

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 85

VANCOUVER ISLAND NORTH

POLICY MANUAL
Section 2

Policy No. 2-340

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

- POLICY -

The Board's transportation system is established to provide equitable, safe and economical transportation for its students, in accordance with the School Act and its Regulation, the Motor Vehicle Act and its Regulation, and this policy and its regulation.

Bus drivers, school principals and/or vice-principals, teachers, students and the manager of transportation services have a responsibility to cooperate with each other in an effort to provide the best service possible to students.

The safe transportation of students is the primary concern in the administration of the Board's transportation system.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

– REGULATION –

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 Eligible Student - a student who resides within School District No. 85, attends a public school within School District No. 85, who requires scheduled transportation, and who resides at a greater distance from his/her school than that established by Ministry of Education walk limits.
- 1.2 Walk Limits - 4 kilometers for grade 1 to grade 3 students and 4.8 kilometers for students enrolled in grades 4 to 12.
- 1.3 Non-scheduled Transportation - the transportation of students, other than scheduled transportation, by or on behalf of, or at the request of, the Board by means of a passenger vehicle, school bus, taxi cab, water taxi, ferry, public transit, airline, special vehicle or other means of transportation approved by the Superintendent.

Adoption Date: Apr. 1990, February 1992

Review Date: Jan. 93; Feb/95; Dec/97; Nov/98; Feb/02; Oct/04; Nov/07; Feb/10; Apr12; Feb/15; Feb/16; Feb/19; Dec/22; Dec/23

- 1.4 Scheduled Transportation - the transportation of students by or on behalf of, or at the request of, the Board by means of a school bus, taxi cab, or special vehicle that, either alone or as part of a transportation system, transports students between their residences and the school on a regularly scheduled basis for the purpose of attending classes.
- 1.5 Passenger Vehicle - a motor vehicle that conforms to the Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Act standards applicable to passenger cars or multi-purpose passenger vehicles on the date of manufacture of the motor vehicle. A passenger vehicle with a seating capacity of 10 persons or less does not require a school bus permit.
- 1.6 School Bus - a motor vehicle of any size, with a valid school bus permit issued by the Motor Vehicle Branch. Specifically, a Yellow and Black School Bus is a bus that conforms to the Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Act standards applicable to school buses on the date of manufacture of the bus and a bus that meets the requirements in the regulations for the Minimum Standards for Construction of School Buses (B.C. Reg. 214/76) and Small School Bus Standards (B.C. Reg. 542/78)
- 1.7 Volunteer Vehicle - a motor vehicle not owned or leased by the Board where the driver of the vehicle receives no remuneration for driving other than reimbursement for reasonable expenses.
- 1.8 Taxicab - a motor vehicle operated as a limited passenger vehicle under the authority of a license or permit issued by either the Motor Carrier Commission or a municipality, designed to carry not more than 10 persons, including the driver. When operated as a school bus, it may only carry one passenger in the front seat in addition to the driver, and additional passengers may only occupy seats equipped with seat belts.
- 1.9 Special Vehicle - a motor vehicle that is designed or modified to carry not more than 10 persons including the driver and that is used for the transportation of special needs students. A permit issued by the Motor Vehicle Branch is required.
- 1.10 Driver's Licence - an operator of a motor vehicle must possess a valid B.C. driver's licence of the appropriate class as follows:
 - 1.10.1 Class 1 and 2 allow the operation of a school bus, special vehicle, passenger vehicle or volunteer vehicle of any seating capacity.
 - 1.10.2 Class 4 allows the operation of a school bus, special vehicle, passenger vehicle or volunteer vehicle providing the seating capacity does not exceed 25 persons including the driver.
 - 1.10.3 Class 5 allows the operation of a passenger vehicle as a volunteer vehicle providing the seating capacity does not exceed 10 persons including the driver.

- 1.10.4 Operation of a vehicle equipped with air brakes is not permitted without a specific and valid license endorsement.

2. SCHEDULED TRANSPORTATION

- 2.1 Providing there is a sufficient number of eligible students to justify creating a school bus route, the Board will provide scheduled school bus transportation. The determination of whether there is a sufficient number of eligible students to create, amend or delete a school bus route shall be at the sole discretion of the Board.

If the Board is giving consideration to the deletion of a school bus route or part thereof, affected parents will be given an opportunity to provide input to the Board. In the event that a school bus route is cancelled, the Board will provide affected parents with as much notice as possible.

- 2.2 The Board may provide scheduled transportation to a student who resides within the Ministry of Education walk limits under special circumstances and provided no additional cost to the Board results. Such circumstances could include:

- 2.2.1 the special needs of a particular student,
- 2.2.2 the safety hazards along the normal route of travel,
- 2.2.3 inclement weather conditions, or
- 2.2.4 accessibility of areas to school buses (no bus if inaccessible).

