



Livingston Educational Service Agency

1425 West Grand River Avenue . Howell . MI 48843

Tel:(517)546-5550

LIVINGSTON EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

SPECIALIZED BUS DRIVERS AND BUS ASSISTANTS

Board of Education Approval: June 24, 2015

Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Updated: July 20, 2015

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Article 1 - Introduction

This handbook has been adopted by the Livingston Educational Service Agency (“Agency”) to establish the wages, benefits, and working conditions for Bus Drivers and Bus Assistants in the Agency’s Specialized Transportation department.

Additionally, this handbook outlines the procedures for such employees that have been put in place to ensure a safe and efficient transportation service.

This handbook does not cover every aspect of an employee’s responsibilities and may not address all laws, regulations and rules applicable to the operation of the Agency. Employees covered by this handbook are responsible for following all Agency policies, procedures, and guidelines. Nothing in this handbook nor any written or oral statements or personnel policies made now or in the future is intended to create or to constitute an employment agreement.

The Agency may, at any time, with or without notice, amend, modify or eliminate any of its policies, including those set forth herein. The employment relationship of Employees covered by this handbook may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time at the option of either the Employee or the Agency

Any questions about employment expectations or responsibilities should be discussed with an employee’s supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Article 2 - Definitions

The following terms are defined:

- A. Agency. The Livingston Educational Service Agency.
- B. Day. The term, Day, denotes a working day unless otherwise stated.
- C. Employee. The term, Employee, denotes any person employed in any position by the Agency.
- D. Employer. The term, Employer, denotes the Board, the Superintendent, and their designees.

Article 3 - Employment Procedures

Section 3.01 Employment Qualifications

The Agency seeks to recruit and retain employees of good will that strive to provide premier transportation services at all times. Employees are expected to be both qualified and competent both in the operation of the vehicles (as required by their job assignment) and in dealing with and handling students with whom they will interact.

All employees shall meet and comply with all federal, state, and Agency standards, policies, regulations, codes and laws, including but not limited to transportation issues, privacy issues, student record issues and any other issues arising out of their employment with the Agency.

The Agency shall utilize a pre-employment interview and/or screening program for all candidates for employment. The screening program shall be designed to identify those candidates who may be suitable for assignment to services for all students.

Every bus driver must have and maintain a valid Commercial Driver's License, appropriate to the vehicle that is being driven, with a passenger endorsement as issued by the State of Michigan, together with any applicable Federal licensing requirements.

Section 3.02 Health and Physical Requirements

Every employee shall be in good health and physical condition to provide services. New employees shall be given pre-employment physicals unless they have successfully passed a physical in the past 12 months for a school transportation job in a Michigan Public School.

Health & Physical examinations shall be required for all bus drivers as established by the Michigan Department of Education and shall be scheduled and paid for by the Agency. Examinations shall occur at least once every two years but may be scheduled more frequently at the discretion of the Agency.

Each driver shall submit to the Agency and also carry when providing services a physicians certificate of examination, all in accordance with applicable legal requirements, in particular the Michigan Pupil Transportation Act.

Section 3.03 Background Checks

The Agency shall require all of its employees that may be in contact with students to be fingerprinted for the purpose of conducting both federal and state criminal background checks as well as a check of motor vehicle operations violations. Each driver shall have a certified safe driving record and no felony conviction for drugs or child abuse or any other felony related to the safe transportation of children, whether or not associated with the operation of a motor vehicle, or conviction at any time of driving under the influence of alcoholic beverages.

Drivers shall have less than six points on his/her driving record pursuant to the State of Michigan points system maintained by the Michigan secretary of State.

The Agency may utilize the background checks performed by another school district in accordance with the Revised School Code and applicable laws.

Section 3.04 New Positions

Information about available new positions is posted on the Agency website and is also available in the Human Resources Department. Current Agency employees seeking a particular open position must apply online if they wish to be considered.

Section 3.05 Vacancies

(a) Vacant Positions

Positions shall be declared vacant when the assigned employee has terminated or transferred to another position.

Vacant positions shall be posted by the Agency for five calendar days. Qualified employees may apply on-line for the vacant position as outlined in the posting. In filling the vacancy consideration shall be given to seniority, qualifications, and work record.

Any employee selected to fill the vacancy shall have their assignment posted as a vacant position under the same process noted above. Any further vacancies created by this shall be filled at the Agency's discretion and shall not be posted.

(b) Temporary Vacancies

A temporary vacancy shall be declared when an employee provides notice to the Agency that they shall be absent for 20 consecutive days or the employee has been absent for 20 consecutive days.

Temporary vacancies shall be bid internally and employees in good standing will be deemed eligible to bid. Any employee selected to fill the temporary vacancy shall have their assignment filled with a substitute employee. In filling the vacancy consideration shall be given to seniority, qualifications, and work record.

Article 4 - Standards of Conduct

Section 4.01 Performance Standards

Every driver shall have successfully completed the basic bus driver education program and continuing education programs as required by the Michigan Department of Education and shall meet and/or comply with all applicable federal and state legal requirements.

Employees are expected to follow all Agency policies, procedures, rules, and instructions at all times.

The principles listed below require the active daily attention of all employees, including consistent attendance, high standards of driving, thoughtful attention to human relations and cooperation of bus drivers and bus assistants with other persons engaged in the educational tasks of the schools in Livingston County. All regulations and procedures of the Agency are related to these central principles:

- A safe trip

- Every trip runs on schedule
- Daily acceptable performance
- Positive environment for every person on the bus.

