

# TRANSPORTATION SPECIALIST HANDBOOK



NORTH FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

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# NORTH FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

The following administrative regulations and procedures apply to all Transportation employees North Florida Educational Institute (NFEI). These regulations are subject to change at the discretion of the Director of Operations or his/her designee.

## BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS/REQUIREMENTS

It is the sole responsibility of the driver to maintain a current DOT physical, valid Florida CDL with P and S endorsement and an up-to-date state certification. Drivers/attendants are responsible for the operation of their assigned bus in a safe and proper manner as required by federal/state/local law. It is also the responsibility of the driver/attendant to adhere to all policies of NFEI and directives of the Transportation Department, including instructions given to drivers/attendants by the dispatch office. Any unsafe operation of your bus or failure to follow NFEI procedures resulting in a citation, a student left unsupervised for any length of time, or an at fault accident resulting in an injury will be grounds for termination of employment.

### 1. BUS DRIVER CREDENTIALS

1. Bus drivers must have a valid Florida CDL license, either Class A or B (with P and S endorsements.)
2. Bus drivers must be at least 21 years of age.
3. Bus drivers must have a safe driving record in accordance with state law.
4. All drivers must pass a physical examination by an FDOT-certified physician each year. The day the physical is taken invalidates the previous physical. If failed, the driver must notify Transportation management immediately. Under DOT regulations, a driver cannot drive with a failed physical.
5. NFEI requires that all Florida CDL holders must provide a Self-Certification Affidavit (CDL-7) at the time of license renewal and/or changes required by FDOT.
6. Bus drivers with a class A or B State CDL license must complete the approved "state certification". (Refresher course every 3 years)

### 2. STATE CERTIFICATION/ RECERTIFICATION

1. To obtain full initial driver certification, a person must complete a twenty-hour basic training course. The training agency shall issue a "Florida School Bus Driver Safety Training Certificate" in a timely manner, and submit the necessary verification information to NFEI.
2. Driver state certification will remain valid for a period of three (3) calendar years as indicated by the expiration date on the certificate. Certification may be revoked or suspended for the conviction of certain criminal offenses as provided by state law.
3. State law requires that every driver transporting students in a school bus **MUST** have in their possession a valid state certificate stating that they have completed, or are enrolled in, an approved school bus driver training course, as well as, a current DOT physical and valid Florida CDL.
4. Anyone whose certification has expired **CANNOT** legally operate a school bus for the transportation of students until such time as they become re-certified or obtain a re-enrollment certificate. The following rules shall apply to certification renewals:
  - a. To avoid a lapse in certification, an eight-hour refresher course must be completed prior to the expiration date, and should be completed during the six-month (180-day) period immediately preceding the date of expiration. If the required training is completed within this time, state certification will then be renewed for a period of three calendar years from the upcoming expiration date.
  - b. During the twelve-month interval immediately following certification expiration, an eight-hour refresher course may be completed for certification renewal. Failure to satisfactorily complete the refresher course or the requested issuance of an enrollment certificate during this dormant time interval will require the completion of a twenty-hour basic training course in order to reinstate full certification status.

- c. If the eight-hour refresher course is completed more than 180 days prior to the certification expiration or during the twelve-month interval following expiration, certification will then be renewed for a period of three calendar years from the actual date of the completion of the course.
- 5. Regardless of the reason, any missed instruction must be completed by arrangement with the Transportation Department and is the financial responsibility of the driver. Except as approved by the training agency, all course requirements for certification **MUST** be completed within the 180-day period immediately following the start of instruction. Otherwise, no credit will be given for the class sessions previously attended, and the entire course **MUST** be completed prior to awarding certification.
- 6. In addition to the above prerequisites, the following rules shall apply to the issuance of all enrollment certificates:
  - a. Recipients must successfully complete a 20-hour basic certification course when scheduled by NFEI transportation. Failure to satisfactorily complete the course as scheduled shall result in revocation of the certificate, and it **CANNOT** be reissued.
  - b. All enrollment certificates shall be dated to expire **NO** later than the end of the school year for which they are issued. It is highly recommended that they be dated to expire within a reasonable period of time following the completion of the scheduled certification course (except as approved by the training agency). A minimum of five years must elapse between the issuance of consecutive enrollment certificates.

