



SCHOOL BUS

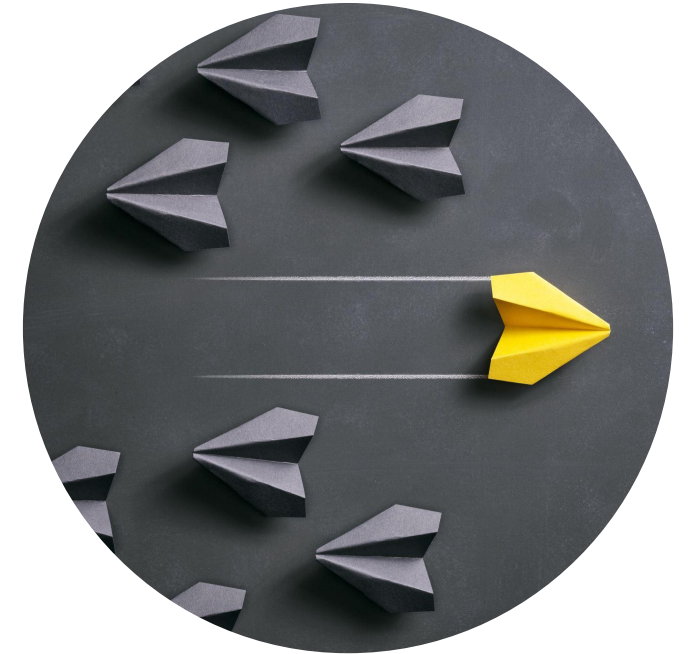
STUDENT BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT



DIVISION 4

INTRODUCTION

- Student management is one of the most important and most complex issues in pupil transportation. It has become more of a challenge in recent years as discipline problems have become more severe on buses.
- Persistent student behavior challenges can be a cause of high driver turnover and a contributing factor in school bus collisions. This training will explore important components of how to successfully manage student behavior.



TRANSPORTATION AND SCHOOL ALLIANCE



Bus driver doubt about the student discipline process is an unfortunate concern in most districts. The perception of bus drivers is that they are not sufficiently backed by school administrators when students refuse to follow the expectations and can lead to very serious problems

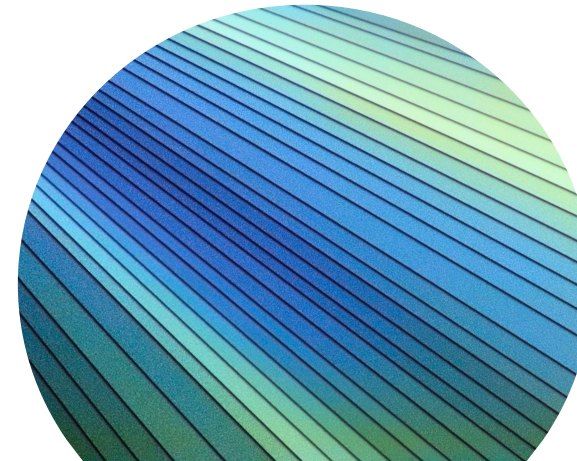
Drivers may give up on the student discipline problem all together and ignore the behavior problems.

Out of frustration a driver may act outside of the constraints of the districts student discipline policy.

Frustration may escalate to anger and the loss of temper with a misbehaving student.

