



## **SD 42 PROCEDURE: 5401.1**

### **USE OF BOARD-OWNED BUSES / 15 PASSENGER VANS**

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#### **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines are to be followed when transporting students to or from a school or a school activity conducted within an approved curricular or extra-curricular program.

The school administration may designate a “Supervisor” to assume overall responsibility for arrangements and supervision of the travel and activity. The Supervisor would normally be the classroom teacher, coach, or activity sponsor. If the school administration does not designate someone else to be the Supervisor, then the Principal assumes the responsibilities of the Supervisor.

Orientation of volunteer drivers, including school district employees and parents is to be provided by the designated Supervisor for the trip and is to cover both the specific trip and general procedures relating to transporting students.

A passenger loading list, including home or cellular contact telephone numbers for the passengers, must be both available in the school and carried with the Supervisor.

Each school shall maintain a roster of authorized drivers with their vehicle registration number. The school administration should ensure the Volunteer Driver Application has been completed by each driver. A Driver’s Abstract Record must be filed with the school Principal, before the volunteer transports students.

The volunteer driver’s abstract must be considered by the school administration or "designated Supervisor" before a volunteer is approved by the Principal as a volunteer driver. The volunteer’s driver’s license abstract should be a part of the application process and the volunteer is responsible for obtaining the document from the appropriate Government office.

The School District intends to use its best efforts to screen and undertake volunteer driver background checks however, no person should consider such checks to be a guarantee of driver suitability.

It is the responsibility of the school Supervisor to obtain prior to the trip, the written consent of the parent or guardian of each student being transported.

The Supervisor will ensure:

- The number of persons being carried in a given passenger vehicle shall not exceed the normal carrying capacity of that vehicle;
- There is a seat belt for each person in the vehicle;
- All children under 12 years of age ride in the back seat; and

- Booster seats will be required for any child under 145 metres (4'9") in height or until their 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In the case where bad weather is likely to cause adverse driving conditions, the Supervisor is required to check with police and/or highway authorities with respect to driving conditions; and in making the decision whether to proceed with the trip or not, decide on the side of caution.

Students may not be charged a fee for such transportation, nor may drivers of private motor vehicles be reimbursed in cash or kind.

### **VOLUNTEER DRIVERS - DISTRICT EMPLOYEE/PARENT/ADULT:**

- have a valid driver's license for at least one year, a photocopy of which will be on file with the school administration. The photocopy will include any medical restrictions;
- carry appropriate insurance coverage as per current ICBC regulations (minimum \$1,000,000 Third Party Liability);
- ensure safe vehicle and operating conditions;
- vehicle is properly licensed;
- have an adequate number of seatbelts and require passengers to wear seatbelts, all children under 12 years of age must ride in the back seat;
- have on file with the school administration, a photocopy of the driver's license that includes any medical restrictions, and a Driver's Abstract Record. It should be remembered that employees transporting students during work hours, are not volunteers – they are employees;

### **REQUIRED DRIVER LICENSES**

Drivers of school buses, special activity buses or special vehicles carrying between 11 and 24 passengers (including the driver), are required to have a Class 4 License.

Drivers of school buses, special activity buses or special vehicles carrying more than 24 passengers (including the driver) are required to have a Class 2 License.

Any vehicle with a seating capacity of more than 10 persons, including the driver, is defined by *Motor Vehicle Act* as a "bus". A "bus" used to transport students is required to have a valid school bus permit (MVA reg. 11.03).

### **VEHICLE OPERATIONS**

Operators should be advised of the importance of training and education for drivers unfamiliar with the handling characteristics of a vehicle with a higher centre of gravity and the importance of seat belt use for the driver and passengers should also be stressed.

Prudent risk management policies should recognize that a hazard does exist and that the risk of a rollover crash is greatly increased when 10 or more people ride in a 15 passenger van.

Two other safety factors to consider when operating a 15 passenger van:

**Be mindful of speed and road conditions:** The analysis of 15 passenger van crashes shows the risk of rollover increases significantly at speeds over 80 kilometres per hour and on curved roads.

**Only qualified drivers should be behind the wheel:** Special training and experience are required to properly operate a 15 passenger van. Ensure your driver or drivers have both—and only operate these vehicles when well rested and fully alert.

This increased risk occurs because the passenger weight raises the vehicle's centre of gravity and causes it to shift rearward, making it more inclined to rollover and more difficult to control in an emergency situation. Drivers who are unfamiliar with the differences in design and handling characteristics may find themselves ill-equipped to correct conditions that compromise the stability of the van. If at all possible, seat passengers and place cargo forward of the rear axle and avoid placing any loads on the roof.

Vehicle maintenance also contributes to the safe operation of any vehicle. A primary contributor to any vehicle rollover is loss of control caused by tire failure. Proper tire pressure is essential in maintaining the integrity of the tire. Tires should be checked visually before every trip and at least monthly with an accurate tire gauge when the tire is cold. The proper air pressure level is found in the owner's manual or on the tire pressure sticker or vehicle data plate located on the doorjamb or glove box door.

## **SCHOOL BUS REQUIREMENTS**

For a 15 passenger van to be considered a school bus, the following requirements must be met:

- must have a school bus permit (issued by the Motor Vehicle Branch);
- must have school bus exterior signage
- should have secured first aid kit – Level 1
- should have secured fire extinguisher
- should have 2 medium size triangle reflectors
- driver must have a class 4 license.

## **BUS INSPECTION PROCESS AND REPORTS**

### **Commercial Vehicle Inspection Report**

The van must have a commercial vehicle inspection every 6 months by a licensed inspection facility. The school will receive a written report and a window sticker is attached to the van with the expiry date.

## **BUS PRE-TRIP INSPECTION**

All drivers must complete a pre-trip inspection report prior to using the van. This is a visual inspection that covers a comprehensive list of checks. One copy is kept in the booklet in the van and another copy is kept in the school office.

The school office keeps a history of all their vehicle inspection reports. All originals of current insurance and inspection reports are kept in the school office, copies are in each van.

All van trips are logged on a calendar at the school.

**APPROVED: September 12, 2012**