### **3. DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING**

- 1. NFEI employees who hold a valid Florida CDL are required to submit to drug and alcohol testing under the following scenarios:
  - a. Pre-employment screening is required.
  - b. Random testing during the school year will be required. Annual random sampling for drugs will include 50% of NFEI employees impacted by DOT regulations. Annual random sampling for alcohol will include 25% of NFEI employees under DOT regulations.
  - c. Post-accident testing will occur when:
    - 1. The NFEI driver is involved in a fatal accident.
    - 2. The NFEI driver is involved in an injury accident and is issued a moving violation.
    - 3. The NFEI driver is involved in an accident where one or more vehicles have been disabled and require towing and the NFEI driver is issued a moving violation.
  - d. Reasonable suspicion: An employee will be required to submit to an alcohol or drug test when there is reasonable suspicion that the driver has violated the drug and alcohol policy. Any employee who refuses to take a drug or alcohol test will be considered to have a positive test.
- 2. A driver whose conduct is in violation of the alcohol and controlled substances prohibitions of federal law may face disciplinary action, which may include termination.
  - a. Conduct violation includes:
    - 1. Refusing to submit to a required test for alcohol or controlled substances.
    - 2. Testing positive for alcohol in a random test.
    - 3. Testing positive for controlled substances in a random test.
    - 4. Testing positive for alcohol in a post-accident test.
    - 5. Testing positive for controlled substances in a post-accident test.
- 3. Any driver testing positive, has the right to request a second test commonly referred to Sample B. Any employee requesting Sample B for testing will be allowed to work in a non-driving capacity until testing results are completed.
- 4. Drivers shall report to their supervisors the fact that they are taking any prescription or over-the-counter medication, which may impair their driving abilities.

## **LEAVES & ABSENCES**

### **1. PERSONAL LEAVE**

1. Employees are expected to submit a Leave Request prior to being absent.
2. All Leave Requests need to be turned in to the Director of Operations for approval.
3. Any driver or attendant that has not reported their absence to the Director of Operations, or their direct supervisor, by 5am is expected to fulfill their full assignment that day.

### **2. EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM**

1. Drivers and Attendants absent for a long-term absence is defined by 10 consecutive days.
2. Any employee who has exceeded their personal discretionary time, or continues to demonstrate attendance issues, may be reassigned to a floating position and may lose the opportunity for extra duty assignments.

### **3. TARDINESS**

1. Employees are expected to be on time. Any employee who does not clock in within 5 minutes of expected report time may not be allowed to drive his/her scheduled route. This could result in not having a paid assignment for the missed route.
2. Any employee not consistently reporting to work at their scheduled start time may be reassigned to a floating position or be terminated.
3. Excessive absenteeism does not include personal illness or injury resulting in Workman's Comp or FML absences.

## **PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE**

1. The dress and grooming of NFEI employees shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for their assignment and in accordance with any additional standards established by their supervisors and approved by the Director of Operations. All employees shall maintain a neat and professional appearance. All personnel will follow these standards.
2. Employees are to remember that they represent NFEI and are to be professional role models.
3. Drivers and Attendants are required to wear their unaltered departmental uniform shirt while on duty. The employee is responsible for the cleaning of the shirt. An employee may purchase extra shirts from NFEI.
4. I.D. Badges must be worn at all times during working hours and while on field trip assignments. Badges should be clearly visible and worn attached to the collar or a lanyard and facing forward.
5. Drivers/Attendants must wear shoes that lace or slip on and cover the entire foot, and provide full foot protection. No sandals, Crocs, flip-flops, ballerina-style "flats" or heels over 2 inches permitted while at work.
6. Pants/Capris/skirts must be no higher than the top of the knee.
7. Drivers and attendants are permitted to wear shorts that are no higher than the top of the knee.
8. Jogging, sweat, pajama, yoga or wind pants are not permitted. Ripped, cut, or torn clothing is not permitted.
9. Tank tops and camisoles are not permitted.
10. Form fitting garments such as leggings, Spandex or stretch fabrics are not permitted.
11. Transparent and/or see-through material will be considered inappropriate and not permitted.
12. Any clothing, jewelry or accessories that have drug emblems, references to tobacco or alcoholic beverages, or anything that is considered obscene or offensive may not be worn.
13. Pierced body ornaments are restricted to the ear during working hours.
14. Head coverings such as doo rags or bandanas are not permitted. Only caps and hats approved by Transportation management may be worn. Stocking caps are approved when cold weather is a factor.
15. The Director, Assistant Director or designee must approve any exceptions.

16. Any employee who is out of uniform and not in dress code will be expected to change into appropriate attire or clock out and leave until compliant.

