**Unit B - Passenger Conduct**

# Learning Objectives

**After completing this unit, the trainee will be able to:**

* Describe the importance of safe student conduct.
* Identify local policies regarding discipline and documentation.
* Identify risk situations for drivers.
* Promote and maintain safe behaviors on the school bus.

**What is Safe Conduct?**

***Discussion: Discuss the importance of student behavior and safety on the bus.***

Promoting safe behavior is necessary and is an important part of the safe operation of a school bus. Bus drivers should not expect all passengers to behave like adults. Drivers sometimes fail to realize that students are young people who are in periods of physical and emotional development with all the challenges associated with exploration and adjustment, and that they require guidance and understanding regarding their behavior.

***Discussion: Do children at different ages behave differently and react differently to discipline?***

**How Can the School Bus Driver Promote Safe Conduct?**

The key to success with students is to have a professional, friendly, positive, and concerned attitude towards them.

The driver can promote self-discipline and provide the necessary group direction for the passengers by understanding the factors that affect discipline;

* Attitudes
* Drivers
* Students
* Temperament
* Discipline method
* Rules
* Time of day
* Time of year
* School bus “climate”
* Student expectation

***Discussion: Discuss the benefits of the following techniques.***

* Learning names
* Seating arrangement
* Establishing expectations
* Positive reinforcement

**Steps for Safe Student Management**

* Informing the students of the rules and regulations and reasons they exist.
* Applying the rules and regulations fairly and consistently.
* Developing a friendly and helpful attitude.
* The driver should present his/herself as one who also follows rules and regulations.
* Patience and timing are also important tools, but do not expect to solve all problems the first time they arise.
* Good conduct equals safety.
* Follow School Board Policies.

**Note: Always follow school policies for student conduct and discipline. Explain**

**the school’s policies regarding student conduct to the student riders on the first day of school.**

Knowing how their actions affect others gives the students a better rationale for why conduct and safety are important.

**Rules for Safe Student Behavior**

An informal atmosphere which encourages pupils to relax and enjoy the ride is desirable. The following instructions should be given;

* Students should load and unload the bus in a reasonable manner.
* Students should proceed quickly and quietly.
* Students should not crowd or push.
* Students should show regard for safety.
* Students should be quiet and should not distract the driver.
* Students should not shout or become involved in other boisterous activities.
* Students should not talk with the driver while the bus is in motion except in an emergency.
* Students should show consideration for others. The bus driver should always concentrate on driving and not be distracted by disruptive activity on the bus.
* Students may be assigned seats – Follow local policy.
* Students should stay seated while the bus is in motion. They should go directly to their seats after boarding the bus and remain seated until the bus reaches its destination and has stopped.
* Students should not destroy or damage the school bus.
* No part of the student’s body should be outside the windows.
* Students should not throw litter or other objects while riding the bus. You may wish to place a trash container in the bus; however, it should meet specifications or be approved by Department of Education personnel.
* Students should not obstruct an emergency exit with any object.
* Students should not place their feet on the seats or in the aisle.

School bus drivers should try to prevent behavior problems before they develop by doing the following:

* The driver should act according to the students age.
* Students who behave in an unsafe manner, should be addressed immediately.
* When disciplinary action is required, the bus should be stopped in a safe place and secured, the ignition turned off, and the key removed.
* The driver should respond calmly and firmly.
* Students must not be discharged at locations other than their designated stops.

**Remember:** If the possibility of the disruption is eliminated beforehand, the problem will not occur.

**Pupil Behavior Related to Safety**

***Discussion: Discuss what situations put school bus drivers most at risk*.**

Students should be encouraged to follow instructions promptly and quickly.

* They should be on time at the bus stop.
* They should always avoid unsafe areas while waiting for the school bus.
* They should follow correct safety procedures when walking on the highway to and from a bus stop.

# Discipline Problems and Reporting Procedures

* To maintain discipline on a bus, the driver must use professional judgment. Practicing professional judgment when administering discipline will enable you to have a safe, orderly bus and the confidence and respect of your pupils.
* Do not take the misbehavior personally.
* Be courteous and remain calm.
* Be responsible.
* Be firm.
* Be interested in the students.
* Establish standards of behavior for yourself.
* Never hesitate to correct unsafe behavior problems and always be consistent with the punishment.
* Never punish the whole group for an individual’s behavior.
* Never promise corrective action without meaning it.
* Never argue or use profane language.
* Never use physical force.
* Never put a child off the bus.
* Have a working relationship with supervisors.

***Discussion: Discuss the appropriate procedures for documenting and retaining student information including, but not limited to, school bus discipline reports and other forms of student information.***

Unacceptable student actions or behavior. (See local policy also):

* Loud and abusive language
* Fighting and other acts of violence
* Pushing, shoving, or running down

the aisle

* Throwing objects
* Possession of weapons, alcohol,

tobacco or drugs

* Lewd behavior
* Sexual harassment
* Vandalism
* Not staying seated
* Bullying

***Discussion: Discuss student discipline policies as well as all policies that address appropriate contact between students and staff.***

If problems occur, immediate action should be taken. When an emergency situation develops, the bus should be stopped and parked in a safe location off the road. Notify the proper authorities. The bus is not to be started until the call is answered, or communication is complete.

Documentation of unsafe behavior is essential, report the student and follow up with the proper authority. The safety of the entire bus is the responsibility of the school bus driver. Unsafe behaviors must not be tolerated and may jeopardize the safety of others.

**Remember:** The key to success is to have a positive attitude toward students.

**Passenger Seating**

School buses are an extremely safe form of transportation. School buses use the principal of compartmentalization to protect its passengers; therefore, proper seating is very important. The bus interior seats are designed to passively protect its passengers.

**8VAC20-70-40 Seating**

The number of pupils who may ride a school bus shall be determined by the total number who can be seated on the seat cushion facing forward, safely seated within the seating compartment, and shall not exceed the manufacturer’s capacity. Pupils may not be permitted to stand, except under unforeseen temporary emergency conditions and for short distances as identified in policy by the local school board.

**Note: Compartmentalization:**

**FMVSS 222 requires all school buses to offer this passive protection system of closely spaced seats with high, padded, flexible backs. In a frontal crash, the seat back absorbs energy of passengers propelled forward against it from behind.**

## Unit Review

1. A student’s conduct has a direct bearing on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of each individual on the school bus.

1. You should prevent unsafe behavior problems before they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. A key to successfully promote safe student behavior, are to always remain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. You should inform the students of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and reasons they exist.

1. You should follow your school division’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when imposing discipline.

1. When an emergency situation develops you should park the bus in a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ location off of the roadway.

1. You should present yourself as one who follows \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. School buses drivers should rely on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to help with unsafe student behavior.
2. Passengers must be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seated within the seating compartment.

1. Drivers must have a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_attitude towards students.

**Answers**

1. safety
2. develop
3. professional
4. rules, regulations
5. policies
6. safe
7. rules, regulations
8. safety team
9. safely
10. positive