Section 4.02 Special Expertise

When a run supported by the LESA Specialized Transportation requires transportation of students with extended special needs (such as special medical care) all drivers and assistants transporting those students shall first demonstrate proficiency and/or complete special training relevant to those special requirements.

Section 4.03 Professional Development

Drivers shall successfully complete as assigned pre-service training and in-service training covering safety practices, procedures, law, and student care and discipline, in particular the following:

- Training required by the Michigan Department of Education to maintain the validity of the School Bus Drivers Certificate.
- Topics related to driving skills, behavioral problems, public relations with students, parents and school personnel, first aid, basic medical information, emergency procedures, student evacuation drills, including evasive maneuvers, pre-trip procedures, accident procedures, etc.
- Training to meet requirements in first aid, adult/child/infant Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation, administration of medications such as Diastat and EpiPens, handling infectious diseases, blood borne pathogens, and behavior management.

Section 4.04 Cell Phone Use

Recognizing that personal cell phone use by school bus drivers or bus assistants during vehicle operation poses a potential safety risk, LESA drivers and assistants shall not use personal cell phones while the school bus is in operation. A bus is considered “in operation” whenever there are students onboard or the bus is in motion.

Drivers and assistants must devote full attention to their task. To avoid distraction, personal cell phones must be silenced or turned off when the bus is in operation. To avoid any possible perception of illicit cell phone use, drivers and assistants may not wear Bluetooth earpieces or similar devices.

Cell phones may be used in an emergency situation if two-way radio communication is not effective. In these cases, the bus must be secured in a safe location prior to cell phone use.

Violation of this policy constitutes a serious safety violation, and is grounds for dismissal per Agency Board Policy.

Section 4.05 Radios

Radios are provided in every school bus. If during bus inspections it is determined that the radio is malfunctioning, you must immediately notify the dispatcher to resolve the matter. Radios are provided for safety and dispatching reasons. The following are prohibited with regards to the usage of radios:

- Radio usage for personal reasons. All transmissions must pertain to official school transportation business.
- Transmitting while someone else is using the radio. Wait until they clear before transmitting.
- Transmitting confidential information.

Section 4.06 Family Members

Family members may not ride the bus with an employee they are related to without the express written permission of the Supervisor.

Section 4.07 Speeding/Unsafe Driving

A driver is expected to drive in a safe and lawful manner at all times. If a complaint of speeding or unsafe driving is received, the Agency will conduct an investigation and will take disciplinary action as needed.

Section 4.08 Conduct on Extra Trips

Lateness and/or other unprofessional behavior on extra trips will not be tolerated and may result in the employee's name being removed from future extra assignments. Drivers must stay with the bus at the location of the trip unless otherwise instructed. Drivers must have the teacher's permission and the supervisor's approval to leave the site of the trip for any reason.

Section 4.09 Drug Use Prohibition and Prevention

Drivers or aides shall not smoke, or possess, consume or be under influence of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances on vehicles while on the job or prior to undertaking such duty within the time frames specified in applicable legal requirements, in particular the Pupil Transportation Act, or otherwise in the exercise of reasonable judgment.

The Agency shall conduct or cause to be conducted tests under applicable legal requirements to determine the presence of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol. Such tests shall be administered to:

- A. Any driver involved in an accident while working but not absolved of fault at the scene of the accident by a Law Enforcement Officer.
- B. Any driver or aide whom the Agency has reasonable cause to believe has reported to work or is otherwise on school property while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- C. Any driver selected for random drug and alcohol tests.

Section 4.10 Appropriate Dress and Grooming

Employees may dress casually, but be aware that you are representing the Agency. Your clothing should be appropriate. For the purposes of safety whenever you are representing the Agency and being paid all footwear must have an enclosed heel, covered toes, and a sole that provides ample traction. If you have a question about what is permissible please

contact your supervisor. Employees wearing inappropriate clothing may be sent home without pay.

Section 4.11 Reporting Traffic Violations

Traffic violations incurred outside of work shall be reported by the employee to their supervisor with 24 hours of receiving the ticket.

Section 4.12 Handling Student Behavior

Employees are expected to follow proper methods for handling student behavior including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Be patient.
2. Always submit an Incident Report whenever a student's behavior or medical circumstances are outside the student's normal day.
3. Address undesirable behavior as soon as you see it.
4. When correcting students, be sure to do so in a manner that respects their disability or conditions.
5. Do not engage adult conversations that are inappropriate for children.
6. Don't "save up" student incidents. Report each one as it occurs.
7. Do not judge a student's ability or comprehension by outward appearance.
8. Treat students as individuals. Learn their names. Compliment good behavior.

Section 4.13 Interactions with Parents

Drivers and assistants may share information with a parent about how that parent's child is doing on the bus. Staff should try to establish a good relationship with them. When parents see that the bus staff cares about the welfare of their students, they will provide support when approached for help with problems.

Avoid the following pitfalls when dealing with parents:

- Never argue with parents
- Do not discuss other students on the bus outside of their own children.
- Do not discuss your coworkers with parents.
- Never make deals or changes to the route with parents
- Never lose your temper when discussing matters with parents
- Never attempt to discuss or handle problems with a parent through the open door of a bus.
- Never tell a parent how to manage students who ride your bus
- Never allow unauthorized persons on your bus

If you are approached by a parent during a route, listen for as long as you can, politely explain that you must meet your schedule, and invite him or her to call your supervisor to meet or talk over the phone.

