Bus Conduct Report form, and the driver may also call the parents and enlist their help to resolve the behavior issue. School administrators, working cooperatively with bus drivers, reserve the right to issue more serious consequences, if warranted by the nature of a student's misconduct. This will be directed by the student handbook.

5.06 Involving Parents in Student Safety and Disciplinary Matters

Highly effective and successful school bus drivers know that parents can be their greatest ally in matters of student safety and discipline. When parents believe that their child's driver is respectful and enforces behavioral expectations in a fair and consistent manner in order to ensure safety, they are much more likely to cooperate with school personnel in disciplinary matters involving their children.

The following are suggestions to facilitate effective interaction:

1. Contact parents before issues become problems. Keep them informed, bearing in mind that you're building relationships with them, not placing blame or complaining.
2. When a child's behavior is good or has improved, let parents know.
3. When talking with parents, first (and sincerely) convey positive traits about their children, such as promptness or honesty.
4. Address behaviors and issues, not people, with focus on positive solutions.
5. When a parent approaches a bus to discuss an issue with the driver, the driver should express interest in the parent's wish to talk and make arrangements to contact the parent at a time when the driver can provide the parent with their undivided attention.

5.07 Student Health Concerns

Bus drivers must be aware of health conditions of the students for which they are responsible. The Transportation Department will work with the school nurse to provide drivers with pertinent medical conditions relating to their student passengers. This will be on a "need to know" basis. General first aid knowledge is essential and each bus is equipped with a first aid kit.

5.08 Student Illness and Injury

Schools should not send ill students home on school buses. If a child becomes ill on the bus, the driver should notify the student's school to relay this information to the parent or guardian. If a student is injured on the bus, the driver should notify the school and complete a student accident form as soon as possible.

5.09 Transporting Large Materials

Students may transport on school buses, only those items that can be secured out of the aisle and do not obstruct the view of the bus driver. Balloons, large display boards, and other sizable items should be transported to and from school in private vehicles.

5.10 Transporting Dangerous Materials Forbidden

Any items that pose a danger to other occupants or impair the driver's ability to safely operate the school bus may not be transported on the bus by students. Glass containers, flammable liquids, animals, alcoholic beverages, drugs, ammunition, explosives, firearms, knives, and any object that can be construed to be a weapon are examples of items that are forbidden and should be confiscated by the driver and turned over to an administrator.

5.11 Video/Audio Surveillance on School Buses

Cameras on buses shall be checked periodically for proper functionality. Decals are placed inside of buses warning occupants that they may be videotaped. Bus drivers may review individual tapes in the presence of an administrator to determine if misconduct is occurring. Bus drivers shall notify the fleet mechanic of camera malfunctions. All videos made of any surveillance camera on BCS property or vehicles shall be the exclusive property of the Blackford County School Corporation.

The Blackford County School Corporation shall make reasonable efforts to maintain the privacy of the videos. Because such videos may be used to identify individual students, videos will not be made available for viewing except by employees of the Blackford County School Corporation, for purposes of school personnel, student discipline and evaluation purposes, or if subpoenaed as evidence in litigation. Some videos may, at the sole discretion of the Blackford County School Corporation, be saved as evidence of unsafe or disruptive behavior. Such videos will be kept secure in the office of the superintendent or building principal.

5.12 Transporting Students with Special Needs

All transportation for our students with special needs is established during case conference meetings and reviewed annually. The Special Ed Director and the Transportation Department will work together to provide the most efficient transportation and safest accommodations possible.

Section 6 | Routes and Extra Trips

6.01 Routing

Routes and assignment to particular routes is the responsibility of the Transportation Department. Student safety is the primary concern in establishing routes, cost efficiency and student ride times are considered as well. When assigning routes to drivers, the proximity of a driver's home to route location, the best use of equipment, driving history / record, difficulty of the route and the needs of the corporation are deemed as primary factors. In an emergency or lack of sufficient time, the administration may make a temporary appointment as needed.

A regular daily route is considered to be the route where students are transported to school in the morning and from school in the afternoon. At the beginning of the school year, bus drivers will be given a list of students on their routes. This list will include student names, addresses, and parent contact information.

Drivers are to:

1. Familiarize themselves with their routes and families.
2. Review their route information to determine if the estimated route stop times are correct. Drivers are given a route draft prior to school. It is the driver's responsibility to drive the route and give the transportation department and parents estimated times for pick up and drop off. Drivers are responsible for providing turn-by-turn directions for morning and afternoon routes in case a sub driver is needed. Any changes in routing must be reported immediately to the transportation department to keep route information current.
3. Discuss any perceived route alterations that he/she believed will improve a route with the Transportation Department before you make any changes.