## **BUS DRIVERS/ATTENDANT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. EXPECTATIONS**

1. Transportation employees are responsible for accurately clocking in and out on a NFEI owned time clock, desktop computer, or an approved device at their assigned time and location. All time edits/adjustments must be emailed to the Director of Operations for payroll.
2. Drivers must properly complete the DVCR Log Book before and after each run including trips. The DVCR Log Book is to remain on the bus until completely full at which time the driver will turn it in to the Director of Operations and receive a new one.
3. All drivers and attendants are responsible for performing a proper pre-trip and post-trip each time they operate a bus. All defects must be recorded and turned in daily or immediately depending on severity.
4. Drivers and Attendants are responsible to check their email daily. Email and bulletin boards are for department business only. All non-department communications such as postings, flyers, etc. must have approval from the Director of Operations before distribution.
5. It is the duty of each driver/attendant to keep the Director of Operations informed of any needed changes relating to their route and to keep the route updated.
6. It is the Driver's and Attendant's responsibility to keep the interior of the bus clean and neat at all times as well as report any damage on a daily basis. Bus cleaning should take place as part of the post-trip.
7. Drivers and attendants may not alter the main structure of the bus. Ex. Taping down windows or gluing.
8. Drivers and attendants are required to secure all windows, doors and latches before leaving the bus.
9. Drivers and attendants are not to store any items in the front dash area of the bus.
10. Each Driver must have with them, while on the bus, eligible rider lists, route sheets, and updated seating charts PreK-12. Copies should be maintained in their designated binder. These items are to be updated as changes occur.
11. Student bus counts and shuttle counts must be completed by the driver or the designee assigned.
12. Bus Drivers and Attendants are required to run their routes as assigned and on time each day. Drivers are not to deviate from their route, or make unauthorized stops, without direct approval from Dispatch.
13. Drivers cannot start their run before their first pick up time.
14. No eating or drinking on the bus while students are present.
15. NFEI is not responsible for any personal items left on the bus.
16. It is the Driver and Attendant's responsibility when delivering students to a school or other location to ensure that all students disembark the bus before moving the bus or leaving it unattended. Failure to do so is grounds for termination of employment.
17. It is the responsibility of the Driver and Attendant to perform an evacuation style release at each campus to check the bus for any students, possessions or damage.
18. Drivers are responsible to notify campus personnel of any student that boarded the bus without an NFEI nametag.
19. School buses are required to come to a complete stop, transmission placed in neutral, and have their air brake engaged at all railroad crossings.
20. Backing a bus is strongly discouraged. You should back a bus only when you have no other safe way to move the vehicle.
21. Headlights should be on anytime the bus is in motion.
22. Buses are not to be idled for extended periods during the route: five (5) minutes or more.
23. Buses should never be left unattended with the key in the ignition.
24. Students should never be left unattended on the bus. Failure to supervise your students may be grounds for termination.
25. Assigned route buses will be used for extracurricular trips before, during and after route times.
26. Buses or district-owned vehicles are not to be used for personal business of any kind, including stopping at convenience stores, donut shops, etc.

## **ROUTE INFORMATION**

### **1. ROUTE**

1. Transportation management will make every effort to ensure all route hours will remain 40 hours or less per week.
2. Route assignments may change from year to year.
3. All routes will be emailed and posted at a minimum of 5 school days.
4. All runs and/or routes are subject to change by management based on student need, and maximum efficiency of the Department.
5. Designated routes and route hours are subject to change and are not guaranteed.

### **2. BOARDING AND EXITING PROCEDURES**

1. Buses shall come to a complete stop with parking brake applied and transmission placed in neutral until all children are boarded and seated, or until all children have exited and the door is closed. If the bus is detained, pull to front of loading zone and activate hazard flashers.
2. When loading or unloading the bus, be sure the right side of bus is next to the curb – whenever possible.
3. Do not load or unload on a street gutter drainage area.
4. Drivers are to stop and allow students to load the bus, even after the bus has left the loading area or bus stop. If student continually delays the bus, the driver is responsible to report the issue to Management.
5. All bus doors shall be kept closed when the bus is moving.
6. The emergency door is to be opened ONLY in an emergency.
7. Proper signals must be operating when loading and unloading.
8. Regular education students should be instructed to be at their bus stop 15 minutes prior to their scheduled bus stop time. Buses will not honk for students.
9. Students crossing the street should do so 10 ft. in front of the bus. The driver shall watch for traffic and signal students when it is safe to cross.
10. Drivers must perform an evacuation style release while unloading students at the campus.
11. No student is to operate the door or signal system of the bus.
12. If there is a question of the safety of a bus stop, i.e.: car following, bus fights, etc., radio dispatch and do not drop off students until stop is safe.
13. If you have a bus rider who is unsure about which bus, he/she is to ride, direct student to the school office. When in route with a student that is unsure of his/her bus stop, notify dispatch and wait for directions.
14. Drivers must ensure that all VPK, Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1st grade riders have a parent/guardian present at the stop before allowing the student to exit the bus unless accompanied by a 2nd grade or older relative.
15. Items (including class projects or musical instruments) that cannot be held in the student's lap safely, placed in an open seat, or stored behind the driver's seat, will not be allowed on the bus. These items cannot take the space of another rider. Items are not to be secured by the driver or held in the window dash area.
16. Departure time from campuses to take students home will be no sooner than seven (7) minutes after the dismissal bell unless directed by a school official.

## **STUDENT MANAGEMENT**

### **1. BUS TAGS/ PERMISSION SLIPS**

1. All riders are required to have a visible NFEI nametag around their neck or secured by a lanyard to their backpack before loading the bus at the campus.
2. A student may ride home with another child on a temporary basis with written permission signed by a school administrator. If there is any question, driver is to contact Dispatch for direction.
3. Drivers can deny transportation to students at the campus when a student does not have a visible NFEI nametag. Dispatch must be contacted before any action is taken.