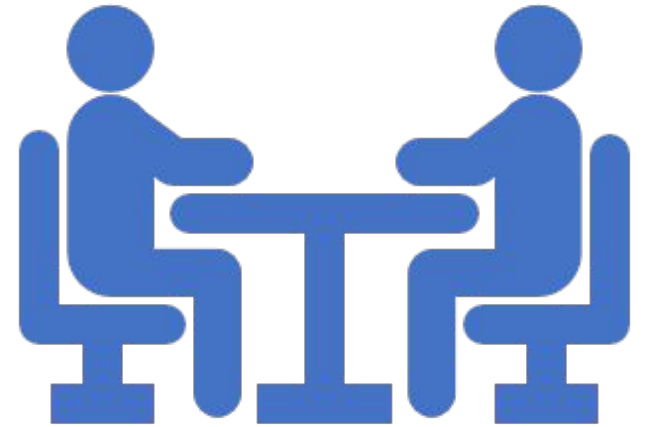


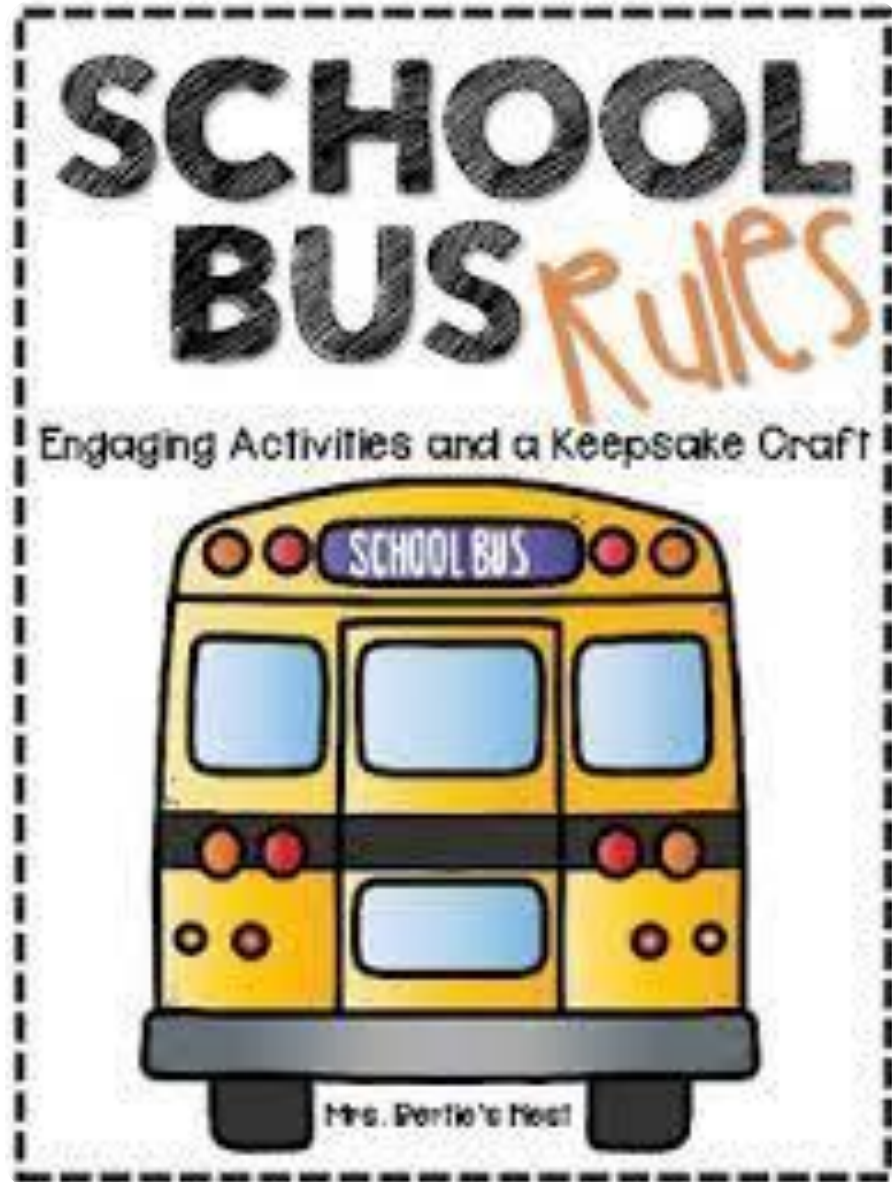
Anger toward a child is never justifiable, the fallout from even a single incident of this nature can affect the working relationship between the school and transportation for a long time.



SUPERVISOR GUIDANCE

- Talk to your supervisor! Transportation supervisors are your advocates. They can do a lot to improve driver and attendant trust in the discipline process. The school bus is an extension of the classroom. Communication with the supervisor is a key factor in the success of student behavior.
 - Involve your supervisor when you are having behavior issues on your bus.
 - If you are unsure of how to handle a behavior situation, ask your supervisor.





