

HARRISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



SCHOOL BUS DRIVER / AIDE HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

**Dedicated to the Safe and Timely Transportation of Our School Children for They are Our Future
2023 - 2024**

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Public Relations	3
School Bus Drivers’ Qualifications	3
Physical, Mental and Moral Requirements	3
Age Limits	4
License and Certificate.....	4
Driver Attitude	4
Driver Appearance & Personal Habits.....	4
Insulin Dependent Bus Drivers	5
Applicants	5
Background Criminal Check –Mississippi Code S37-9-17	6
Deductions.....	6
Termination & Suspensions.....	6
Jury Duty.....	7
Sick Leave Policy	7
Family Medical Leave Act	7
Rules for Good Drivers.....	8
Tort Liability.....	8
Insurance	8
Performance Responsibilities	8
Equipment Responsibility	9
Refueling Buses.....	9
Activity Trips	10
Evacuation Procedures	10
Route Descriptions & Maps.....	11
Route Changes.....	11
Cold Weather & Rain	11
Discipline Forms.....	11
Student Behavior on Buses.....	11
Suggestions for Maintaining Discipline.....	11
Video Surveillance	12
Procedural Handbook.....	13
MDE Code of Ethics - Standard of Conduct.....	18

Introduction

The Harrison County School District owns, maintains, and operates a fleet of 230 school buses. Our buses travel roughly 11,000 miles per day with an annual mileage of approximately 2 million. The district transports more than 11,000 students each day.

The boundary lines of the Harrison County School District extend from Hancock, Stone, and Jackson Counties, and within the city limits of each city, as designated by annexations. The Harrison County Child Development Center's boundary lines encompass the entire area of Harrison County, both city and county.

There is a steady increase in the number of buses and the number of pupils being transported. Perhaps the increase could be attributed to the fact that the school bus is the safest mode of transportation today. Safety, in school transportation, is important.

A school bus is no safer than its DRIVER. The professional school bus driver should recognize the need to acquire a thorough knowledge of his/her responsibilities. Safety regulations and policies, personality traits, character, grooming and general conduct are all important parts of a bus driver's job; but let's not forget for a moment that we are transporting the most prized possession of Harrison County – our children.

Public Relations

Students are under the control of the driver for an appreciable length of time each day. They will learn from the driver and the transportation environment. The driver has the opportunity to teach valuable lessons in citizenship by being fair, firm and consistent with students.

The driver should be courteous at all times to the riders, refraining from questionable conduct and speech. The school bus driver should be courteous and tolerant toward other motorists. Professional bus drivers are emissaries of good will and the bright beginning of a school day. The attitude of the driver can influence the student and the student's classroom for the day. Remember how important you are.

School Bus Drivers' Qualifications

Physical, Mental and Moral Requirements

1. A driver must have at least 20/40 visual acuity in each eye.
2. It is recommended that each driver have a vision test for glaucoma, depth perception and presence of cataracts.
3. It is recommended that each driver have a physical examination that includes, but is not limited to: tests for tuberculosis, high blood pressure, diabetes, and possible use of drugs. A doctor should give an opinion as to whether or not the applicant is physically qualified to perform the work of a school bus driver.

4. A driver must have sufficient physical strength to drive a school bus.
5. A driver must have the normal use of both arms, both hands, both legs, and both feet.
6. A driver should be a person of good moral character.
7. A driver should be emotionally stable.
8. A driver's hearing shall not be impaired to the extent that it would interfere with the safe operation of a bus.
9. A driver must pass a pre-employment drug and alcohol test.

Age Limits

A driver must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

License and Certificate

1. A driver shall have a valid commercial driver's license (effective April 1, 1992).
2. A driver shall have a valid school bus driver's certificate issued by a Mississippi State Department of Education approved instructor.
3. A minimum of sixteen hours in a regular school bus driver-training course, approved by the Mississippi State Board of Education is one of the requirements for receiving a certificate. (Valid for one year).
4. Renewal certificates may be issued for attending an annual 8-hour certification course.