## **2. SAFETY**

1. Drivers/Attendants are responsible for maintaining safety procedures on their buses.
2. If anyone on the bus is being physically assaulted or brandishing a weapon, the driver and/or attendant may request police assistance. Dispatch will contact the Police immediately.
3. It is illegal (TEC 34.004) if “a child is standing on a school bus that is in motion.” Do not move the bus until all students are seated unless the driver is directed to do so by police or person in an administrative position with NFEI.
4. No person, other than school personnel and students, shall board the bus for any reason except in an emergency or as approved by the Transportation Office.
5. If any individual approaches the bus in a hostile manner or is causing a severe delay in the route, it is the driver’s responsibility to secure the bus and notify dispatch immediately.
6. Drivers are not allowed to carry any unauthorized guest.
7. Drivers/Attendants shall not administer any drugs or medicine to any student. The Driver/Attendant, however, may issue items in the “First Aid Kit”, if needed, or asked for by a student.
8. Students should exit the bus only at the student’s DESIGNATED STOP.

## **3. ASSISTANCE ON ROUTE**

1. When needing assistance to maintain effective discipline on the bus, Drivers/Attendants should use the following student management procedures:
  - a. Drivers may submit a completed discipline referral
  - b. Drivers can speak with an NFEI administrator or supervisor if there is a question
  - c. Drivers should contact Dispatch when needing immediate assistance at the campus and must submit a completed discipline referral when a campus administrator is called to the bus upon completion of their route
  - d. Drivers are not to remove students from the bus, but may request campus administrative assistance
2. Drivers must have approval from a campus administrator, operations management or transportation dispatch to deny student transportation.
3. Any student left at a campus must be released to a school faculty member.

## **4. STUDENT DISCIPLINE/COMMUNICATION**

1. When dealing with student management, drivers are required to follow the transportation department progressive discipline procedures as follows:
  - a. Issue a verbal warning for safety violations and/or misbehavior (each time it occurs).
  - b. Temporarily change the student’s seat assignment.
  - c. Inform student that incident will result in a warning/referral.
  - d. Complete a Student Referral Form when student behavior continues within 24hrs. of the route.
2. NFEI administration will review video as part of their investigation process and student behavior.
3. Do not physically touch regular education students.
4. Employees shall limit conversation with students to specific information that would be required to perform their duties.
5. Do not give food, candy, gum, medicine or drinks to students.

# **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

## **1. EVACUATION**

1. Bus must be stopped, parking brake set, and engine key switch set to auxiliary.



2. Turn ON hazard lights.
3. Driver will stand, open door, and face passengers.
4. Driver gives command: "Front Door Evacuation" (Regular Education Students)
5. Driver calls in emergency to Transportation Department Office, put microphone out the window.
6. Front door assistant - lead students to safety.
7. Students evacuate - alternating from right to left and front to back until all are off.
8. Driver walks to rear of bus checking between and under all seats.
9. Driver carries off:
  - a. Fire extinguisher
  - b. First aid kit
  - c. Reflectors
10. Driver checks to see if students are at a safe distance
11. Place reflectors at correct distance:
  - a. Curbs or hills
  - b. Divided highway
  - c. 2-way traffic (30 mph)

## 2. ACCIDENTS AND MOVING VIOLATIONS

When a driver of an NFEI vehicle is involved in an at-fault accident or a violation of the law, the incident may result in disciplinary action up to and including a recommendation for termination.

1. All accidents that result in an NFEI vehicle coming into contact with any other vehicle, object, or another bus; NFEI dispatch must immediately be contacted without leaving the area.

### 2. If Involved in an Accident:

- a. Stop immediately.
- b. Determine if evacuation is necessary.
- c. Make a first aid check of all students and individuals involved in the accident.
- d. If injuries are involved, the bus should not be moved prior to the arrival of law enforcement personnel. The students must be checked and released by the police or school administration before moving the bus.
- e. Radio dispatch or call Transportation (have color, make, type, and model of vehicle available). Tell Transportation the location and if there are injuries.
- f. Activate emergency flashers and set reflective triangles.
- g. If the accident occurs on the weekend, radio or call local Police.
- h. EXPRESS NO OPINION.
- i. Use your established seating chart to verify names of all passengers on the bus. If they were transported to a hospital, get the name and location of the hospital.
- j. Do not leave the scene of the accident without permission from Dispatch.

**3. Collision with Unattended Vehicle or Other Property.** Do not leave the scene of the accident until you have contacted the Transportation office, and/or a safety trainer or local Police have arrived on scene and have released you to proceed. If the bus is involved in a hit and run, you must remain at the location in order for authorities to file a report. THIS IS THE LAW.

### 4. Post-accident follow-up-

1. In all cases, the Director of Operations must clear the driver before they are allowed to return to his/her assigned route.
2. Drivers are required to meet with the Director of Operations for a post-accident follow-up.
3. A Driver (Witness) Statement and an updated seating chart must be completed.
4. The finished Accident/Incident Report form must be signed by the driver.
5. A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) procedure must be completed.