6.02 Eligible Passengers

Only students who are enrolled in the Blackford County School Corporation and personnel from the Corporation are authorized to ride school bus routes. Homeless students have the right to be transported to the schools in which they were enrolled before becoming homeless. Each student must ride the bus to which they have been assigned, unless arrangements/permission has been given to ride another bus. To ride as a guest, a student must present to the bus driver, a bus pass from his/her school's principal's office. As students enroll throughout the school year, they will be assigned to routes according to the location where they are to be picked up and dropped off. The School Offices and the Transportation Department will work collaboratively to inform drivers of new students and to convey bussing information to students at time of enrollment.

6.03 Disembarking at a Different Location

Students are to be delivered only to the locations established as the delivery point on drivers' routes. A student may not disembark at another location, unless the driver has, in his/her possession, a signed bus pass indicating an alternate location has been approved. While alternate destinations may be used for children on occasion, parents should work cooperatively with the Corporation to establish a regular schedule. In emergency cases or last-minute changes, a student may be delivered to an alternate destination by verbal instruction from office staff over the radio. Exchanging of

passengers (shuttling) is a good way to help reduce fuel cost. The shuttles buses and exchange points will be determined by the Transportation Department.

6.04 Road Hazards on Routes

Any road hazards (low hanging branches, points of obstructed visibility, deteriorating road conditions, etc.) observed by drivers should be reported to the Bus Barn via the radio.

6.05 Timeliness

Notwithstanding exceptions due to poor road conditions, drivers are expected to run their assigned routes as scheduled. Students and parents should know, within a five (5) minute window, the time their bus will arrive.

When weather necessitates driving at a lower speed and a bus is delayed, drivers should contact the Bus Barn and let them approximately how far behind they are running. This will help us field incoming calls from our families.

6.06 Substitute Drivers

When it is necessary for a regular driver to be absent, please report the absence as soon as possible to the Bus Barn. Please work with the transportation department to ensure that your bus route sheets, maps, and other info is current. It would also be helpful to list 2-3 students who would be a good source of help to the sub driver. This information needs to be kept on your bus at all times and be made readily available to sub drivers.

6.07 Extra Trip Eligibility and Selection

All drivers are eligible to drive for field trips, athletic activities, and extra-curricular trips. The Athletic Department will work with the Transportation Department to schedule drivers to drive athletic events. Please make sure that the trip sponsor provides you with a trip ticket because you will be paid for the event from the information found on that ticket. School Secretaries or someone from the Transportation Department will obtain drivers for field trips.

6.08 Transportation for Field-Trips and Other School Related Activities

Well-planned field trips can enhance student subject learning. Student participation in extra-curricular and athletic events can also be beneficial to develop an individual's abilities and skills. When being transported for these events students must be accompanied on the bus by a coach, teacher or other chaperone. Bus Drivers, in cooperation with trip sponsors, are to provide safe and efficient transportation to and from these events. Trip Sponsors are responsible for student behavior and the bus driver is responsible for the bus and has ultimate authority over routes and operations. If the driver deems that conditions constitute a safety hazard, he/she has the authority not to proceed.

Trip Leaders are to:

1. Ensure that students understand that regular bus rules apply and understand the expected conduct.
2. Report any discipline problems to the appropriate principal as soon as feasible.
3. Review the destination and routes with the bus driver prior to departure.
4. Assist the driver in enforcing the rules of the bus.

5. Account for all students before departure from each location.
6. Supervise children until they have transportation home upon completion of the trip.
7. Report any cases of poor driver judgment or behavior to the Transportation Department.

In addition, trip leaders are expected to see that the interior of the school bus is reasonably clean (free of liter or refuse) before students disembark at the conclusion of the trip. In planning the event, trip leaders must allow for reasonable travel time to and from destination(s), recognizing drivers' obligations to follow all school bus-related traffic laws and regulations.

Section 7 | Safety Procedures & Emergencies

Prevention and preparedness are two essential factors in transportation safety. At any time, any driver can be faced with a situation that threatens the safety and

well-being of passengers. Drivers must seek to reduce the chances of such situations through prevention, and understand what to do to ensure passenger safety, through preparedness. During an emergency, the driver must take charge of the situation, establish order, and do that which is necessary to assure the well-being of all passengers.