Driver Attitude

1. A driver should be cheerful, confident, serious minded, and considerate of others.
2. A driver should not quarrel with pupils.
3. A driver should be friendly, fair and firm.
4. A driver should control his temper at all times.
5. A driver should display a wholesome attitude.

Driver Appearance & Personal Habits

1. Drivers are expected to come to work cleaned, well groomed and dressed appropriately.
2. Drivers and Bus Aides may not wear flip-flops, open-toe shoes, shoes with high heels or open heeled shoes while driving and/or assisting on the bus.
3. Drivers must wear assigned district badge at all times.
4. Drivers are not allowed to use tobacco products on school property (*school buses are considered school property*).
5. Drivers must be punctual. Repeated tardiness could result in suspension or dismissal.
6. Drivers are prohibited by law from driving under the influence of drugs, narcotics, or alcohol. Drivers are subject to being randomly tested for the above.

Insulin Dependent Bus Drivers

The Harrison County School Board seeks to employ and maintain qualified persons to serve as bus drivers in the district. In compliance with **Senate Bill 2560 passed during the 2004 Legislative Session**, bus drivers who are insulin dependent must meet the following requirements:

Notwithstanding any requirement imposed by state law, or state or federal regulations, the issuance of a commercial driver's license to a person suffering from diabetes may be issued if the person otherwise meets all qualifications for issuance provided:

- a. The driver is physically examined every year, including an examination by a board-certified/eligible endocrinologist attesting to the fact that the driver is:
 1. Free of insulin reactions (an individual is free of insulin reactions if that individual does not have severe hypoglycemia or hypoglycemia unawareness and has less than one (1) documented symptomatic hypoglycemic reaction per month.
 2. Able to and has demonstrated willingness to properly monitor and manage his/her diabetes.
 3. Not likely to suffer any diminution in driving ability due to his/her diabetic condition.
- b. The driver agrees to and complies with the following conditions:
 1. A source of rapidly absorbable glucose shall be carried at all times
 2. Blood glucose levels shall be self-monitored one (1) hour prior to driving and at least once every four (4) hours while driving or on duty prior to driving, by using a portable glucose monitoring device equipped with a computerized memory.
 3. Submit blood glucose logs to the endocrinologist or medical examiner at the annual examination or when otherwise directed by the Department of Public Safety.
 4. Provide a copy of the endocrinologist's report to the medical examiner at the time of the annual medical examination.
 5. Provide a copy of the annual medical certification to the person's employer for retention in the driver's qualification file and retain a copy of the certification on his person while driving for presentation to a duly authorized federal, state or local enforcement official.
- c. The commercial license issued under this subsection will bear an endorsement restricting commercial driving on the license to driving only within the boundaries of Mississippi.

Applicants

All persons seeking employment in the Harrison County School District must complete a formal application. A personal interview and driving record check will be required.

Background Criminal Check –Mississippi Code S37-9-17

All personnel employed by any school district in the state of Mississippi effective July 1st,2000 shall be required to have a criminal background check and a current child abuse registry check. The applicant shall also be fingerprinted, and such fingerprints shall be forwarded to the FBI for a national registry check. The fee for the fingerprinting and criminal check shall be paid by the applicant and shall not exceed \$50.00. Under no circumstances shall a school district disseminate information received through any such checks, except insofar as required to fulfill the purposes of employment.