### 3. SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES (See Severe Weather Procedures Guide)

## SPECIAL NEEDS PROCEDURES

### 1. GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. The Driver/Attendant should wear protective rubber gloves when assisting students in matters that require physical contact. (Gloves may be checked out from the special needs equipment room).
2. The driver will notify the responsible person at the pick-up/drop-off location of the date/time the student will start on the bus. The driver will also re-notify the parent/guardian of any change in time during the school year.
3. When the bus arrives at the pick-up point for any student, do not let the student, parent, or guardian delay your route.
4. If a rider is a special needs student, keep a record of his/her “no-shows” in case it is needed by the Special Education Department.
5. Special needs students and/or special program students must not be picked up or dropped off at an address other than the location listed on the current Bus Transportation Form and route description.
6. No special needs student is to cross the street. Load and unload students only on the curbside of the road. Do not use driveways to turn around, to load, or drop off students.
7. When notified that a special needs student will be absent for an extended period of time of three (3) days or longer, the driver will be notified by the Special Education Office.
8. If a special needs student is absent for five (5) consecutive days, the driver or attendant will notify the Special Education Office of the student’s absences. The Special Education Office will contact the parent to verify the situation and notify the driver.
9. When picking up special needs students at a residence it is NOT the responsibility of the Driver/Attendant to go to the door for a student. When dropping off students, only the individuals listed on the Transportation Supplement/Authorized Receiver Form can receive the student.
10. The driver and/or attendant are not to go into a student’s home under any circumstances or take possession of a house key. Employees are not to help student(s) open door to the home. If a special needs student is approved to be left alone and cannot open door, contact Dispatch for further instructions.
11. Only when it is stated on the student’s Transportation Supplement Form may a special needs student be left alone at a drop off location.
12. If a special needs student cannot be left alone, do not open the bus door unless the person listed on the Transportation Supplement/Authorized Receiver Form is at the bus door.
13. When dropping off a special needs student the Driver/Attendant must:
  - a. Ask for and see a picture ID to verify identity unless identity has been previously determined and recognized by the driver.
  - b. Be presented an ID as listed on the Transportation Supplement/Authorized Receiver Form.
  - c. Have a parent or guardian listed on the Transportation Supplement/Authorized Receiver Form verified by the driver give permission before designating a sibling that does not have an ID to have the ability to receive the student.
14. If the Transportation Supplement/Authorized Receiver Form states that a special needs child is to be left with the parent/guardian, sibling, or others listed on the form and no one is at the drop-off address at drop-off time - follow these procedures:
  - a. Contact Dispatch—requesting to return to school.
  - b. Await approval from Dispatch to return to the school.
15. The attendant will go to the door of the school to pick-up or deliver special needs students.
16. The attendant will go to the door of daycare centers when picking up or delivering a student. The Driver/Attendant should not go inside the daycare center.
17. The Driver/Attendant transporting special needs students will cooperate with the school in implementing behavior plans and grading systems.

18. At all times the information on each run will be kept in a binder provided by NFEI. The following items of information must be maintained for each run:
  - a. Transportation Supplement
  - b. Transportation Route Descriptions
  - c. Authorized Receiver Form
  - d. Other student documents
19. It is recommended that all special needs students wear lap belts or other types of restraints as listed on the Transportation Supplement Form. It is the responsibility of the Driver/Attendant to have the correct car seats, infant seats, or safety restraints installed properly according to all laws of the State of Florida.
20. The Driver/Attendant's primary responsibilities are to maintain discipline and order, safety of the students, and to ensure a clean and neat appearance of the bus. Do not use or spray items that can be harmful to fragile students and other employees. All spray cleaners must be approved by management.
21. The attendant will be outside the bus door to assist students on and off the bus. Never leave the bus with student(s) on board. If you are alone and need help, use the radio.
22. Physical contact should be kept to only what is necessary to assist special needs students to ride the bus. However, knowing that each student is different, the Driver/Attendant may find it necessary:
  - a. To assist the student in and out of the seat or carry them as necessary and make sure the student is strapped in, buckled in, the wheel chair is secured, or whatever is needed to secure the student. Allow the student to do as much as they can for themselves, including climb stairs, buckling the seat belt and setting the brakes on their wheelchair.
  - b. To comfort a student, which could include sitting by a student, cleaning a student's face, suctioning the student, and whatever else is needed to comfort the student.
  - c. To have special training on handling the student provided by the Transportation staff or the student's school administrator, teacher, and or nurse.
23. Drivers are not to move the bus until the special needs students are properly secured and attendant is seated. Students and attendant must be seated at all times while the bus is in motion. It is recommended that the attendant wear a seatbelt at all times while the bus is in motion.
24. Student Confidentiality – Discussing student concerns should be in private and only with designated staff. Do NOT take photographs of students. Do not post pictures, names, or incidents concerning any student or the transportation of students on any social media. (Family Education Rights and Privacy Acts of 1974 – The Gossett Law).
25. The attendant will sit behind the last student on the bus so the students may be observed at all times. Give full attention to the students. Do not sleep or read, do not work on handicrafts, or use cell phones, or anything that takes your attention off the students while students are on the bus.
26. Attendants are to cooperate with parent requests to take medication to school or return the medication to them.
27. Attendants will keep up with the personal belongings of students on the bus and make sure items arrive at school or home with the student. Use professional discretion when it comes to students' personal belongings.
28. Routes may not be changed, including pick up/drop off locations or times, without prior approval of the Transportation Office.

