

Business and Non-Instructional Operations

Bus Drivers

The Orange Board of Education, or Business Manager, shall approve all bus drivers annually and/or upon initial employment following certification by the bus contractor that each driver is in all respects qualified to drive a school bus.

If necessary, the Superintendent or Business Manager may remove a driver from his/her assignment through either

1. suspension of bus drivers who are Orange Board of Education employees;
2. through notification of the bus contractor that a particular driver or particular drivers may no longer drive in the Orange district and shall report the action to the Orange Board of Education.

The Superintendent shall require each regular driver to participate annually in a locally developed first aid seminar of at least three hours duration. Whenever practical, substitute bus drivers shall also be required to participate in the first aid experience.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statute

[10-220](#) Duties of boards of education.

[14-276](#) Licensing of school bus operators. Names of suspended or revoked licenses furnished upon request.

[14-276a](#) Regulations re school bus operators and operators of student transportation vehicles; qualifications; training.

[14-277](#) Operator's duties on stopping bus.

[14-279](#) Vehicles to stop for school bus. Penalties. Written warning or summons.

New Policy adopted: 2003

Policy Reviewed: May 13, 2013

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Bus Drivers

Employees' Duties; Driver

Guide for Orange Elementary School Bus Drivers

The school bus service that is provided the elementary school children of Orange has always been of the highest quality. This is a result of close cooperation of the Orange Board of Education, the administration, the school secretaries and the owner-drivers themselves.

In fact, it is the care and good sense of the owner-drivers, which is largely responsible for the high favor in which the bus service is held by the parents.

From time to time, however, incidents occur which create the inevitable criticism and comment. It is to forestall these occurrences and to promote uniformity of action that these few guidelines are drawn.

Route Organization

The routes, stopping places for pickups and drop-offs, direction of travel, student assignments, etc. are always very carefully planned by school personnel. This is necessary for economy of time and money, for proper pupil placement and for safety. No change should be made in the routing without the express agreement of the Business Manager and Principal and notification of the transportation agent. Places for boarding or leaving the bus should not be changed without prior agreement with the principal and parent. Notification of any change shall be handled by the school principal.

Bus Safety

Drivers should be extremely careful not to start the bus rolling if every student is not seated. At no time should children be permitted to stand in a moving bus. This is true particularly as they approach the place of exit. Children sometimes line up in the bus aisle before the vehicle has come to a complete halt. This is contrary to good safety practice and should not be permitted.

Student Personnel

Children are not permitted to switch buses. The group assigned to a bus at the beginning of the year remains throughout the year. No child who is not in the assigned group should be permitted on the bus without the previous knowledge and permission of the Principal, which shall be relayed, to the bus driver

Student Control

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and those students being transported. In all incidents occurring on the bus, the judgment of the bus driver will be accepted as final. The driver can be held legally negligent. So can school administrators if the driver has not been notified of the need for better control. The line of responsibility for student behavior and supervision is from the driver to the school Principal to the Superintendent to the Orange Board of Education. The school principal is responsible for all actions involving students and is in the best possible position to assist and support the drivers most effectively.

Disciplinary action by the driver may take different forms. Change of seat is often effective. Oral reprimand or warning is sometimes helpful. Reporting unruly behavior to the principal and through him/her to the parent is most effective. The principal will report to the parent. The driver should not do so.

It is better to report a problem early than to be patient, lenient, and forgiving. This often leads to a critical situation in which drastic action must eventually be taken. A child will naturally go farther and farther in disturbing action if he/she is permitted. A driver must nip misbehavior early and establish control.

On the other hand, constant referrals for minor infractions tend to undermine the authority of the bus driver. It is necessary to strike a proper balance. The Principal can help here.

Suspension of a child from bus rights is an absolutely last resort. No pupil shall be suspended without an informal hearing by the building principal at which pupil, parent and bus driver are present. (cf 5114 – re Suspension)

Children should not be put off the bus at any stop other than the regular one. If a child is so unruly that immediate action seems necessary, keep the child on the bus and bring him/her back to the school. The principal will handle the case at that point.

Speed and Time

Posted speeds and traffic regulations must be observed. Schedules are very tight, but it is not expected that bus drivers reduce running time by speeding.

There is a natural tendency to pick up a few minutes of running time by starting the first morning run a few minutes early. Buses are to arrive at the school as closely to the scheduled time of arrival as possible. On those occasions when weather and traffic conditions interfere, it is better to be late than be consistently ahead of arriving time throughout the year.

Hazardous Road Conditions

Drivers should keep the school administration informed of hazardous road conditions so that steps for immediate correction by the proper town authorities can be taken.

No-School Call

School is called off by the Superintendent after consultation with the local highway department and local police. On calling off school, the Superintendent first notifies his/her Administrative Assistant who reports the closure in the One Call system. One Call notifies bus drivers. Additionally, closures are reported on the Orange School District website at www.oess.org and through the local media.

Accidents

Accidents involving a bus, or a child riding in a bus, should be reported to the Business Manager and Principal of the school serving that child or children, immediately. If the accident requires police presence, have the police notify the school as soon as possible. The school administration must know in order to get the children quickly to their destination.

Individual accidents to children in the bus should be reported immediately to the school Principal and the school nurse. A report to the insurance carrier must be completed. If the child is being dropped-off at the end of the day, the accident should be reported to any adult who is receiving the child.

Substitute Drivers

Each substitute driver should be briefed, be given a copy of the guide, be properly licensed, have a complete physical, and be approved by the Business Manager.

In Case of Breakdown

The driver's first responsibility is to the children. He/she cannot leave them alone in the bus. He/she should use the radio to notify the Business Office and bus company

of the break-down. Other drivers will be asked to cooperate in bringing in or taking home the children.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-215](#) Duties of local and regional boards of education

[10-216](#) Duties of boards of education

[10-217](#) Report of accidents

[10-218](#) [14-281a](#) Speed of school buses

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