Section 4.14 Cleaning Buses (Exterior)

Buses should be cleaned whenever needed to maintain a safe and appropriate environment for transporting students, or as directed by their Supervisor. Bus washes should be limited to no more than one time every other day and done at the end of a route, not before leaving. Assistants are to be dropped off at the garage prior to washing.

Section 4.15 School Bus Idling

Pre-Trip Inspection

Your bus may idle during the pre-trip inspection as many of your required checks depend on the bus running.

If the temperature is above 40 degrees, you must shut your bus off after completing your pre-trip.

If the temperature is below 40 degrees, you may allow your bus to continue to idle. The maximum idle time in this situation is fifteen minutes.

AM Unload at School

You must shut your bus off if you are sitting for more than 5 minutes. The bus will retain enough heat to keep the students safe and comfortable. Be sure to turn your key to accessory to allow the 2-way radio to function, as well as shutting down any blowers or fans to save the batteries.

If you are routinely to school early enough to where this is an issue, see Eric to have your route adjusted.

Before Noon Route

Unless otherwise noted on the message board, no idling is allowed prior to the noon routes.

Before PM Route

Unless otherwise noted on the message board, no idling is allowed prior to the PM routes.

Special Situations

During periods of extreme cold, the mechanics will start the fleet at a temperature chosen in conjunction with the office staff. This temperature will vary due to multiple factors.

During periods of extreme cold, some or all of the idling restrictions above may be lifted. Be sure to check the message board for information.

If you feel there is a special situation involving your bus or route that requires you to act outside of the policies listed above, please see one of us. We will discuss the situation and you will receive a decision in writing.

Section 4.16 Bus Maintenance Requests

Drivers shall submit a completed Daily Vehicle Inspection Report to communicate maintenance needs to the garage staff. More time critical issues may also be communicated verbally in addition to but not in place of written documentation. If you are ever instructed by the garage staff to discontinue an issue you feel needs repair, report your concerns to the supervisor.

Section 4.17 Daily Announcement Log

Daily announcements will be communicated on a daily check-in sheet located at the dispatch window. Employees are required to initial this sheet when reporting for their first assignment of the day.

Section 4.18 Route Adherence and Accuracy

The established route directions are to be followed as written, unless doing so presents a clear and immediate danger to students and staff, would violate traffic laws, or there is a legitimate cause to deviate as described below.

Permanent deviations from the scheduled route must be preapproved by office staff. Deviations include travel path, pick up/drop off locations, and pick up/drop off times.

Temporary deviations due to missing students are allowed, as long as the scheduled times for the students on board are not adjusted.

If you are aware of a significant deviation due to temporary changes such as absent students, report this to the dispatch staff. They will advise if they intend to contact parents to ask permission for the earlier pick up and drop offs, or if you should secure your bus and wait for the scheduled times. Do not modify parent pick-up times without approval from your Supervisor.

Permanent changes or schedule inaccuracies must be reported to the router. For the purposes of this section, a student who has not ridden for over a week without any contact from the parent(s) is considered a permanent change and must be reported to the router.

Section 4.19 Official Correspondence

Most official communication to employees is via Agency email. Make sure you have access to your account, and check it several times a week. Copies of communications may be placed on the various information boards, but this is not required.

Section 4.20 Fueling Buses

Buses are to be fueled whenever the level indicated is below $\frac{1}{2}$ at the conclusion of a route. This standard is the same for substitute drivers, who are not required to fuel unless the level is below $\frac{1}{2}$.

Assistants are to be dropped off at the garage prior to fueling your vehicle.

Fueling is to be completed during any paid downtime, such as a scheduled layover or package hour time generated by missing students.

Section 4.21 Driver's Required Paperwork

The accurate completion and submission of the following items are the responsibility of the bus driver. Additional items may be added to this list.

- Daily Inspection Report Booklet – individual daily sheet

- Student Attendance Log – monthly report
- Mileage Log – submitted when full
- Evacuation Practice Forms – submitted as requested

Section 4.22 Student Transfer Method

It is important for the safety of our students that the requested method of transfer as listed on the student's Specialized Transportation Request Form is followed. An overview of the three methods is listed below;

Independent Transfer – This is the least involved method of transfer. The student is dismissed at the requested drop-off location without escort or verification of other family/caregivers being present. This is reserved for the most self-sufficient of students. If you see a young student, or a student that seems unable to care for themselves marked as Independent Transfer, please contact the dispatchers for clarification.

Eye to Eye Transfer – This is the most common transfer method. The bus driver must make visual confirmation that a member of the family or other caregiver is present to receive the student before they are released from the bus.

ID Badge Transfer – This is the most secure and least common method of transfer. Any person receiving the student from the bus ***must*** present an Agency issued badge to signify that they are authorized to receive that student. **THIS INCLUDES PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS.** Do not release to anyone that fails to provide an Agency ID badge. See the supervisor for clarification if you have questions about the appearance of the badge.

Section 4.23 Student Medical Boxes

Student medications are kept in yellow plastic medical boxes, or “med boxes”. These medication are needed to ensure the safe transport of certain students, and are a critical safety item.

Medical Boxes are to be brought back inside the garage at the completion of every run. Certain medications are temperature sensitive so it is important to report any medications that have been forgotten on the bus.

It is the responsibility of the bus driver to ensure any needed boxes are onboard before leaving, and returned after the run.

Article 5 - Emergency Situations

(a) Bus Breakdowns

Any mechanical failure or other problem that impairs an employee's ability to continue the route must be immediately reported to the dispatcher. The dispatcher will provide instructions applicable to the situation. Employees shall not abandon a bus in distress.