## **2. WHEELCHAIR PROCEDURES**

1. Load wheelchair backward on lift.
2. Lock the wheelchair brakes and turn off the power, if electric.
3. Driver/Attendant's hand must be on the wheelchair at all times while the lift is being raised or lowered. Bus must be in neutral or park and parking brake applied as long as lift/lift door is open or in operation. Do not move the bus if lift or lift door is in use.
4. Park the wheelchair facing forward and lock the brakes when positioning a child on the bus.
5. Attach straps as close to a non-moveable part of the frame of the wheelchair as possible.
6. Use matching strap sets on both front and rear of wheelchair.

7. Student's shoulder-lap belt must be fastened. Attach the lap belt close to the student's body; it should fit next to the student (thread through openings between the back and seat.) The buckle should fit the hip on the side--Just like on an automobile seat belt.

### **3. EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS**

1. Students exit in correct order:
  - a. Ambulatory first
  - b. Non-ambulatory second
2. Only use lift when it is safe to use.
3. Driver/Attendant removes from bus:
  - a. Fire extinguishers
  - b. Binder with student information
  - c. Red flags (if applicable)
  - d. Reflectors/strap cutter
  - e. First aid kit
  - f. Blankets
4. Use of blanket for evacuation of special needs buses: Most students who have been in a wheelchair since birth are quite light, usually not having developed the normal bone structure or musculature of a physically normal child or adolescent. In this case, emergency evacuation by releasing the restraining belt and carrying the child from the vehicle is the best alternative.
5. The above practice is not recommended in the case of a child with fragile bone structure or with an adolescent who has become paralyzed after normal body development. In these cases, it is recommended that the Driver/Attendant place a blanket on the floor and carefully lower the child. Then move the child towards the rear emergency door. This will allow legs and arms to slide by seat legs without catching on them and potentially injuring the child.
6. Care should be taken to assure that legs and arms do not become entangled in seat legs or dangling restraining belts. Upon reaching the emergency door, the Driver/Attendant, preferably with assistance, can ease the child to the ground and again slide the individual to a safe location.
7. Notice this method of emergency evacuation places little physical stress on the driver or attendant since at all junctures the child's weight is only being directed as opposed to lifted by the Driver/Attendant.

## **TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT**

### **1. FUEL/ DEF**

1. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure the bus is properly fueled. Failure to properly fuel any NFEI - owned vehicle may lead to disciplinary action.
2. Bus must be unoccupied before fueling.
3. Drivers are responsible to fuel the bus with at least ½ tank of fuel and DEF (if applicable) at all times. Field trip drivers are to TOP-OFF the fuel tank after a trip.

### **2. RADIO PROCEDURES**

1. Use radios for NFEI school related business ONLY. Keep exchanges short and to the point. AM/FM radios are not to be used while students are on the bus.
2. STEPS FOR REPORTING BY RADIO A SAFETY ISSUE AND/OR AN EMERGENCY:
  - a. Driver to Dispatch: "This is bus # \_\_\_\_\_. I have an emergency".
  - b. Dispatch to Driver: "What is the emergency?"
  - c. Driver to Dispatch: State problem and give your specific location. Use cross streets to identify your location.
  - d. Once you have called Dispatch for assistance, remain in the same location until instructed to proceed.

- e. Out of control students: Contact Dispatch if you feel you have out of control students causing an unsafe situation. Dispatch and/or administrators will give you further instructions after assessing the problem.
  - f. Dispatch may direct the bus to return to the school.
  - g. If Police are dispatched to your location, **DO NOT MOVE BUS UNTIL LOCAL POLICE CLEARS YOU TO MOVE:**
  - h. If police arrive on the scene, they assume responsibility for the situation and will be in charge.
3. Drivers shall limit radio communication to specific information that would be required to perform their duties.

### **3. SEAT BELTS**

- 1. Any Transportation Department employee driving a school-owned vehicle will be required to wear a seat belt, according to manufacturer's specifications.
- 2. State Law requires that if a vehicle is equipped with a three-point lap and shoulder belt, the driver is to ensure that all occupants wear them.

### **4. VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

- 1. Video records are the property of NFEI and may be viewed by a parent, school administrators and qualified NFEI personnel.
- 2. Do not touch or tamper with cameras or camera equipment mounted on buses. Any manipulation may be grounds for termination.

## **EXTRA DUTY ASSIGNMENTS**

All extra duty assignments, in addition to your assigned route or schedule, are considered overtime work and must be approved by a supervisor beforehand and therefore is at the discretion of management. Fieldtrips, route training, summer school and driving for graduation ceremonies are examples of extra duties but are not all-inclusive. Employees that have exhausted all leave and are in dock status could lose eligibility for extra duty assignments.