7.01 Prevention of Mechanical Failure

A pre-trip inspection is absolutely necessary before a driver begins the first route of the day. It is essential to have a routine for systematically inspecting the bus. Drivers must become familiar with the looks, sounds, and smells of their buses, so as to sense when something is amiss. Any malfunctions are to be reported to the fleet mechanic immediately.

7.02 Driving in Adverse Weather Conditions

Operating a school bus in hard rain, high winds, and on icy roads is a great responsibility, requiring concentration by a driver.

Drivers should:

1. Remind students as they are entering the bus that their cooperation and good behavior is especially important in bad weather.
2. Reduce speed as necessary according to road and visibility conditions.
3. Allow more time to stop for students, vehicles, and at intersections.
4. Give other motorists more advanced warning of their intention to stop, especially at railroad tracks and when picking up/dropping off students.
5. Watch closely to ensure that other drivers do not "slide through" activated stop arms.
6. Use strobe lights if visibility is reduced.
7. Not traverse roadways with rising water.

7.03 Tornadoes

Inclement weather can arise at any time. Drivers need to be alert and listening to their bus radios at all times. Please report any violent wind, rain, hail, or funnel-shaped clouds to the Bus Barn immediately. If a tornado warning is issued before morning routes, school will be delayed until the warning is lifted or local conditions are determined to be safe. If a tornado warning is issued before dismissal, at the end of the day, students will remain in their buildings until the warning is lifted or conditions are determined to be safe.

When a bus is on the road and a tornado is spotted by the driver, or the driver is told to find shelter for their riders, the driver should immediately seek the best shelter out of the bus. If possible, the driver should advise the Bus Barn of their location. Drivers must never try to outrun a tornado! Instead, a driver should park the bus in a safe position for evacuation, take the emergency kit, and evacuate the students to a shelter location away from the bus and power lines (at least 200 feet if possible). The best shelter is the lowest level of a sturdy building, preferably a basement. If a

structure is not available, students should take shelter in a ditch or ravine, lying face down with their hands covering their heads. After danger has passed, the driver should check for injury and seek medical assistance. The driver should be cautious of weakened structures, tree damage, downed power lines, and other hazards presented by the storm.

7.04 Bus Fires

Fires on school buses can be caused by mechanical failure, accidents, or riders. In all cases, rapid response by drivers to exit students is essential. During these emergencies, the first priority for drivers is to ensure that students are safe from flames and smoke. The following instructions apply.

1. SHUT OFF THE ENGINE.
2. Don't hesitate - Evacuate! If drivers smell something hot, see smoke, or suspect a fire for any reason, students are to be evacuated immediately.
3. Do not open the hood.
4. Fire extinguishers are NOT to be used to extinguish flames, unless the flames block an exit from the bus. Students are to be evacuated and supervised.
5. If a fire extinguisher must be used, the driver must pull the pin, aim at the base of the flame, and squeeze the handle. The extinguisher's contents must be concentrated on the base of the flame.
6. Students who are close to flames and smoke should be evacuated first.
7. Remain calm and focused.

7.05 Evacuating the Bus

Because of the size and construction of school buses, children are often safer on a school bus than they are outside of it. In addition, having children inside of a bus enables the driver to "hold" students in a confined area, which enables better supervision. There are times, however, when passengers must evacuate.

These are:

1. Fire.
2. Leaking Fuel.
3. Approaching Tornado.
4. Illness of passenger that requires emergency medical attention.
5. Possibility of the bus being struck
6. Possibility of the bus rolling or tipping.
7. Submersion or partial submersion in water.
8. Violent behavior by a person on the bus.

NOTE: If any of these situations arise, contact the Bus Barn for direction. In each of these cases, it is important that students exit the bus quickly and carefully. Students should be directed to gather at a specific location at least 100 feet from the bus, if feasible. After students have exited the bus, continued supervision is required.

Evacuation should NOT occur when:

1. Power lines are down on or near the bus.
2. Hazardous chemicals are on the ground outside the bus.
3. Dangerous lightning or hail is in the immediate vicinity.

4. A person off the bus intends to harm one or all of the passengers.
5. Temperatures are below freezing, and no immediate danger exists.

Exit Selection - The circumstances involved in an emergency will dictate which exit(s) are used. Passengers should know how to evacuate using all points of exit. Evacuate the using exit in the following order:

1. Front service door.
2. Rear emergency exit.
3. Emergency exit windows.
4. Roof hatches

Although circumstances vary, drivers should select the means by which to exit using the following considerations:

1. Exit(s) should be away from points of danger outside of the bus (fire, traffic, etc.).
2. Exit(s) should be clear of any obstructions inside and outside the bus.
3. Students closest the point of danger should exit first.