(b) Medical Emergency

General Procedure-

- Secure the vehicle
- Contact base with your location, and nature of the emergency
- If the emergency involves a student, review and follow any applicable Care Plans. If the student does not have a Care Plan, or the emergency is not related to the issues covered in the plan, follow your general First Aid and CPR training.

(c) Accident procedures

In the event of an accident, a driver's first priority is the students on the bus.

If it appears there have been significant injuries, contact 911 first. If not, please contact the office via cell phone. If you do not have a cell phone available, use the two way radio.

Students should remain on the bus if at all possible. Evacuate only if absolutely necessary.

The bus staff must collect the seat location of students on board during the accident.

Do not discuss the accident with any parties other than the police and office staff.

If medical personnel decide to remove students from the bus, be sure to provide them with the student data forms and care plans, and ask where the student is being taken.

Article 6 - Safety Program

The Agency acknowledges that safety is a paramount concern, and accordingly, employees of the Agency shall comply with all aspects of the safety program. The safety program shall include, but not be limited to, scheduled safety meetings for drivers and aides and at a minimum shall meet and/or comply with all applicable federal and state legal requirements.

Suggestions for training and/or safety meetings subjects should be directed to a Supervisor. All constructive suggestions are appreciated.

Section 6.01 "Empty Bus" Program

Children, especially very young children, may not always get off the bus at their appointed stop. A child's health could be seriously threatened if left on a bus unattended for an extended period of time, depending on the weather conditions, temperature,

location and other factors. The leaving of a child on a bus by a bus driver and assistant shall result in immediate termination for both.

To prevent the leaving of students on the school bus after the completion of a route, the bus driver and assistant may complete a quick check for remaining students. Once back at the transportation facility a formal inspection after each route shall be completed by walking to the back of the bus and inspecting around and under all seats. The driver shall then hang a sign, provided by the Agency, in the back door window of the bus. If a bus is found without a sign while parked at the transportation facility, the staff member will immediately check the bus for students and then report this action to the supervisor.

Buses are not to drive outside of the transportation facility with the sign displayed in the back door window.

Section 6.02 Bus Inspections

(a) Pre Trip Inspections

The school bus driver is expected to make a safety inspection of their vehicle before receiving any passengers. The safety inspection is to be documented using the form provided by the Agency. The safety inspection form is to be turned in on a daily basis. Any mechanical issues are to be documented. If the driver is concerned about the immediate safety of their bus, the driver is to contact the supervisor, or if the supervisor is not available the driver is to contact the dispatcher on duty. During the pre-trip inspection, the driver must remove the “Empty Bus” Program sign until the end of his or her route.

(b) Post Trip Inspections

The school bus driver is expected to complete a post trip inspection during which they close all windows, hatches, and doors. They then inspect the interior of the bus for vandalism, lost articles, remaining students, etc. and hang the designated sign in the rear emergency door. The exterior of the bus is then inspected for anything out of the norm and document findings on the designated form.

Section 6.03 Practice Evacuations

Employees are required to perform three practice evacuations per student group during the school year.

The due date and type of evacuation is listed on the Practice Bus Evacuation Form, which is distributed at bid as well as available in the main hallway.

With the exception of non-ambulatory students, and those with behavior issues, the staff are to physically evacuate the students during an evacuation drill. This should be completed in the parking lot of the destination school, and must be witnessed by staff from another bus or the school.

The overall plan needs to be documented and, along with the evacuation form, submitted to the dispatchers before the due dates listed.

Article 7 - Staff Performance

Section 7.01 Evaluations

The Transportation Director shall complete an evaluation for each employee at least annually.

Evaluations shall be based on each employee's performance in the following categories:

- Safety – Performing all duties without accidents, tickets or formal complaints and in accordance with applicable laws, as well as Agency policies, guidelines, and instructions.
- Attendance – Coming to work consistently and working the scheduled work shift; arranging appointments and personal business so as not to interfere with scheduled duties.
- Cooperation – Cooperates with parents, school districts, and the Agency staff to make operations run smoothly.
- Attitude – Exhibits a positive, proactive attitude and seeks solutions to problems rather than placing blame or merely complaining.
- Communication – Informs supervisors about conditions requiring attention and listening to parents, students, and staff regarding concerns.
- Contributions – Using innovation and shared thinking to resolve problems, making suggestions and working toward common goals of the department.

Section 7.02 Accident Review Committee

Accidents resulting in an injury or over \$500 total estimated damage will be addressed by the Accident Review Committee.

The purpose of the Accident Review Committee is to provide a fair and uniform process to evaluate and determine post-accident activities with the overall objective of reducing or eliminating repeated accidents. The committee shall review all accidents to determine the preventability of the accident and the level of compliance with Agency policies and procedures.

The concept of preventability is based on the premise that drivers are expected to meet a higher standard of performance than the average motorist. It is self-evident that the professional driver should be able to observe and assess the behavior of pedestrians and other drivers and recognize those actions that may create hazardous conditions and take every reasonable measure to avoid involvement in an accident.

The committee shall review the accident for defensive driving and preventability, not for legal fault. The fact that a driver, who becomes involved in a vehicle collision, is not legally at-fault does not mean the driver could not have prevented the accident.

The committee shall consist of three members, the Transportation Director, the supervisor, and a certified trainer.