Deductions

- a. All employees of the school district must sign for:
 - 1. State retirement
 - 2. State withholding tax
 - 3. Federal withholding tax
 - 4. Any other district forms
- b. Bus drivers must provide:
 - 1. Copy of Social Security Card
 - 2. Copy of driver's license

Termination & Suspensions

Serious infractions, including but not limited to the following, could be cause for immediate dismissal or suspension:

- 1. Theft
- 2. Dishonesty
- 3. Under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- 4. Failure to completely stop for a railroad crossing
- 5. Failure to report an accident
- 6. Carrying unauthorized passengers
- 7. Using the bus for unauthorized purposes
- 8. Being convicted of a moving violation after receiving a citation for driving a school bus
- 9. Speeding, reckless or dangerous driving
- 10. Insubordination to any principal, transportation supervisor, or school official
- 11. Excessive absences or tardiness
- 12. Use of cell phone/texting/headphones/ blue tooth/or other electronic device while on the bus. (Nathan's Law)
- 13. Refueling the bus with students on board
- 14. Failure to have the yellow card in back window of bus as instructed by the director of transportation will result in the following: (a) First Offense: Written Reprimand; (b) Second Offense: Suspension without Pay; (c) Third Offense: Termination.

15. Leaving a student on the bus after the morning or the afternoon route is cause for immediate termination.
16. Failure to comply with performance responsibilities and procedures

Termination or suspension may be the end result of due process. The superintendent of education is responsible for the safe and smooth operation of the transportation department and has the right to recommend termination or suspension for any infraction it warrants. School bus drivers are considered at will employees.

Jury Duty

School district personnel can expect to be called for jury duty. The district shall excuse such absence, which shall not affect or influence absentee, sick or personal leave.

The following procedures shall apply:

1. The driver must inform the bus shop immediately upon receiving a summons.
2. The driver must provide proof of time served on jury duty to the transportation office.
3. Failure to follow these procedures may result in loss of driver pay for those days missed.

Sick Leave Policy

All non-certified personnel shall be granted seven days sick leave per year, beginning with the first day of continuous employment. This will, of course, be pro-rated if a driver should start driving later in the school year.

Sick leave can be accumulated indefinitely. Remember, this is sick leave, and should be used as such. Medical documentation for sick leave must be provided upon request.

Family Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (**FMLA**) is a United States federal law requiring covered employers to provide employees job-protected and unpaid leave for qualified medical and family reasons. Qualified medical and family reasons include personal or family illness, family military leave, pregnancy, adoption, or the foster care placement of a child.

The Act allows eligible employees to take up to 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period to attend to the serious health condition of the employee, parent, spouse or child, or for pregnancy or care of a newborn child, or for adoption or foster care of a child. In order to be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must have been at the business at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months, and work at a location where the company employs 50 or more employees within 75 miles. The FMLA covers both public- and private-sector employees, but certain categories of employees are excluded, including elected officials and their personal staff members.

Rules for Good Drivers

1. Be courteous.
2. Stop completely at all stop signs.
3. Be at your assigned bus stops on time.
4. All buses must come to complete stops immediately before crossing a railroad grade crossing, regardless of whether loaded or empty of students.
5. Be considerate of other motorists. Never permit a long line of traffic to continue to accumulate behind you.
6. Never leave a bus with the motor running or with pupils on it.
7. Practice defensive driving.
8. Never back up a bus except in an emergency, then only with someone to direct you.
9. When you call in with a mechanical problem, DO NOT travel farther down the road. **STAY PUT** and await instructions from the Transportation Department.
10. Maintain control of students at all times while they are in your care.
11. For your safety, avoid any confrontation with parents or citizens. Calmly advise them to call appropriate school authority.

If a school bus driver is unable to drive his/her bus route, it will be the responsibility of the bus driver to notify the Transportation Department. The Transportation Department will provide all substitute bus drivers for each day a substitute is needed. Notification should be as soon as one is sure he/she will not be able to drive.

The bus may need to be returned to a school or transportation office.

Tort Liability

Immunity from liability for injuries to school children while being transported to and from school does not apply to drivers of school buses entirely, since the driver of a school bus will be held personally liable for injuries growing out of his/her own negligence. Any exposure of persons to unreasonable risks constitutes negligence. Negligence may result from carelessness, failure to take reasonable precaution, traffic violation, or incompetence.