When evacuating the bus, the driver should:

1. Stop the bus in the safest possible location.
2. Turn off the engine, set emergency brake, activate 4-way flashers, and take the key.
3. Determine if evacuation is necessary and which exit(s) to use.
4. Notify the Bus Barn via bus radio with the following information:
 - a. Bus Number.
 - b. Location of bus (road, street or nearest crossroad/street).
 - c. Type of Emergency.
 - d. Form of Assistance Needed.
 - e. Whether or not the bus will be evacuated.
5. Direct Students to evacuate using the safest exit(s) alert them to:
 - a. The fact that this is an emergency.
 - b. Remind them to stay calm, quiet, and to follow directions.
 - c. Tell them the bus must be evacuated.
 - d. Tell them which exit they will be using.
 - e. Tell them to leave their possessions on the bus.
 - f. Tell them to move quickly and safely to the exit.
 - g. Tell them where you will meet upon exiting the bus.
6. Have the first students off the bus assist others who are evacuating by standing on both sides of the exit.
 - a. Release students from left to right, row by row.
 - b. Take the first aid kit and hang the radio outside the driver's window.
 - c. Driver must ensure all students are off the bus before evacuating themselves.
 - d. Account for all students and keep them together.

7.06 Evacuation Drills

Preparedness for evacuation, through practice, will enable students to calmly and smoothly carry out evacuations during an actual emergency. For safety reasons, evacuation drills will be limited to a front and rear evacuation. Two drills will be conducted during the school year and will be done at designated schools and supervised by staff. The Transportation

Department will send you a schedule of when the drills will occur. It is recommended that you select 2 (two) or 3(three) older, trustworthy students to act as assistants during possible bus evacuations. Advise them of the types of evacuations, their role in those evacuations, and any pertinent safety information. Demonstrate or explain how to use the safety equipment and emergency exits on the bus.

7.07 Bus Accidents and Breakdowns

If you are involved in an accident, stop the bus and notify the Bus Barn immediately. The Bus Barn will contact local law enforcement and dispatch an administrator to the site of the accident. After contacting the Bus Barn, if applicable, attend to injured students. Reassure them to keep calm and evacuate the bus only if necessary. Make sure the bus is in a secure location and only allow law enforcement or school personnel to board the bus. The Administration Office will direct you in the proper post procedure accident that you are to follow.

If you are not sure, but think you may have been in an accident (possibly hit a parked car or other property), stop the bus and radio in to the Bus Barn for direction. Do not leave the scene of a possible accident unless directed to do so.

In the event of a breakdown, contact the Bus Barn with the nature of the problem and the location of the bus. Stop the bus off the road, if possible, and as far to the right as possible. Secure the bus and activate all hazard lights. Keep the children on the bus unless it is unsafe to do so. Place flags or reflectors around the bus according to state law.

Safety Procedure - Although the circumstances for accidents vary - no two accidents are alike - drivers must be able to competently act in all situations. Common sense and an understanding that passenger safety is the driver's primary responsibility are two important elements in such situations. In the event of an accident involving a school bus, the driver needs to:

1. Contact the Bus Barn.
2. Remain calm and focused.
3. Reassure students and keep them calm.
4. Stop the bus, if it is moving, and turn off the ignition. The bus should not be moved unless directed to do so by a police officer or unless there is imminent danger of fire or causing another collision.
5. Set the emergency brake and activate the four-way flashers.
6. Assess the situation and take appropriate steps.
7. Assist in transferring students to a backup bus.

NOTE: Other drivers and school offices should avoid radio transmissions and allow the involved driver to communicate and get directions from the Administration Office.

In addition to emergency steps previously listed, drivers should:

1. Not make any statements regarding fault or blame anyone for the accident.
2. Discuss details about the accident with Police and School Administrators only.
3. Be able to identify witnesses to the accident.

The BCS Corporation will follow the Summary of Requirements by 49 CFR Part 382.303 regarding Post-Accident Testing. The requirements to test are:

1. The accident resulted in a human fatality.
2. The bus driver is issued a citation within 32 hours of the accident under State or local law.

3. Injury results in a person requiring medical treatment away from the scene of the accident.
4. A vehicle has to be towed from the scene of the accident.