The Director will apply the following guide to determine the applicable progressive post-accident action:

Preventability Determination	Action
First preventable accident within current fiscal year with or without property damage and/or injuries	Re-training, written reprimand, and up to 3 days suspension without pay.
Second preventable accident within current fiscal year with or without property damage and/or injuries	Termination of employment as a bus driver. Employee may appeal to be retained as a bus assistant.
Two preventable accidents within three years of the current accident under review	Re-training, written reprimand, and up to 5 days suspension without pay.
Three preventable accidents within three years of the current accident under review	Termination of employment as a bus driver. Employee may appeal to be retained as a bus assistant.
Preventable accidents where bus rear-ended other vehicle, failed to stop at a stop sign or traffic light, failed to yield, struck a pedestrian or other similar serious singular event	Progressive discipline steps may be accelerated to a more severe response level, including termination.

Section 7.03 Performance Improvement

Performance improvement may be suggested whenever the Agency believes that an employee’s performance is less than satisfactory and can be resolved through adequate counseling. Corrective counseling is completely at the discretion of the Agency. The Agency expressly reserves the right to discharge “at will.” Even if corrective counseling is implemented, it may be terminated at any step at the discretion of management. The Agency, in its sole discretion, may either warn, reassign, suspend, or discharge any employee at will, whichever it chooses and at any time.

The Director of Transportation will determine the course of action best suited to the circumstances. The steps in performance improvement are as follows:

(a) Verbal Counseling

At the first step in correcting unacceptable performance or behavior, the supervisor will review pertinent job requirements with the employee to ensure his or her understanding of them. The supervisor will consider the severity of the problem, the employee’s previous performance appraisals and all of the circumstances surrounding the particular

case. A written warning, probation, or possible termination could result if the problem is not resolved at this level. The supervisor will document the verbal counseling for future reference but it will not become part of the employee's personnel file.

(b) Written Reprimand

If the unacceptable performance or behavior continues, the next step is a written reprimand. Certain circumstances, such as violation of a widely known policy or safety requirement, may justify a written reprimand without first using verbal counseling. The written reprimand defines the problem and how it may be corrected. The seriousness of the problem will be emphasized, and the written reprimand shall indicate that probation or termination or both, may result if improvement is not observed. Written reprimands become part of the employee's personnel file.

(c) Probation

If the problem has not been resolved or the circumstances warrant it, or both, the employee may be placed on probation. Probation is a serious action in which the employee will be advised that termination will occur if improvement in performance or conduct is not achieved within the probationary period. The Director of Transportation and the designated supervisor, after review of the employee's performance improvement documentation, will determine the length of probation. Typically, the probation period should be at least two weeks and no longer than 60 days, depending on the circumstances. A written probationary notice to the employee will be prepared by the Director of Transportation who shall meet with the employee to discuss the probationary letter and answer any questions. The employee should acknowledge receipt by signing the letter. If the employee should refuse to sign, the Director of Transportation may sign attesting that it was delivered to the employee and identifying the date of delivery. The probationary letter becomes part of the employee's personnel file.

On the defined probation counseling date or dates, the employee and the Director of Transportation will meet to review the employee's progress in correcting the problem that led to the probation. Brief written summaries of these meetings shall be prepared with a copy provided to the employee and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file.

At the completion of the probationary period, the Director of Transportation and the designated supervisor will meet to determine whether the employee has achieved the required level of performance and to consider removing the employee from probation, extending the period of probation, or taking further action. The employee will be advised in writing of the decision. Should probation be completed successfully, the employee will be commended, though cautioned that any future recurrence may result in further disciplinary action.

(d) Suspension

A two or three day suspension with or without pay may be justified when circumstances reasonably require an investigation of a serious incident in which the employee was allegedly involved. A suspension may also be warranted when employee safety, welfare, or morale may be adversely affected if a suspension is not imposed.

In addition, and with prior approval of the Director of Transportation, suspension without pay for up to three consecutive working days may be imposed for such proven misconduct as intentional violation of safety rules on the job. These examples do not limit the Agency’s use of suspension with or without pay in other appropriate circumstances, such as the need to investigate a serious incident. In implementing a suspension, a written counseling report shall be issued to set forth the circumstances justifying the suspension. Such a report shall become part of the employee’s personnel file.

(e) Termination

The employee is notified of the termination by the Director of Transportation and will be directed to report to the personnel department for debriefing and completion of termination documentation. Involuntary termination is reserved for those cases that cannot be resolved by corrective counseling or in those cases where a major violation has occurred which cannot be tolerated. Terminations are to be treated in a confidential, professional manner by all concerned.

Section 7.04 Attendance Expectations

Employees are expected to come to work on all days they are scheduled.

Attendance issues include tardiness, excessive absenteeism, failure to report (no call /no show), pattern of absences (missing certain days of the week, etc.), or absence without pay (AWOP). Attendance issues will be subject to a separate improvement plan.

Instance Number	Attendance Issues All other attendance related issues not itemized in the following table.	Failure to Report Employee does report at designated time, does not report absence before assigned route departs from garage or origin point.	Tardy Employee reports to work after the scheduled report time but still completes the route.	Absence Without Pay Employee does not complete scheduled assignments, and does not have approval or available time off for absence.
1	Verbal Warning	Written Reprimand, Removal from extra work sheet	Verbal Warning	Written Reprimand, Removal from extra work sheet, no longer eligible for summer assignment
2	Written Reprimand	Unpaid Suspension, Length TBD	2 nd Verbal Warning	2 nd Written Reprimand, Moved 1 Position Lower on Seniority List

3	2 nd Written Reprimand	Termination Hearing	Written Reprimand	1 Day Unpaid Suspension, Moved 1 Position Lower on Seniority List
4	Suspension, Length TBD		2 nd Written Reprimand	Unpaid Suspension, Length TBD, Moved 5 Positions Lower on Seniority List
5	Termination Hearing		Suspension or Termination Hearing	Termination Hearing

One instance of attendance improvement will be rolled back per school year.