Why Do You Need Rules?

For students, riding the school bus is a privilege that is contingent upon their continuous observance of bus expectations and established regulations.

- Rules establish expectations for acceptable behavior and safety on the school bus.
- Many of the expectations that students observe on the school bus are the same expectations they follow in school.
- Expectations should be reviewed with students on the first day of school and routinely throughout the year.
- Expectations should be simple, realistic and enforceable, and should be posted where everyone can see them.
- Expectations should be short and stated positively to promote good behavior.
- Enforce the expectations consistently and equitably. Be sure your students know and understand each expectation.



MANAGING BEHAVIOR

- Student behavior expectations should be clear and consistent, including consequences for unacceptable behavior. Inappropriate behavior on a school bus can have potentially fatal consequences. For example, when the driver looks in the rearview mirror to identify and correct student behavior, who is driving the bus? Safe and appropriate behavior is the expectation, and nothing less should be acceptable.
- Managing student behavior on the school bus is a team effort involving the driver, school administration and parents. The goals are to ensure a safe ride to and from school and to help school children develop appropriate behavior over the long haul.



IMPROVING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Effective management strategies consist of:

1. Develop and enforce district wide bus expectations – Students need to know what is expected of them.
2. Keep bus expectations simple and short, if possible, less than ten.
3. Bus expectations should be similar to those of the classroom and frame expected bus behavior in the positive. Tell students what to do instead of what not to do. For example, " stay seated rather than no standing ”.
4. Educate students on what is correct behavior.

Good bus expectations address safety behaviors, and usually include language that reminds students about the dangers of distracting the bus driver. Remember that students will not take what is expected of them seriously unless, expectations are enforced consistently by all drivers and attendants as well as school based, personnel.



SPECIAL CHALLENGES

Special challenges for bus drivers can consist of:

- a. Students with special needs
- b. Bullying and harassment.
- c. Weapons and violence



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The discipline of students with special needs can bring a unique challenge. Behavior problems that are a manifestation of a disability may not be subject to the same disciplinary consequences, and decisions about individual students will be made on a case by case, basis. Communication between transportation and special educators is essential when determining if behavior problem is a manifestation of a disability. If behavior problems are severe enough then the students IEP must be revisited, with additional accommodations made to transport students to and from school. Bus drivers and attendants must be informed about students who have been identified with severe emotional disturbance or aggressive behavior. If properly informed the driver and attendant will be prepared for situations and use their knowledge to ensure a calm ride home.



BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

- Bullying and student to student harassment has always been an issue on school buses and in school. The most common places that bullying and school harassment occur is school settings that have little to no supervision such as hallways, cafeterias, playgrounds, bathrooms and on the bus.
- Be proactive by educating yourself on the districts bullying policy so that you can effectively enforce them to protect the students on your bus.



WEAPONS AND VIOLENCE

Weapons and violence are especially challenging for bus drivers and attendants. Priority is protecting all students on the bus, not disarming the student identified with a weapon. Any weapon related incident should be:

- Reported to law enforcement immediately
- Reported to school administrator
- Reported to your supervisor



IMPROVING BEHAVIOR – AGE APPROPRIATE

Teaching students responsible bus behavior must be age appropriate.

- With younger students, lessons must be short and simple, focusing on key concepts such as staying in your seat while on board or staying away from danger zones while outside the bus.
- With older students being realistic about the consequences of failing to follow the expectations can be effective.



UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN

Successful student management depends on an understanding how childrens minds work . Every child has a unique personality and different behavior management strategies are needed for each group.

- a. Preschool
- b. Kindergartners
- c. Grades 1-3
- d. Grades 4-8
- e. Grades 9-12



PRESCHOOLERS

Preschool children are one of the most vulnerable populations for transporting. Communication with preschoolers must be very simple and clear, similar to that of a student with a disability.

