

<u>Section E:</u>  <b>Business Management</b>	<b>Knox County Board of Education Policy</b>		
	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
	<b>Student Transportation Management</b>	<b>E-170</b>	<b>7/95</b>
		Reviewed:	Revised:
	<b>9/17</b>	<b>11/17</b>	

1 School buses shall be maintained and operated in accordance with state law and State Board of Education  
2 Rules and Regulations.<sup>1</sup>

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5 The school transportation program shall be monitored daily by the principals and the Transportation  
6 Department and subjected to periodic evaluations by them as necessary. The transportation supervisor  
7 shall maintain an overall evaluation and a summary report shall be submitted to the Director of Schools or  
8 the Board as needed by request.

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10 **REPORTING ACCIDENTS**

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12 All accidents involving a school bus or any other commercial vehicle providing transportation services to  
13 Knox County Schools, regardless of the damage involved, must adhere to the following:

- 14 • Immediately report the incident to the appropriate emergency agency (911) and the Director of  
15 Transportation Department or the Director's representative;
- 16 • Vehicles will remain at the accident site until law enforcement<sup>2</sup> determines the estimated damage  
17 and they are released by law enforcement;
- 18 • The driver should not attempt to place the blame for the accident or admit responsibility for the  
19 accident and make a possible determination of the cause. This will be determined through  
20 investigation;
- 21 • In the event law enforcement determines that damage to property of any one person is in excess of  
22 four hundred dollars (\$400), a police report will be completed.<sup>3</sup> A copy of the police report must  
23 be submitted of such accident to the Transportation Department within five (5) days and  
24 Tennessee Department of Safety within twenty (20) days;<sup>4</sup>
- 25 • In the event law enforcement determines that damage to property of any one person does not  
26 exceed four hundred dollars (\$400), the Knox County Schools Security Department will complete  
27 an incident report.<sup>5</sup> The incident report shall be provided to the Transportation Department within  
28 five (5) days.

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31 These requirements shall apply to accidents occurring upon highways and the premises of any shopping  
32 center, trailer park or any apartment house complex, or any other premises which are generally frequented  
33 by the public at large.<sup>6</sup>

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35 **REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING SAFETY RELATED INFRACTIONS**

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39 Anyone may report a suspected safety infraction incurred during the operation of a school bus by calling  
40 the transportation safety hotline number 865-594-1935. This line is manned by the transportation  
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customer service office from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on weekdays when school is in session and by the Knox County Schools Security Dispatcher at all other times. Allegations that cannot be immediately confirmed or denied by the transportation director will be forwarded to the Transportation Safety Officer in the Knox County Schools Security Office for full investigation. All investigations will be completed in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-6-2116.

At the beginning of each school year, parents will be provided a hard copy notification of the procedure to report suspected bus related safety infractions.

## **RECORDS RETENTION AND MAINTENANCE**

Beginning not later than January 1, 2018, the Knox County Schools Transportation Department shall maintain the following records in either hardcopy or digital/electronic form:

1. School bus maintenance and inspection records
2. School bus driver credentials, background checks, health records and any completed performance reviews
3. Driver training records; and
4. Any bus and driver related complaints received and any record of investigation of lodged complaints

## **END OF ROUTE BUS CHECK**

All drivers of a bus or any other vehicle transporting students of Knox County Schools shall fully check the passenger area for each vehicle each time the vehicle is vacated by the driver for any purpose to ensure that all children have left the vehicle.<sup>7</sup>

A bus driver's failure to comply with this requirement shall result in the permanent disqualification of the non-complying individual's eligibility to provide transportation services for Knox County Schools.

A contractor's failure to comply with this requirement shall result in immediate termination of the service assignment.

## **QUALIFICATIONS OF BUS DRIVERS EMPLOYED BY CONTRACTED PARTIES**

1. Bus driver applicants must be of good character, competency and fitness to be employed.
2. No person shall be authorized to drive a school bus providing services to Knox County Schools in any capacity until they have attained 25 years of age, have at least five consecutive years unrestricted driving experience, satisfactorily complete a local and Tennessee Bureau of Investigation background screening and a drug screening as required by the DOT and Board policy. A Certificate of Eligibility (Tennessee Department of Safety, Form 2-C) shall not be issued until results of the investigation are made available to Knox County Schools<sup>8</sup>;
3. School bus drivers employed for individuals under a contractual agreement with the Board shall be included on the Bus Driver Eligibility Roster maintained by the Transportation Department to provide services in any capacity (including field trips, athletic events).
4. School bus drivers shall possess a valid commercial driving license with appropriate endorsements to operate a school bus with an unrestricted operator's license.<sup>9</sup>

1 5. All bus drivers shall satisfactorily complete an annual physical examination.<sup>5</sup>

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3 6. DOT compliant or alternative drivers shall meet all qualifications and requirements for regular  
4 drivers.

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6 **DUTIES OF BUS DRIVERS EMPLOYED BY CONTRACTED PARTIES**

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8 1. The driver shall deal with children in a firm, fair, and friendly manner. Any misconduct of pupils  
9 shall be reported to the principal of the school to which the pupil belongs. The driver does not  
10 have the authority to suspend a pupil from transportation privileges.

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12 2. The driver shall obey all State and local traffic regulations.

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14 3. Each driver shall be responsible for cleaning the bus a minimum of one time per school day.

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16 4. Drivers shall not use profanity, tobacco, drugs, or intoxicating beverages when transporting pupils.

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18 5. It shall be the duty of any driver to promote safety habits.

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20 6. The driver shall participate in the driver training program as required by the State for maintaining  
21 their CDL.

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23 7. The driver shall maintain a consistent time schedule, never early, seldom late.

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25 8. The driver shall check the maintenance operations of the vehicle before morning and afternoon  
26 runs and ensure all passengers have safely exited after each run.

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28 9. The driver shall have at least an elementary knowledge of first aid. The driver's employer is  
29 responsible for first aid training.

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31 10. The responsibility for determining whether weather and other conditions are such to allow for safe  
32 driving conditions or to close schools early is the responsibility of the Director of Schools. Some  
33 roads may become hazardous during severe weather conditions. Under such condition, the  
34 decision shall revert to the driver since he must assume personal responsibility for the safety of the  
35 children on his route.

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37 11. The driver shall maintain satisfactory working relationship with all school personnel.

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39 12. The driver shall permit only those students assigned to his/her bus to ride during the regular  
40 contracted route with the following exceptions:

- 41  
42 • Driver assistants approved by the Transportation Department or a building level administrator  
43 from the school where the assigned student riders attend;
- 44  
45 • Children of a bus driver meeting criteria stipulated in the Knox County Schools School Bus  
46 Handbook (BA.4)

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48 13. The contractor or his or her employees shall not recommend, recruit or otherwise solicit student  
49 participation in any non-school sponsored activity.

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14. The contractor or his or her employees shall adhere to all items included in the School Bus Handbook maintained by the Transportation Department.

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Legal References:

1. T.C.A. § 49-6-2101-2113; TRR/MS § 0520-1-5-01.
2. T.C.A. § 55-10-103.
3. T.C.A. § 55-10-108.
4. T.C.A. § 55-10-107.
5. TRR/MS § 0520-1-5-.01.
6. T.C.A. § 55-10-107.
7. T.C.A. § 49-6-2114.
8. T.C.A. § 49-6-2107.
9. TDOS § 1340-3-3.

Approved as to Legal Form 9/29/2017  
By Knox County Law Director  
*/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director*