The Harrison County School District carries liability insurance, which covers liabilities in accidents or accidents in which no liability may be found. This liability insurance may cover liabilities that occur as the result of bodily injury or property damage.

Insurance

Insurance questions can be answered by the insurance clerk at: (228) 539- 6513

Performance Responsibilities

1. Obey all traffic laws.

2. Carefully observe all signs, signals and rules of the road as provided by the Mississippi Motor Vehicle Laws.
3. Maintain discipline when students are on the bus. A bus driver has the authority to maintain discipline on the bus. You may want to review these rules with your principal.
4. Report any disorderly conduct to the principal.
5. Keep assigned schedule.
6. Keep inside of vehicle clean and comfortable at all times. Buses should be swept at least once every day.
7. Perform a daily pre-trip inspection of the bus, including brakes, steering gear, lights, signaling devices, emergency door, and tires. Report promptly in writing the defects or deficiencies that may affect the safety of the bus operation or result in its mechanical breakdown.
8. Notify the bus shop in case of mechanical failure or lateness.
9. Discharge students at authorized stops only.
10. Transport authorized students only.
11. Exercise responsible leadership when on school trips.
12. **REPORT ALL ACCIDENTS** to the transportation office and they will inform & direct proper authorities. The person making the call should be able to report calmly and coherently the exact location of the accident, the number and severity of injuries, name of the bus driver, and number of the bus.
13. **IN NO INSTANCE SHOULD A DRIVER ATTEMPT TO FIX THE BLAME. DO NOT DISCUSS THE ACCIDENT WITH ANYONE EXCEPT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS OR SCHOOL OFFICIALS. DO NO LEAVE THE ACCIDENT UNTIL A SCHOOL OFFICIAL HAS GIVEN YOU PERMISSION TO DO SO.** Make a list of names of all passengers on the bus.
14. Any accident will require drug testing.
15. It is the responsibility of the bus driver to deliver the bus to/from the transportation Office when service is needed.
16. Drivers may be called upon to run extra routes within their daily allotted four hours.
17. Bus radio must be charged, in working order and turned on at all times during bus routes.
18. The bus driver and bus aide (if applicable) will do a thorough inspection of the bus at the end of the morning and afternoon routes to ensure that all students are off the bus.

Equipment Responsibility

The bus drivers are responsible for the cleanliness of their bus and the care of all school property.

Refueling Buses

Bus drivers are responsible for seeing that his/her bus is refueled.

Activity Trips

All activity trips will require an Activity Trip Permit issued by the Transportation Department through your principal or athletic director. The driver is not to drive the bus without this permit.

It is the **responsibility of the driver** to obtain a timecard and turn it in to the proper department to receive payment.

Evacuation Procedures

Bus evacuation drills should be conducted at least twice during the school year. Procedures for these will be provided to the driver by the principal.

Usually, students remain on the bus during an emergency. But some situations require that you evacuate the bus:

1. ***Fire or danger of fire.*** A bus should be stopped and evacuated immediately if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire. Passengers should move a distance of 100 feet or more from the bus and remain until the driver of the bus has determined that no danger remains. Being near an existing fire and unable to move the bus away or near the presence of gasoline or other combustible material should be considered as “danger of fire” and students should be evacuated.
2. ***Unsafe position.*** In the event that a bus is stopped due to accident, mechanical failure, road conditions, or human failure, the driver must determine immediately whether it is safer for passengers to remain in the bus or to evacuate. You must evacuate if:
 - a. The final stopping point is in the path of any train or adjacent to any railroad tracks.
 - b. The stopping position of the bus may change and increase the danger. If, for example, a bus should come to rest near a body of water or precipice where it could still move and go into the water or over a cliff, it should be evacuated. The driver should be certain that the evacuation is carried out in a manner, which affords maximum safety for the children.
 - c. The stopping of the bus is such that there is danger of collision. In normal traffic conditions, the bus should be visible for a distance of 300 feet or more. A position over a hill or around a curve where such visibility does not exist should be considered reason for evacuation.