Section 7.05 Retraining

The Agency may require retraining after a preventable accident or incident or after a driver’s evaluation. A driver assigned such retraining may not continue to provide services until such retraining has been successfully completed.

Section 7.06 Dispute Resolution

An Employee that has a concern or issue related to their work or workplace should first communicate these issues to the Director of Transportation. If after meeting with the Director the employee still feels their issue is unresolved, they may contact the Deputy Superintendent and request a meeting. If still unsatisfied after this meeting, a meeting with the Superintendent may be requested.

Article 8 - Seniority

Seniority denotes the length of continuous employment by the Agency.

Seniority will initially be established on July 1st, 2015 for all existing employees. The order of seniority will be based on the Adjusted Seniority Date with the Agency as of 6/30/15.

Employees that accept another position within the Agency shall have their seniority frozen. Such employee may use their seniority to bid on future vacancies or routes, provided they return to a Transportation assignment at the next bidding cycle. Employees who remain in a non-Transportation assignment beyond the next bid cycle shall forfeit any Transportation seniority.

Employees that are terminated or have been laid off for more than one year shall lose their seniority and their name will be removed from the seniority list.

Article 9 - Bus Route & Trip Assignments

Section 9.01 Route Assignment Process

Any driver who does not possess a current and valid certification, commercial driver's license or physical exam documentation on the route selection day will not be allowed to participate in the selection process or reserve a route.

On the route selection day, route selections will be conducted based on seniority. Time spent by employees bidding on routes is not considered paid time, unless conducted as part of an in service. Routes may only be bid by employees present at the time of bid, unless authorized in writing by the Supervisor. Proxy bid will be by management staff only.

The Agency may cancel, add or change route assignments at any time. Route assignments may change if the Agency determines that it is necessary to make the best use of Agency resources or to satisfy the transportation requirements of a particular student or school. Safety concerns may also require changes to existing routes.

Section 9.02 Information to Post

At the beginning of each new school year, all routes will be posted in advance of the route selection day. Route postings will list the pick-up points, drop-off points, starting time, estimated total daily hours and student information. Employees will be notified via Agency email when and where these routes may be viewed.

Section 9.03 Dry Runs and Initial Parental Contact

Dry runs are required to be completed after bid. Time slots will be designated and employees shall select a time to complete a dry run during the bid process. After a dry run is completed, the driver of the run will contact the parents/guardians of their assigned students to introduce themselves and verify scheduled times. Employees will be paid up to the scheduled route time plus one hour for completing a dry run and phone calls.

Section 9.04 Assignment of Primary Bus to Route

Buses shall be assigned to routes every year before the beginning of each school year. This assignment is subject to change during the school year as deemed necessary. Buses are assigned to routes and not drivers.

Section 9.05 Temporary Non-Voluntary Transfer

If an employee needs to be pulled from his/her assignment due to a staffing shortage, the displaced employee will be paid their actual hours from the new assignment or the package hours from their normal assignment, whichever is greater.

Section 9.06 Extra Work

Any work not permanently assigned to a route package is considered extra work. At the start of the school year, extra assignments will be selected on a rotating basis starting with the most senior employee. The rotation shall continue throughout the year with ineligible employees being removed and new employees being added to the bottom of the seniority order.

On or around October 1st, extra trips that reoccur on a regular basis that have not been added to route packages will be assigned by seniority bid. In order to participate in this bid, an employee must be eligible for extra work. Additionally, after the extra work bid occurs any employee who loses eligibility will also lose their assigned extra work. There will be a second bid and extra work reassignment that will occur after winter break as changes to extra work schedules are common at this time.

The Agency will make one attempt to contact an employee who is up for an assignment. If the employee cannot be reached, they will forfeit their place until next rotation.

The minimum pay for extra work is one hour.

Employees who are up for an extra assignment but turn it down will be charged with a decline, unless the work occurs during a summer session in which the employee has not accepted a route assignment.

Employees will not be offered extra work that conflicts with their assigned student transportation routes unless the work being assigned is a Field Trip.

If an extra assignment is cancelled after it is accepted the employee will be offered the next available assignment. If multiple assignments are cancelled, employees will choose the replacement assignments in seniority order.

Employees that have declined 5 assignments during the school year or had an instance of Absence Without Pay (AWOP) are not eligible for an extra assignment and will be removed from the list.

Section 9.07 Emergency trips

Emergency trips are assigned by the Supervisor based on the circumstances of the emergency. Emergency trips will be assigned to the highest senior available and appropriate Employee.

Section 9.08 Summer Assignments

Employees without an instance of unpaid absence during the school year and have received a satisfactory employee evaluation will be eligible to work during the summer. Summer assignments shall be offered using the same bidding procedure as the Fall assignments.

Article 10 - Compensation

Section 10.01 Payroll Procedures

Employees will document their hours on a weekly timesheet. This sheet will have spaces to record any extra work, and spaces to record actual time worked if the assigned route exceeds the scheduled hours. Below are some important rules and procedures to follow when documenting your times;

1. If you exceed your scheduled hours, record the actual time worked. Then, have a dispatcher review and sign your extra time **as soon as practicable**. The dispatcher may refer you to a supervisor depending on the nature of the extra time.
2. Be sure to review your timesheet at the end of the week and sign the signature line before submitting it to the dispatcher.
3. Timesheets are due on Friday after completion of the final run. Timesheets will be accepted no later than noon on Monday. If you are consistently late, you may miss a check date and be subject to a performance improvement plan.