- 2.3 A student who has transferred from the school closest to home to a more distant school, in accordance with policy 2-295 (School Choice), may be permitted to use scheduled transportation under certain circumstances. Such use could only occur if the following conditions are met:

- 2.3.1 sufficient room is available on the school bus,
- 2.3.2 no deviation from the regular school bus route occurs, and (2-260 rescinded)
- 2.3.3 no additional cost to the Board results.

The Board may withdraw such school bus transportation privileges at any time, with 24 hours' notice. The Board reserves the right to charge a fee to parents for transportation services provided under these circumstances. Fees are based upon the average cost per kilometer of providing transportation to each student, and they are payable in advance for the school year.

- 2.4 Where, in the opinion of the Board, there is an insufficient number of students to justify providing a new school bus route or to justify amending or maintaining an existing school bus route, the Board will pay parents of eligible students a transportation assistance allowance. The allowance is claimed each school year

through forms that are available at the district office. The Board pays the allowance on a monthly basis to parents after receipt of an attendance report from the appropriate school. Effective December 1, 2023, the allowances per family are as follows:

Paved Roads:	\$0.55 per kilometer to a maximum of \$29.00 per day
Unpaved Roads:	\$0.60 per kilometer to a maximum of \$35.00 per day
Water:	\$0.67 per kilometer to a maximum of \$42.00 per day

If the Board pays a transportation assistance allowance, the full responsibility for safe transportation and insurance coverage rests with the vehicle or vessel owner.

2.5 The Board may permit students to use scheduled school bus transportation in order to participate in organized after-school sports, cultural and school related activities under certain circumstances. Such use could only occur if the following conditions are met:

- 2.5.1 sufficient room is available on the school bus,
- 2.5.2 no deviation from the regular school bus route occurs,
- 2.5.3 no additional cost to the Board results, and
- 2.5.4 a written permission process is followed, involving parents, school principals and/or vice-principals and the manager of transportation services, with notice being given to the school bus driver.

The Board may withdraw such school bus transportation privileges at any time, with 24 hours' notice. The Board reserves the right to charge a fee to parents for transportation services provided under these circumstances.

- 2.6 The Board will not provide scheduled school bus transportation to students who are enrolled in independent schools.
- 2.7 With the exception of supervisors or other employees authorized by the Superintendent or Secretary-Treasurer, adults (other than eligible students) are not permitted to ride with students on school buses.
- 2.8 Only district-owned school buses are to be used to provide scheduled transportation. In certain circumstances, the Board may investigate and utilize other options permitted by legislation, such as, but not limited to, contracted school buses, taxicabs and district-owned or contracted special vehicles.
- 2.9 Each day that a school bus is operated on a highway with students on Board, it should be inspected by the bus driver to ensure there are reasonable grounds to believe it is in safe working order.

- 2.10 A minimum of \$10,000,000 in I.C.B.C. liability insurance coverage is to be purchased for each school bus. The School Protection Program provides legal liability coverage in excess of this amount.
- 2.11 The development, publishing and implementation of procedures for student conduct on buses, safety, emergencies, school bus loading and unloading, the cancellation of bus runs, and the transportation of special needs students, is the responsibility of the manager of transportation services in consultation with school principals and/or vice-principals. The manager of transportation services is also responsible for maintaining current passenger lists for each school bus.
- 2.12 School principals and/or vice-principals will ensure that students are instructed at the beginning of each school year as to the proper procedure for Boarding and exiting a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least three times a year to acquaint students and school bus drivers with procedures to follow in emergency situations.
- 2.13 A student may be suspended from riding a school bus and/or suspended from school for a period of time as a result of an incident of misconduct while riding on a school bus. The manager of transportation services (or designate) shall consult with the student's principal to ensure that consideration is given to the student's educational needs. Refer to PM2-330 – Student Suspension.
- 2.14 School bus routes, schedules and stops will be developed under the direction of the manager of transportation services. The objective of bus scheduling and routing will be to achieve maximum service with a minimum number of school buses, consistent with providing reasonable and equitable service to all eligible students. Parents will be advised of school bus routes and schedules in August of each year.
- 2.15 School bus routes will follow the most direct roads practicable to serve students eligible for scheduled transportation. Routes will be designed to minimize turn around points and to employ, as nearly as practicable, the full carrying capacity of each school bus.
- 2.16 School bus stops will be located at convenient intervals in places where students may cross highways, await the arrival of school buses, and may board and exit school buses with the utmost safety permitted by highway conditions. The number of bus stops will be limited to enable school buses to make the bus run in reasonable time.
- 2.17 Subject to educational requirements, school schedules will be adjusted to allow maximum utilization of each school bus by alternating elementary and secondary bus runs.

2.18 The supervision of students travelling between home and school by public transportation is the responsibility of the governing authority of the carrier concerned. Substantiated incidents of misconduct dealt with under the jurisdiction of the carrier should be promptly reported to the appropriate principal and/or vice-principal.