In an emergency, it is possible for children to jam the emergency door by trying to get out of the door at the same time. Each school is responsible for coordinating and conducting two school bus drills per school year.

There are several ways to evacuate:

1. Everyone exits through the rear emergency door.
2. Everyone exits through the front entrance door.
3. Front half exits through the front entrance door and rear half exits through the rear emergency door.
4. Exit through side emergency door alone (if bus is so equipped) or in combination 1-3 above. In all of the above procedures, pupils should be moved to a place of safety away from the roadway.

Route Descriptions & Maps

Routing maps will be provided by the Transportation Department.

Route Changes

Under no circumstances will routes or bus stops be changed without approval of the Transportation Supervisor. Routes must be driven as assigned. No stops will be made other than designated stops.

Only the transportation supervisor or director and can make changes to a route.

Cold Weather & Rain

Using Hancock Bank Time and Temperature, on days that are rainy or 32 degrees or colder, drivers should pick up students as closely as possible to their residences. This will take extra planning on the driver's part. Leave a little earlier and plan accordingly.

Discipline Forms

Fill in the discipline form and return the entire form to the principal of the school. **BE CONSISTENT**, watch what you say on the forms, and proofread them before you turn them in. The principal will complete the bottom portion with his/her action and return a copy to the driver. Be as specific as possible concerning the offense. This will help the principal decide the level of punishment.

Student Behavior on Buses

The privilege of riding a school bus can be taken away from the rider only by the principal. Drivers are expected to keep order and discipline on the bus, but their major responsibility has to be driving the bus safely. Therefore, students are expected to cooperate with the behavior regulations. Safety regulations have been printed and given to all pupils in the form of a handbook. The driver should read these carefully. If you have any questions, see your principal.

Suggestions for Maintaining Discipline

1. The driver and principal should work together to keep discipline.
2. The driver must take an active part to maintain discipline.
3. Never give an order you do not mean to enforce.

4. Be fair, firm, and consistent; it isn't punishment, but injustice that make a child rebel against you.
5. It is illegal to strike a child.
6. Look for good qualities – all children have them.
7. Remember, a sense of humor is extremely valuable.
8. Report all fighting as soon as possible to the principal.
9. If there is a disturbance on a bus, the driver should pull his/her bus off the road. he/she then stops the disturbance and proceeds on with the route. The students who caused the disturbance must be taken to school or home; they cannot be just put off the bus. The principal will call the students into the office the same or next day and determine punishment.
10. Be cooperative with students/parents when running your route. For example, when you see a child coming, take a minute and wait for him/her. On rainy/extremely cold days, make allowances for the weather. If a student becomes a chronic problem in not being at his/her stop, report the problem to your principal BEFORE making the decision not to pick him/her up again. If a child is not at his/her stop for three consecutive days, either give the parent a call, or check with the school's attendance clerk. Possibly, the student is homebound due to a childhood disease (chickenpox etc.). The school can then ask the parent to give you a day's notice before you begin stopping again.

Video Surveillance

The school board authorizes the use of video cameras on district property, including school buses. Students or staff in violation of board policies, administrative regulations, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record or staff member's personnel record. The district shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance or retention.

PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK

Procedural Manual Outline:

I. Accident Procedure

- a. Assess the situation and secure the bus in a safe location.
- b. Check on the injury status of the students.
- c. Call emergency response (911) and afterwards inform the transportation department.
- d. Remain at or in the vicinity of the location until you are released.
- e. Compile an accurate seating chart of with student names.
- f. Students may not be released to a parent at the accident site unless parent identification has been verified by a school or transportation official.
- g. Discuss the circumstances of the accident only with law enforcement or school officials.

II. District Radio

- a. Bus radio(s) should be in your possession, activated, at all times while operating a school bus.
- b. The radio should be charged daily
- c. Keep the speaker "on" at all times (top left button).