Be honest. If you have an unreported permanent route change, cancelled trip, or any other issue that would impact your hours, report and document it. Payroll fraud will result in prosecution.

Section 10.02 Package Hours

Package Hours are determined by the total estimated drive time of the route as determined by the routing software, plus:

Condition	Driver	Assistant
First run of the day	+15 minutes for vehicle pretrip inspection	+5 minutes for report time
All subsequent runs except the final run of the day	+5 minutes for report time and approach inspection	+5 minutes for report time
Final route of the day	+10 minutes for paperwork and email	+10 minutes for paperwork and email

Drivers who are assigned a second vehicle (such as a Head Start bus) who drive the vehicle on its first run of the day are given a second 15 minute allotment to complete an additional pre-trip inspection.

Package Hours are compiled as accurately as possible, but adjustments will be made for any clerical errors. Additionally any permanent changes to the package will cause the hours to be adjusted either up or down to suit the revised route. A permanent change includes students who move out of district, students that are reassigned to other routes/schools, students who have not ridden for over a week without contact from the parent, or any other change that it is not reasonable to assume is transient in nature.

If an outbound route concludes early, the Employee is required to remain on premises until the conclusion of paid time. Likewise, if a route is missing students on the inbound side the Employee is required to report at the scheduled time. While on paid time, other duties may be assigned that fit within the originally scheduled route time.

The package hours as documented are official.

Section 10.03 Hours Stabilization

Permanent route changes (as defined in Section 10.02) shall not negatively impact the scheduled package hours beyond three hours per pay. This applies to the hours at the time the route is bid.

Section 10.04 Wage Scale

Employees shall move steps on the wage scale based on a combination of time worked for the Agency in their assigned job and with an annual evaluation that provides evidence the employee has met the performance expectations as established within this Handbook. All increments occur on July 1st.

	Increment Criteria	Drivers	Assistants
Step 1	Effective at time of hire.	\$14.79	\$11.06
Step 2	Eligible July 1 st following date of hire.	\$15.51	\$12.24
Step 3	Eligible one year after Step 2.	\$16.63	\$12.24
Step 4 Must have been hired prior to 1/27/2011 to be eligible	Eligible one year after Step 3.	\$17.49	\$13.42

Bus Cleaning – Employees engaged in the cleaning of buses will be paid \$12.00 per hour.

Section 10.05 Overtime

Each employee is responsible for keeping his or her weekly hours under 40 for the week. Any time in excess of 40 hours shall be pre-approved by the supervisor and shall be paid at 1.5 times the hourly rate for all hours actually worked in excess of 40. For purposes of overtime, the work week is Sunday through Saturday.

Article 11 - Fringe Benefits

Section 11.01 Voluntary Health & Supplemental Benefits

Health Benefits available as required by the Affordable Care Act. Supplemental benefits available as published.

Section 11.02 Term Life Insurance & Long Term Disability

The Board will pay the premium for each full time Employee for a \$10,000 term life insurance policy. Each full-time Employee with five (5) or more years of seniority shall be eligible for a Board-paid term life insurance policy of \$15,000.

Section 11.03 Authorized Time Off

Employees will be granted 6 sick days and 2 personal business days per school year. These days will be added to the employee's attendance banks on July 1st. Employees who bid and work a route package during the summer shall receive an additional sick day, credited on September 1st. Employees entering employment after July 1st shall be granted a prorated amount on their date of hire.

Start Date	Sick Days	Personal Days
July or August	6	2
September or October	5	2
November to December	4	1
January to February	3	1
March to April	2	0
May to June	1	0

- Sick days

The amount of compensation provided per sick or personal day will be based on the approved package hours as of the date the paid day is used. Days can be utilized in quarter day, half-day or full-day increments.

Criteria for utilization of sick days shall be:

- Personal illness, injury or quarantine.
 - Serious illness in the immediate family, e.g., husband, wife, child, father or mother.

The Employee shall notify the administration of his/her impending absence stating the nature of absence (illness or bereavement) and where he/she can be contacted during the day.

Employees shall give such notification at least 90 minutes prior to his/her scheduled on-the-job starting time, or at the opening of the office if route departure is less than 90 minutes into the operational day.

After the 3rd absence of the year, the Employee may be required to provide a doctor's verification of the need for the absence. The doctor's verification shall be on a form provided by the Employer and shall provide such information as diagnosis, prognosis, if and why the illness/injury would prevent the employee from working, how long it

is anticipated the employee will be off work, and what the treatment plan is. Failure to comply with such a request will result in the withholding of pay for such leave days and disciplinary action.

Employees with more than 20 sick days as of June 30, 2015 may request to be paid for all days in excess of 20 at 40% of the Employee's most recent non-summer package hours. Such election shall be made no later than July 15, 2015.

- Personal days

Use of personal business days must have prior administrative approval. Only two employees per job classification will be approved to use Personal Time per day. These absences shall be considered in the order received. Requests for time off will not be accepted more than 60 days in advance.

This leave shall be used only for the purpose of conducting personal business which cannot normally be transacted after work, on weekends, between runs or during vacation periods.

Employees who have over 15 sick days in their sick bank may, with the written pre-approval of the supervisor, convert up to 5 of those days into personal days for covering an unusual absence such as an out of state event, anniversary trip, or other similar event. The conversion is subject to the prior approval of the Supervisor.