2.19 Effective January 1, 2010, school bus drivers must comply with the B.C. Motor Vehicle Act which states that while driving a vehicle in the Province of British Columbia, drivers may not talk on a cell phone that is not hands free or use any other device that does not require one touch to activate. Texting and e-mailing while driving is also not permitted while the vehicle is moving.

3. NON-SCHEDULED TRANSPORTATION

3.1 Overall responsibility for arrangements and supervision of the travel and activities are the responsibility of the school principal. The principal will ensure the following requirements are met in approving non-scheduled transportation.

3.1.1 Passenger and vehicle loading lists are available in the school and provided to the driver.

3.1.2 Transportation of students only occurs in accordance with Board policy and regulations.

3.1.3 Vehicles used have the appropriate permits or licences.

3.1.4 School buses or special vehicles have current Motor Vehicle Branch inspection reports.

3.1.5 The designated drivers are in possession of valid and appropriate driver's licences; are in good health and accident-free for at least three years. All drivers, whether employees or volunteers, must annually provide a copy of a driver's abstract that is to be kept on file in the school office. Drivers must undertake not to operate the vehicle in an unsafe manner or in contravention of any statute or regulation governing the operation of motor vehicles.

3.1.6 Effective January 1, 2010, the designated driver must comply with the B.C. Motor Vehicle Act which states that while driving a vehicle in the Province of British Columbia, drivers may not talk on a cell phone that is not hands free or use any other device, including a GPS device, that does not require one touch to activate. Texting or e-mailing while driving is also not permitted while the vehicle is moving.

3.1.6 The passenger carrying capacity of the vehicle is determined and not exceeded.

- 3.1.7 The necessary vehicle insurance is carried.
 - 3.1.8 Any special safety requirements connected with the trip are met.
 - 3.1.9 If passenger vehicles are being used, no more than one student occupies the front seat, in addition to the driver, and additional students only occupy seats equipped with seat belts.
 - 3.1.10 Activities requiring non-scheduled transportation are approved in advance in accordance with the Board's policy and regulations on field, athletic and cultural trips.
 - 3.1.11 With the exception of bus drivers in district-owned school buses, employees transporting or supervising students on field, athletic and cultural trips must have received prior authorization for each trip.
 - 3.1.12 If passenger vehicles are being used, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the vehicle is in safe working order. If winter conditions exist the vehicle shall be equipped with appropriate tires and/or chains.
 - 3.1.13 If contracted vehicles are being used, there must be a formal written contract for the transportation required.
 - 3.1.14 Written parental consent is obtained for each student requiring non-scheduled transportation.
 - 3.1.15 Students are instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted to acquaint students and school bus drivers with procedures to follow in emergency situations.
- 3.2 School trips requiring non-scheduled transportation (cultural, field and athletic trips etc.) may utilize Board-owned school buses, unless such use would disrupt scheduled transportation or the number of students involved is too small to warrant the expense. Board-owned school buses must be driven by bus drivers who are employed and paid by the Board in accordance with the current collective agreement.
- 3.3 No student will be permitted to drive an employee's motor vehicle or a district-owned motor vehicle for school activities or school errands. No student will be permitted to drive a motor vehicle for school activities or school errands with other students as passengers.

- 3.4 A minimum of \$10,000,000 in I.C.B.C. liability insurance coverage is to be purchased for each school bus. The School Protection Program provides legal liability coverage in excess of this amount.
- 3.4.1 The Board will maintain I.C.B.C. Special Excess Legal Third Party Liability coverage to bridge the gap that may exist between an employee's or volunteer's I.C.B.C. liability limit and \$1,000,000. The School Protection Program provides legal liability coverage in excess of this amount for employees and volunteers, while on approved activities, provided the vehicle is not used for a purpose other than what it is insured for under I.C.B.C. and no violation of any motor vehicle regulation or section of the criminal code has occurred.
- 3.4.2 The Board does not maintain coverage for personal belongings contained within a vehicle (the vehicle owner may have coverage under a homeowners/tenants policy).
- 3.4.3 The Board does not maintain coverage for physical damage to a vehicle (it is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to insure physical damage directly with I.C.B.C., e.g. comprehensive and collision insurance.)
- 3.5 All costs for non-scheduled transportation will be paid from school funds in accordance with **policy 3-50 – School Trust Accounts**. Subject to budget availability, the district will support transportation costs for the district track meet, isolated school deadheading costs, isolated school travel to Arts in B.C. Schools activities, and special needs student travel approved by the Assistant Superintendent as part of an I.E.P.
- 3.6 Requests to use district-owned school buses should be provided to the manager of transportation services at least two weeks in advance of the starting date of the trip.
- 3.7 Teachers and/or other accompanying adults are responsible for providing appropriate student supervision during non-scheduled transportation.