III. Leave Requests

- a. Advanced notice (24 hours or more) of leave is preferred.
- b. Except for extreme emergencies, the **driver must personally call in**.
- c. **Morning absences** must be reported to the Transportation Department at **06:00 AM**.
- d. **Afternoon absences** must be reported to the Transportation Department **no later than 01:00 PM**.
- e. All drivers are given 7 sick days a year.
- f. Absences of two days or more may require the driver to bring the bus to the transportation office.

IV. Bus Route Clock In / Clock Out

- a. To clock in and out you will need to call 866-491-3162. You will be prompted to enter your unique five-digit pin and job number provided by the Payroll Dept. Follow these steps for logging time:
- b. Morning Clock In / Out

1. Clock in just before leaving to begin your route. On a normal basis, no one should clock in in before 6:00AM.
 2. Clock out when the last student gets off the bus. This should be done at the LAST school you service in the morning. On a normal basis, no one should clock out after 8 AM.
- c. Afternoon Clock In / Out
1. Clock in just prior to first students boarding the bus. On a normal basis, no one should clock in before 2:00 PM.
 2. Clock out once you have unloaded, checked and parked your bus for the day.
- d. Notify the Transportation Department if you exceed your allotted time.

e. Activity | Athletics | Band | Vocational Clock In / Out

For these trips, you will clock in/out using additional job numbers provided by the payroll department. You will clock into these jobs prior to departing your location and remain clocked in until you have returned to your departing location.

V. Rain and Inclement Weather

- a. Under these circumstances it is required that the bus pick up / drop off as close to student residences as safely possible

VI. Student altercations or misbehavior

- a. In most circumstances, it is ideal to diffuse the situation expediently and to submit the relevant discipline forms to the respective school the following day.
- b. Severe circumstances may warrant the return of the student(s) to the school and/or police intervention.
- c. Inform the transportation department in the event of a severe disturbance.
- d. Students should not be returned to school until the transportation department has been informed in order to ensure that school personnel are present on campus.
- e. Contacting law enforcement should be done as a last resort. Sometimes the wait time alone for a responding officer could cause more issues than the initial incident.

VII. Fuel Cards

- a. **Fueling with students on board is strictly prohibited.**
- b. All fuel cards are to remain on the respective bus at all times.
- c. Lost or Stolen cards must be reported as soon as possible to the transportation office.
- d. All buses should be adequately fueled at all times, to avoid problems in emergencies. Refueling should take place when the fuel gauge reaches half a tank.
- e. Each employee shall use their own unique PIN # to purchase fuel. The Transportation office will provide the PIN # to employees where needed.

VIII. Maintenance Issues

- a. Any mechanical or other bus issue should be reported to the transportation office immediately.
- b. A maintenance form may be submitted by the driver or called in to the transportation department.

IX. Student Discipline

- a. Discipline forms should be written for students when necessary.
- b. Forms should be written legibly with the infraction listed.
- c. Avoid unnecessary details and personal opinion
- d. Only the student's name for whom the form is intended should be listed.
- e. If the administrator needs other student names or information, attach a separate sheet.

X. Bus Routes

- a. Routes should be consistent and on time.
- b. Routes should be run as they are assigned without deviation. Notify transportation in the event of road closures or construction.
- c. Any route changes must be approved by the transportation supervisor or director.
- d. Notify transportation of any hazards associated with a route.

XI. Loading/Unloading

- a. Drivers must flag students across the road using the "sweeping motion" as taught in bus school when loading or unloading.
- b. Students must be taught this procedure and held accountable for compliance.

- c. Passing another bus while it is loading or unloading at a school site is prohibited.
- d. Buses should not back up while at the school site during loading and unloading.
- e. All students should be seated prior to placing the bus in motion and should remain that way throughout the duration of the route.
- f. Students should never cross more than one lane of traffic to catch the bus.
- g. Buses may not idle while at the school site
- h. All buses should be checked for students after the route is complete.