BCS Corporation reserves the right to conduct drug/alcohol testing for any of our employee, coach, or other activity volunteer involved in an accident while using one of our motor vehicles. Even though some individuals driving our white activity bus (or any other Corporation vehicle) may not need to have a yellow bus card certificate, those individuals can nevertheless be required to be drug tested when an accident occurs. Those individuals that have a yellow bus card certificate are subject to random drug/alcohol testing and are also subject to testing should an accident occur.

Driver Discipline

An accident is not necessarily cause for termination of employment. The Administration will take all factors into consideration. If a driver's gross negligence, drug, alcohol, or cell phone usage is determined to exist in connection with an accident, the driver will be terminated. Failure to report an accident is also grounds for termination.

7.08 Responding to Conflict and Acts of Violence on the Bus

If two or more students become engaged in unruly behavior or a physical confrontation, the bus driver must understand that his/her priority is to protect all passengers and him/herself. While each situation is different, drivers should:

1. Stop the bus in a safe location, activate the four-way flashers, and set the park brake.
2. Notify the Bus Barn of the situation and bus location or if a weapon is involved.
3. Command all students to remain seated and those involved to stop the disturbance.
4. Move other students who might be in jeopardy of being harmed to a safe location on the bus until the fighting has ceased.
5. Evacuate students from the bus if the situation escalates and the safety of the other passengers should become a concern.
6. Do not attempt to grab weapons from students.
7. Do not allow unruly students to disembark at any location other than their designated stop or school unless law enforcement or school officials take custody of the student(s) from the bus.
8. Make a full report (written) to the students' principal upon completion of the route.

7.09 Driver Illness

If a driver becomes ill during his/her route and the driver believes that it is not safe to continue driving, he/she should stop the bus in a safe location, activate the four-way flashers, and contact the Bus Barn, advising of the situation and bus location.

7.10 Student Illness or Injury

During transit to or from school, or on school-sponsored trips, students may become ill or injured while on the bus. Epileptic seizures, allergic reactions, diabetic-related emergencies, and choking are a few of the many incidents that may occur while buses are on the road. While each situation will be unique, it is important that drivers be able to react in a prompt and responsible manner to ensure the safety of all passengers. When a child becomes seriously ill or injured, the driver should:

1. Park the bus in a safe location as quickly as possible, set the emergency brake, and activate the four-way flashers.
2. Notify the Bus Barn of the situation, including bus location and being cautious of what information you share over the radio.
3. If the child requires emergency assistance, call 911.
4. Move other children away from the student.
5. Provide first aid/care for the child to the most reasonable extent possible.
6. If emergency medical personnel must attend to the student, temporarily evacuate the other students to a safe location.
7. Reassure students to calm anxiety that might occur, especially if the student must be transported from the bus by ambulance.

7.11 Delays and Cancellations

Delays and cancellations will be determined by the superintendent at the earliest times possible. As soon as a decision is made, the call tree will be activated.

7.12 Unsafe Conditions

Drivers become familiar with their students and their families and routines. If a driver observes something "out of the ordinary" he/she should contact the Bus Barn so authorities and or parents can be contacted regarding the situation and make sure it is safe to let that child off of the bus.

Drivers should contact the Bus Barn of bad road conditions.

Section 8 | Security and Threat Awareness

School bus drivers need to be cognizant of the condition of their bus and surroundings as they can present an easily accessible target for noncustodial parents in crisis, and mentally unstable individuals who wish to harm others. Here is a list of security readiness items that need to be followed:

1. Be familiar with Corporation security guidelines.
2. Understand and be capable of employing emergency procedures.
3. Remove keys for the ignition when the bus is unattended.
4. Conduct thorough pre-trip and post-trip inspections looking for suspicious damage to bus.
5. Maintain an uncluttered bus.
6. Be aware of people and activities in your surroundings, noting any suspicious behavior or unusual activities (i.e., unusual vehicles, strangers, etc.).

8.01 Suspicious Persons, Activities or Vehicles

Suspicion of persons should not be based on race, color, ethnicity, age, or gender, but on unusual behaviors that, when considered together, lead a reasonable person to believe that imminent danger exists. Such behaviors might include:

1. Odd, disruptive behavior or acting nervous.
2. Showing unusual interest in employees and/or students.
3. Soliciting information about school facilities, buses, or schedules for no apparent reason.
4. Taking photographs/video of people or school property.
5. Wearing a uniform but not involved in appropriate activity.
6. Wearing irregular/disproportionate clothing for body type or weather in an attempt to conceal something.
7. Avoiding Eye Contact.
8. Be non-communicative and/or uncooperative.
9. People or Vehicles repeatedly sighted within school/school bus environment or following the school bus.
10. Vehicles parked in unusual places or for extended periods of time.