- Holidays

Employees will be paid the number of hours they are scheduled on the work day preceding a holiday for the following holidays:

Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; the day after Thanksgiving Day; Christmas Day; day after Christmas, the day before or after New Year's Day; New Year's Day; Good Friday; Memorial Day; and July 4th.

To be eligible for pay for any given holiday, the Employee must work the entire scheduled working day before and the next scheduled working day after the holiday or have prior approval from their Supervisor for paid time off (sick time shall not be approved for such purpose). If a holiday falls within the first seven (7) days of an absence due to a work related injury, the employee shall qualify for holiday pay.

- Jury Duty.

An Employee who is summoned and who reports for jury duty shall be paid an amount equal to the difference between the amount of salary he/she would otherwise have earned by working on that day and the daily jury fee paid by the Court, not including travel allowances or reimbursement of expenses for each day on which he/she reports for or performs such jury duty on which he/she would otherwise have been scheduled to work.

An Employee who is subpoenaed shall be released from regular duties without loss of salary to appear in court as a witness in any case connected with the Employee's employment or in cases where the Agency is involved.

Notwithstanding the above, paid release time shall not be granted for court appearances which are not connected with the Employee's employment or in which the Agency is not involved, or where the Employee is one of the defendants except in an Agency connected case in which the Employee is acquitted.

- **Bereavement Leave.**

When death occurs in an Employee's family, e.g., spouse, parent, grandparent, grandchild, parent of current spouse, child, brother or sister, or son/daughter-in-law, the Employee on request will be excused from work for up to five (5) calendar days immediately following the date of death, provided that he/she attends the funeral. The employee may elect to defer the use of up to one day to attend the funeral services if such services are scheduled later than the five (5) calendar days noted above. The supervisor will require written documentation of attendance at the funeral.

An Employee will be excused, on request, for one (1) day to attend the funeral upon the death of an aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, sister-in-law, or brother in-law.

An Employee excused from work under this Section shall, after making written application, receive the amount of wages he/she would have earned by working during the straight-time hours on such scheduled days of work for which he/she is excused with pay provided that he/she attends the funeral. Payment shall be made at the Employee's rate of pay, not including premiums, as of his/her last day worked. Time thus paid will not be counted as hours worked for purposes of overtime.

- **Leave Time for Work-Related Injuries.**

On the day a work related injury occurs when authorized to leave work early to secure medical attention/treatment due to a work-related injury or lice, an Employee will not lose pay or have to use sick/personal time for that portion of the day lost.

Section 11.04 Unscheduled Closings

- **Suspension of Operations.**

On any given day every reasonable effort will be made to determine by 6:15 a.m. whether or not operations will be suspended. If such a decision is made, it will be communicated via phone.

- **Unscheduled School Closings.**

Each Employee shall be credited on July 1st with two (2) unscheduled school closing days that may be used during the year if their scheduled assignment is cancelled due to conditions not within the control of school authorities, as defined

in Section 101(4) of the State School Aid Act. Such days shall not carry-over to the next year if they are unused. Pay for such days will be based on the scheduled hours for the cancelled assignment.

- **Show-Up Time.**

If operations are suspended after an Employee's starting time, but before the start of scheduled classes, Employees who show up for the beginning of their assignment will be paid two (2) hours of straight time rates if the day is rescheduled.

Section 11.05 Attendance Merit Incentive

An employee who uses no sick leave from the period commencing July 1 and ending January 31 shall be eligible for a three hundred (\$300) attendance merit incentive payment and may elect to be paid for up to one unused personal business day.

An employee who experiences only one (1) occurrence during this period of time shall be eligible for a one hundred (\$100) attendance merit incentive payment.

An employee who uses no sick leave from the period commencing February 1 and ending June 30 shall be eligible for a three hundred (\$300) attendance merit incentive payment and may elect to be paid for up to one unused personal business day.

An employee who experiences only one (1) occurrence during this period of time shall be eligible for a one hundred (\$100) attendance merit incentive payment.

For purposes of this Section, an occurrence of sick leave is defined as any legitimate use of a partial day, a full day or more than one (1) day, consecutively, as a result of personal or family illness.

In order to qualify for the merit incentive, the employee must be a seniority employee for the entire one (1) year period.

An employee who has more than twenty-five (25) accumulated sick days and who is eligible to earn six (6) sick days during the ten (10) month school year, and who uses not more than three (3) of those days, shall be eligible to convert up to three (3) of his/her remaining days to incentive leave at seven (7) hours per day. The employee who qualifies for and opts to take part or all of his/her incentive leave, must schedule such leave with the supervisor during the unscheduled summer days following qualification (i.e. from July 1 through August 31). There shall be no carryover of incentive leave days.

Article 12 - Expense Reimbursement

Section 12.01 CDL/License Renewal

The Agency shall reimburse bus drivers for the cost of any required endorsements or license fees in excess of their personal license that are required to perform the work of a school bus driver.

Section 12.02 Meal Reimbursement

Employees may be reimbursed up to \$10 for meals purchased during an assigned field trip. To be reimbursed, the employee must present an **itemized receipt** from the establishment where the purchase was made. The time and date of purchase must be clearly denoted on the receipt. If the receipt is not detailed, or the Agency has any reservations about the receipt as presented, reimbursement will be denied.

Section 12.03 Physicals

The Agency shall pay for the actual cost of physicals as required under section 3.02 of this handbook.

Section 12.04 Damaged clothing or eye glasses

The Agency shall not reimburse employees for clothing or eyeglasses damaged while performing work. However, extenuating circumstances shall be considered by a supervisor upon the receipt of a written explanation and request for reimbursement.