XII. Railroad Crossing

- a. All buses must perform the proper procedure when approaching railroad tracks:
 - 1. Stop 15 feet or more from the tracks.
 - 2. Place the parking brake on and put the bus in neutral.
 - 3. Activate emergency flashers.
 - 4. Open the door and the driver window.
 - 5. Look, listen, and look again.
- b. Be sure there is adequate room ahead to clear the tracks.
- c. Contact transportation if there is a signal malfunction at the railroad crossing, do not proceed.

XIII. Bus Stops

- a. Students must be picked up and discharged only at their assigned stop location.
- b. Guest riders must always present an official note approved by a school administrator in order to ride home with a friend. Scrutinize the note carefully and send for a school official if you have any questions.
- c. It is common for guest riders to ride in the mornings without a note. However, if an unassigned student begins to ride frequently, contact transportation with the student's name.
- d. Students should never be left at a bus stop, unless explicit instructions have been given by a school administrator or a transportation official regarding suspension or expulsion.
- e. Common stops should be established wherever safely possible, particularly at apartment complexes and subdivision areas. If a common stop or reasonable walking distance is in question, contact the transportation supervisor.
- f. The immediate bus stop area is considered an extension of the school; therefore, students may be held accountable for unacceptable behavior.
- g. Students are expected to be ready and waiting at their assigned bus stop five minutes prior the arrival of the bus. Students who fail to comply may be subject to disciplinary action.

XIV. Parent or Citizen Encounters

- a. The only people allowed on a bus are students and school district employees.
- b. Parent/driver roadside conferences are discouraged.
- c. If anyone approaches the bus in an attempt to speak with the driver, politely inform them that while their concerns are important, please contact the school or transportation office for assistance.
- d. If anyone attempts to board the bus, immediately warn them that they will be in violation of state law if they proceed. Instruct the person to contact the transportation office.
- e. Do not confront disgruntled parents or anyone else at the bus stop.

XV. Driver Information

- a. The transportation department maintains necessary records such as copies of driver licenses, certification cards, contact numbers, expiration dates, etc.
- b. Drivers are responsible for providing the transportation office with updated information regarding the aforementioned items.
 - 1. Copy of renewed licenses
 - 2. Updated phone numbers and addresses

XVI. Summer Bus Schools

- a. All drivers needing recertification must attend a summer bus school.
- b. While transportation maintains the necessary records, the driver is ultimately responsible for ensuring that he or she obtains the proper credentials such as renewed driver licenses and certification cards.

MISSISSIPPI DEPT OF EDUCATION

CODE OF ETHICS

STANDARD OF CONDUCTS

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
 - Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
 - Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning
 - Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
 - Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
 - Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Harassment of colleagues
 - Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
 - Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school related activity
 - Physical altercations
 - Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice and does not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
 - Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
 - Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:
 - employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
 - information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
 - information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
 - reasons for absences or leave
 - information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
- Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes and local school board policies.

- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Educator/Student Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students.
 - Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
 - Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
 - Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - Committing any act of child abuse
 - Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
 - Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act

- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
- Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationship with students.

Examples of these acts may include but not be limited to:

1. sexual jokes
2. sexual remarks
3. sexual kidding or teasing
4. sexual innuendo
5. pressure for dates or sexual favors
6. inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing
7. rape
8. threats of physical harm
9. sexual assault
10. electronic communication such as texting
11. invitation to social networking
12. remarks about a student's body
13. consensual sex.

Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with colleagues, both in and outside the classroom.

- Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the following:
 - Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
 - Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
 - Interfering with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
 - Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
 - Using coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues.

Standard 6: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
 - Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school-related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students.
 - Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented using tobacco.

Standard 7: Public Funds and Property

An educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
 - Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
 - Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents or any school-related function
 - Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
 - Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
 - Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 8: Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Ensuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
 - Ensuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body
 - Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
 - The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. (This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.)

Standard 9: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law
 - Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.
- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
 - Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
 - Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 10: Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local school board or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

- Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board
 - Refusing to perform services required by the contract.