8.02 Reporting and Responding to Suspicious People and Activities

If you note a person behaving in a suspicious manner:

1. Contact Bus Barn.
2. Helpfully challenge the person - ask if they need assistance or directions.
3. If response is refusal to answer or aggressiveness, withdraw immediately and report to Bus Barn.
4. Never be confrontational or attempt to physically detain anyone.

If someone is acting suspicious, please note distinctive facial characteristics, clothing, build, tattoos, etc. When reporting a suspicious vehicle, please note the location or direction of the vehicle, the make, model, color, and license plate number if possible. Never allow anyone on the bus other than assigned students, school or emergency personnel.

Section 9 | Guide

9.01 Pre-Trip & Post-Trip Inspection Guide

The BCS Transportation Department requires all drivers to perform a pre-trip and post-trip inspection after every regular or extra-curricular route. Please refer to the inspection guide portion of the handbook. This will be a helpful tool in performing a thorough inspection of the bus. Part of the daily inspections should include checking your mirrors and making adjustment. A grid has been painted on the parking lot by the Bus Barn.

Please use this grid to check mirrors and make necessary adjustments on a regular basis. If you notice any mechanical issues, please contact a mechanic and fill out a work order. The mechanics can also assist you in adjusting and tightening mirrors. Depending on the repair type needed, it may be necessary to remove your bus from the route immediately and a spare be used.

9.02 Rules for Pupils Who Ride the Bus

School bus drivers are to have control of all school children transported between the homes of the children and the school, and return. The driver shall keep order, maintain discipline among the children while in the bus or along the route, shall treat all the children in a civil manner, see that no child is imposed upon or mistreated while in his/her charge, and shall use every care for the safety of the children under his/her charge. School bus drivers shall assure that the following regulations are observed by all pupil passengers:

1. Each pupil shall be located immediately upon entering the bus in the place assigned by the driver.
2. No pupils shall stand or move from place to place during the trip. Students should be sitting down and facing the front of the bus at all times.
3. Loud, boisterous, or profane language, or indecent conduct shall not be tolerated.
4. Pupils shall not be allowed to tease, scuffle, trip, hold, hit or use their hands or body in any other objectionable manner.
5. Pupils shall not open or consume food or beverages, i.e. soft drinks, etc., while riding the bus, unless permission has been given by the driver for a special reason or occasion.
6. Pupils shall not be allowed to transfer from their regular route bus to another unless they have a bus pass from the school office.
7. No pupils shall enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the door has been opened by the driver.
8. The child should be waiting at his or her boarding station when the school bus arrives. In case of an emergency.
9. Causing late arrival by the pupil at his or her station, the school bus driver will be required to wait no longer than three minutes after the scheduled time for arrival at the pupil station. If the school bus driver is already three minutes late, he or she need not wait at all.
10. Upon recommendation of the bus driver, school authorities may deny the privilege of riding on the school bus to any pupil who refused to conduct himself or herself in a gentlemanly or ladylike manner on the bus.

9.03 Contact Information

Central Office:

- 765-348-7550

Special Needs Office:

- 765-348-5321

Bus Barn/Maintenance:

- 765-348-7554

Blackford Jr.-Sr. High School:

- 765-348-7560

Blackford Intermediate School:

- 765-348-7595

Blackford Primary School:

- 765-348-7584

Community Numbers:

- 765-348-4819: HCPD
- 765-348-0547: Fire Department
- 765-728-6504: Mont. PD
- 765348-7236: DISPATCH
- 765348-3363: City Dept.
- 765-348-0306: County Garage

9.04 Receipt of Handbook and Classified Manual

D300-E

CERTIFICATION OF RECEIPT

I certify, pursuant to Department of Transportation Guidelines and Board Policy D300, that I received a copy of [Board Policy D300](#) Alcohol and Controlled Substance Policy for CDL and Safety-Sensitive Positions, [Board Policy D275](#) Drug-Free Workplace, [D350](#) Fitness for Duty Leaves and Examinations, and [D400](#) Family & Medical Leaves of Absence (“FMLA”). Additionally, I certify that I received a copy of the Transportation Employee Handbook.

Printed Name

Position Title

Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date