### **1. FIELD TRIPS**

- 1. The Director of Operations will assign field trips.
- 2. NFEI may assign any bus in the fleet to meet the needs of the trip, including route buses.
- 3. Buses on all field trips are to go directly to point of pick up.
- 4. No stops for meals are permitted, before, during, or after the trip, without prior approval of the Director.
- 5. Any unplanned stops, not previously listed on the fieldtrip form, must be approved by management before reaching the additional destination. For example, sponsors requesting to stop for meals before or after event that is not previously listed on the trip sheet, must have approval from management.
- 6. Buses are never to be used for personal reasons.
- 7. Driver's assigned trips after their AM runs will go directly to the point of pick-up without returning to the bus lot, unless a bus change is required.
- 8. Only use the bus assigned per the Trip Sheet or by Dispatch. If the bus assigned is not available, contact Dispatch for instructions. Do not take another bus unless instructed by Dispatch.
- 9. Please review maps provided by sponsors before leaving for the destination.
- 10. Sponsors are responsible for paying for all trip related expenses.
- 11. Drivers **ARE NOT TO LEAVE** the destination point and return later. Once you drive a group somewhere, stay with them.
- 12. Drivers are not allowed to bring guests/children on field trips.

13. Sponsor's children will not be allowed on field trips if the child's weight and height would require a child safety seat.
14. Accurately clock in and out before and after each fieldtrip. Mileage must be reported on all trip sheets.
15. Drivers must get a signature and time of drop off from the sponsor on the Field Trip Form.
16. Trip cancellation: When a trip is canceled or the scheduled time is changed after arrival at pick-up, the driver will be given the opportunity to work up to four hours, scheduled by management.
17. When a school requests more than one bus, the drivers will stay together as a team as well as in the assigned order.
18. The driver must submit all field trips paperwork within two business days to be compensated for the trip.
19. The "back at school time" on the trip sheet is only an estimated time. When the trip is complete, the Driver will only be paid up to 45 minutes to return, clean, and refuel the bus. Drivers must clock out. All trips will receive a minimum of two hours.
20. Do not load the bus until sponsor is present and on the bus.
21. Drivers must be skilled in the operation of special lifts, tie downs, and restraints. It is the responsibility of the driver to know how to operate all equipment.
22. Food and drinks for the group should not be allowed on the bus without approval by the Transportation Department.
23. Drivers must contact Dispatch prior to leaving the bus lot when running late on a trip.
24. A field trip driver may be suspended or removed from other field trips if driver:
  1. Is a No Call / No Show.
  2. Cancel more than one trip after assigned per semester.
  3. Is late for a pick up time.
  4. Does not turn in field trip paper work within 2 business days of trip completion.
  5. Fails to clean a bus or top off the fuel tank.
  6. Is late for assigned route due to incorrect trip profile on file.
  7. Reports to the wrong school or fails to follow trip instructions.
  8. Has any other trip violation that either is against policy or hampers the progress of the field trip.
  9. Has exhausted all discretionary leave and is in dock status.
25. Field Trip Assignment Procedures:
  1. Field trips are assigned on a random basis, as well as route availability. All trips will be assigned by the Dispatch Office.
  2. Last minute trips will be assigned based on the availability of the drivers with management approval.
  3. Trips cannot be swapped, traded, or given to another driver. Trips and assigned routes should not exceed 48 hours per week. In assigning trips, every effort will be made to avoid overtime.
  4. Hours shown on Field Trip Request will be used in assigning the trip.
  5. If original trip driver is late for a trip, and a stand-by driver has to cover the trip, the original driver will not clock-in and will not be paid.
26. Overnight Trips:
  1. Drivers will be paid a minimum of 14 hours for each 24-hour period on overnight trips. Any hours in excess of 14 hours you are required to work during a 24-hour period must be documented on the Trip Sheet and signed by the trip sponsor. (Note: Lot departure time will start 24-hour period.)
  2. Room and board of driver on out-of-town trips will be paid by the organization requesting the trip.
27. Driver Availability:
  1. All drivers are responsible for filling out and updating a Field Trip Availability Form so that trip times do not overlap route time. Drivers cannot exceed 48hrs per week.
28. Informing Dispatch of Field Trip:
  1. When informing Dispatch Office of your absence for the day, it is the driver's responsibility to inform Dispatch that the field trip assignment must also be covered.

## **2. SUMMER SCHOOL**

1. All Transportation policies/guidelines apply during summer schools that are in effect during the regular school year unless changed by the Director or designee.
2. After screening, selected applicants for the position shall be chosen based off merit, training, experience, and ability to meet the requirements of the available position.