When possible, bend down to their level

Require more time to understand and follow directions

Be patient

Repeat instructions numerous times





KINDERGARTNERS

- Kindergartners have varied levels of maturity. They have short attention spans and are easily distracted. After the first few days of school, some kindergartners are fully adjusted to the school routine and some others will seem like toddlers. Regardless they often love their bus drivers and are usually receptive to clear safety instruction and positive reinforcement techniques. A smile and a warm hello will mean a great deal to them.





GRADES 1-3

Children in the early grades of elementary school may be nervous in the bus environment. The bus ride is a new experience.

- Expectations should be clear and simple
- **This age group want** to be liked by adults so it's a key time to teach them safety fundamentals
- **They are** focused on right and wrong





GRADES 4-8

Children in the later grades of elementary and middle school are becoming independent individuals but are very aware of their standings among their peer groups. What adults think matter very little compared to what their peers think. For this reason, direct challenges in front of the entire bus will result in face saving showdowns and increased defiance. Students in grade 4-8 are self conscious, awkward and unsure of themselves. They may shun or belittle students not in the in group. Bullying and harassment are prevalent among students in these grades



GRADES 9-12

Students in high school have a growing sense of self identity, but there may be continuing middle school issues as they grow into adulthood. These students want badly to be treated like adults and behavior management is most effective when they are treated in that fashion. Though they may demonstrate an outward coolness they will also indicate an appreciation for adult friendliness and connection.

High school students are able to make reasonable and safe choices especially when reminders of those choices are presented. They will demonstrate maturity and heed warnings that are offered respectfully and reasonably



DRIVER AND ATTENDANT TIPS

- Get to know your kids
- Always maintain a calm but firm voice
- Maintain personal space of the student, invade personal space only if necessary
- Provide reminders of positive behavior choices in the past
- Be a role model
- Have a sense of humor
- Ignore minor irritating behavior, however, potentially dangerous behavior such as moving from seat to seat should never be ignored
- Greet students as they board the bus say hello, please and thank you when speaking to students.
- Be consistent and on time – This will go a long way with parents



DRIVER AND ATTENDANT TIPS (CONT.)

- Manage your own behavior (Modeling responsible safe and mature behavior in front of students is critical)
- Always remain professional
- Recognize and praise students when you notice good behavior
- Never try to discipline students while looking in overhead mirror and bus is moving. The overhead mirror is used for very brief glances of the situation not for arguments or stare downs with a misbehaving child.
- Remember that some students are master manipulators so be on your guard and don't overreact.





DON'T LOOSE YOUR COOL

Never lose your temper, It is essential that you control your temper on the job. A loss of temper means a loss of respect and by behaviors such as:

1. **SCREAMING** – Screaming at kids is ineffective. A strong controlled command voice gains attention without screaming.
2. **CURSING** – Cursing in front of students at any time is a good way to lose not only their respect but also a job.
3. **THREATS** – Avoid making threats you cannot follow through on, such as telling students they will be thrown off the bus for the rest of the year if they don't sit down. This can destroy your credibility.
4. **HANDS ON STUDENTS** – Never place hands on a student except to protect them from danger, such as an attack by another student or to move out of harms way. Physical contact between a bus driver or attendant and student must be a last resort in an emergency.



BUS REFERRALS

The proper use of bus referrals can be beneficial to bus drivers and attendants.

- Fill referrals out completely and legibly
- Use referrals judiciously (Never write up the whole bus) and only after giving an appropriate verbal warning.
- Avoid editorial comments, such as "Johnny is like his sister". The whole family is a problem.
- Report observations as accurately and specifically as possible, and only report the details of which you are absolutely certain.
- Focus on the issue of safety, briefly explain how the student's behavior was dangerous to him/herself or to other students. Unless school policy forbids it write down actual curse words a student said, so the principal and the parent understand exactly what happened.
- Remember minor infractions can be handled by the driver. Not every behavior warrants a write up. Writing up a student for minor infractions consistently may cause the supervisor, assistant principal or designee to stop looking at referrals seriously. Things that can be done prior to write ups are, counseling, positive rewards, seat change, speaking with parents , and communicating with Supervisor, teacher or assistant principal.



THANK YOU!
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