# **GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES**

## **1. REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

**NOTE OF CLARIFICATION: It is the Driver and/or Attendant's legal responsibility to call the Florida Department of Protection and Regulatory Services to report suspected child abuse/neglect.**

## **2. EMPLOYEES' CHILDREN AND GUESTS**

1. All employees' children and guest(s) must check in at the Dispatch Office.
2. No children or guests are allowed on the bus routes or field trips.
3. No children will be allowed in the transportation building on non-school days if the employee is working on the clock.
4. No children will be left unattended at any time at an NFEI Facility, unless approved by Director or designee.
5. A Driver/Attendant may apply for a route or trip that transports his/her own children, grandchildren or other family members.

## **3. PERSONAL RADIOS AND CELL PHONES ON BUSES**

1. An operator may not use a wireless communication device while operating a passenger bus, including the use of a phone for GPS. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary actions including up to a recommendation for termination.
2. If an emergency occurs, pull bus over to side of road in a safe spot, engage parking brake, then and only then use a cell phone.
3. No personal radios will be used on the bus.

## **4. SCHOOL CLOSURE**

NFEI may close schools for a full day or part of the day because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When it becomes necessary to open late, release students early, or cancel school, NFEI officials will post a notice to NFEI's website and notify local radio and television stations.

## **5. DELAYED START OF SCHOOL**

When school is delayed for any reason, Drivers/Attendants will report to work according to school start time delay schedule. Example (School is delayed 2 hours – employees report 2 hours later than regular clock in time)

## DRIVER DISCIPLINE

### SPECIFIC VIOLATIONS

The following list of violations and consequences covers the most common issues related to driver discipline and does not cover all possible driver discipline issues. Anything not covered in this list will be addressed at the discretion of the Director of Operations and communicated to the employee affected.

### MINOR (VERBAL OR WRITTEN REPRIMAND)

Violation	Beginning Consequences Starts at:
Bus cleanliness second verbal warning	Verbal Reprimand
Did not stop at railroad crossing, no passengers on board	Verbal Reprimand
Pre-Trip not completed	Verbal Reprimand
Minor safety infraction	Verbal Reprimand
Any violation after verbal reprimand	Written Reprimand
Warning citation while driving a school bus	Written Reprimand
Abusive/inappropriate language/actions to students	Written Reprimand
Abusive/inappropriate language/actions to staff/parents	Written Reprimand
Moderate safety infraction	Written Reprimand
Map & route paperwork not complete for substitute by due date	Written Reprimand

### MAJOR (SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION)

Violation	Beginning Consequences Starts at:
Any violation after written reprimand	1 Day Suspension W/O Pay
Minor moving violation citation with children on board	1 Day Suspension W/O Pay
Post trip not completed, no student(s) left on board *1 <sup>st</sup> Time*	1 Day Suspension W/O Pay
Any violation after 1 day suspension	3 Day Suspension W/O Pay
Major safety infraction	3 Day Suspension W/O Pay
Minor moving violation citation with children on board	3 Day Suspension W/O Pay
Use of alcohol during an “on duty” school day	Termination
Use of illegal drugs	Termination
Failure to pass a drug or alcohol test	Termination
Violence against a student/adult (except in cases of protection of self or other students)	Termination
Any deliberate policy/procedure violation with an at-fault accident while driving a school bus	Termination
Any violation after 3 day suspension	Termination
Major moving violation citation	Termination
Weapons in possession of, or brought on the bus by the driver	Termination
Post trip not completed, student(s) left on board	Termination
Post trip not completed, no student(s) left on board *2 <sup>nd</sup> Time*	Termination
Did not stop at railroad crossing, students on board	Termination



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HANDBOOK**

The purpose for the Employee Handbook is to inform all Transportation Employees of current Transportation Department policies and procedures. This “Acknowledgement of Handbook” form is to ensure that each employee is aware and knowledgeable of all policies and procedures of the department.

I accept and understand the North Florida Educational Institute Transportation Department Handbook and have read the contents prior to my start date. I fully understand these policies and procedures and understand that failure to follow these policies and procedures will be reflected in the evaluation of my job performance and could result in disciplinary action or termination of my employment with North Florida Educational Institute.

I also accept that route assignments are subject to change when determined to be in the best interest of North Florida Educational Institute.

I also understand that if I hold the position of a bus driver, a condition of my employment is that I must maintain and possess at all times a valid Florida “CDL” license (with P and S endorsement) as a driver for North Florida Educational Institute, along with a DOT physical card and a Florida School Bus Driver Safety Training Certificate. I am aware that if for any reason my license is suspended, revoked or reclassified, I cannot drive for North Florida Educational Institute (not having or non-renewal of liability insurance may result in your license being suspended in the State of Florida). I am also aware that I must report driver’s license suspension, revoked license, reclassification, arrests, or any kind of traffic citation (private and/or district vehicle) to the management of the Transportation Department within three days. Failure to comply with this directive may result with my termination as an employee of North Florida Educational Institute.

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**Print Employee Name**

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**Employee Signature** **Date**

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**Administrator Signature** **Date**

**ALL TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEES MUST SIGN THIS STATEMENT.**