

TITLE 280 – DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

CHAPTER 30 – DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

SUBCHAPTER 15 - SAFETY AND EMISSIONS

PART 10 – Rules and Regulations Regarding School Bus Transportation

10.1 Organizational Rules

A. Authority

1. ~~This Part is promulgated Pursuant to Title 42, Chapter 35 R.I. Gen Laws Chapters 31-2, 31-10, 31-20, 31-22, 31-23, and 31-30., and Title 31, Chapter 2, 10, 20, 22, 23 and 30 of the Rhode Island General Laws, the Department of Transportation hereby amends the regulations for the transportation of school children issued October 23, 1985 and adopts the following rules and regulations for school bus transportation, effective September 30, 1986 or upon being filed with the Office of the Secretary of State, whichever date is sooner.~~
2. ~~Any and all such regulations previously promulgated are hereby rescinded.~~ These regulations shall apply to all motor vehicles owned by any person or by the State or a City or Town and used for the transportation of children to or from school and/or used in transporting children for compensation and to the operation of such vehicles. For purposes of these regulations, all such vehicles shall be classified as ~~A~~School Buses=, but taxicabs and vehicles owned by the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority are specifically exempt from the application of these rules and regulations.
3. ~~The Director of the Department of Transportation or his designee shall suspend the registration of any school bus which is determined to be unsafe for transporting passengers, and may suspend the registration if it does not meet all minimum equipment requirements established for a school bus, or if said vehicle is not delivered for inspection when required. Any vehicle found to be transporting passengers after its registration has been suspended for any of the above stated reasons may be towed from the highway at the owner=s expense, and the registration plates shall be returned to the Department of Transportation forthwith.~~

B. Purpose

1. The purpose of these regulations is to prescribe conditions under which school buses may be operated in this State, in order to more fully protect the health, safety and welfare of all school bus riders.

C. Severability

1. These regulations are hereby declared to be severable, and if any portion of these rules and regulations shall at any time be declared to be unenforceable or illegal, no other portion of such rules shall be affected thereby.

10.2 School Bus Design and Equipment Requirements

A. Each registered school bus is to be equipped with all equipment and devices mandated by state or federal law or regulation, including but not limited to the following:

1. Aisles
 - a. Every longitudinal aisle must be at least twelve (12) inches wide and kept free of obstructions, including extra seats. All vehicles manufactured after April 7, 1977, a clear zone not less than 12" X 24" and which extends 40" high shall be maintained in front of the emergency door and handle. Every floorboard, fire wall, panel, and any part of the undercarriage, including the rear sections in every school bus, must be free from holes, rusted-out metal, openings, and other separations that could cause exhaust and other fumes to enter any part of the passenger compartment. Boots are required around the necessary floor openings provides for the clutch, brake and other equipment and devices. The floor covering in the aisle and entrance area shall be of a non-skid, wear resistant, fire resistant, and rib type, as commonly used in commercial passenger transportation vehicles.
 - b. Vehicles should be free of dangerously damaged body items, parts, or unreasonable mirror extensions, or other items that could cause injuries or damage to any passengers, pedestrians, or other vehicles.
2. Chassis Specifications
 - a. Every chassis must meet or exceed all minimum requirements of the Society of Automotive Engineers (S.A.E.) and/or the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (F.M.V.S.S.) applicable to vehicles of the same Gross Vehicle Weight (G.V.W.)

3. Defrosters

- a. Every school bus shall be equipped with a defrosting device in good working order, adequate to prevent the formation of snow, ice or fog on the windshield.

4. Drive Shaft Protection

- a. Unless otherwise adequately protected, the drive shaft shall be a substantial guard so located as to prevent the shaft from dropping to the roadway or causing damage to the brake system in the event that the drive shaft becomes disconnected while in operation.

5. Emergency Door

- a. An emergency door shall be provided and shall be located in the rear center or near the rear of the bus on the left side.
- b. It shall have a minimum horizontal clearance of 24 inches, a minimum vertical height of 43 inches and be clearly marked Emergency Door on both the inside and outside.
- c. It shall be equipped with a fastening device on the inside and outside which may be quickly released, but which is also designed to offer protection against accidental release.
- d. It shall also be equipped with an automatic buzzer device, located within the drivers compartment, which will clearly indicate to the driver of the vehicle when the emergency door is unlatched. Control of the emergency door from the driver's seat shall not be permitted.
- e. There shall be no steps leading to the emergency door.
- f. There shall be no locks or devices, on any emergency door that will prevent passengers from exiting the bus through the emergency door.

6. Entrance Door

- a. The entrance door shall be at least 22 inches in width located at the right side of the vehicle, and controlled from the driver's seat. It shall be manually or power operated, designed to prevent accidental or unintentional opening of the door and shall open outward unless it is a folding double-hinged door. The upper and lower door panels shall be made of safety or shatterproof glass to

provide the seated driver with a clear view of the ground area near the entrance door.

- b. Vehicles designed with a seating capacity of 16 passengers or less need not be equipped with safety glass in the lower portion of the entrance door if the vehicle is equipped with a convex rearview mirror located near the right front corner of the vehicle so as to provide vision for the driver (while in a seated position) to the ground area at the entrance door.

7. Fire Extinguisher

- a. The bus shall be equipped with at least one pressurized, potassium bicarbonate base dry chemical-type fire extinguisher, mounted in the manufacturers extinguisher bracket and located in the drivers compartment in full view of and readily accessible to the driver. A pressure gauge shall be mounted on the extinguisher so as to be easily read without removing the extinguisher from its mounted position.
- b. The fire extinguisher shall have a minimum capacity of not less than two and a half (2.5 pounds) and be of a type approved by the Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., with a rating of not less than 10 B:C. The operating mechanism shall be sealed with a type of seal that will not interfere with use of the fire extinguisher.

8. First-Aid Kits

- a. Every school bus shall be equipped with a first-aid kit mounted in an area accessible to the operator which consists of bandages, sterile pads, adhesive tape and band-aids for use in the administration of first-aid treatment.
- b. Effective January 1, 1987, a list of emergency telephone numbers or procedures shall be maintained in an area accessible to the operator at all times.

9. Foot Pedals

- a. Every foot operated pedal, including but not limited to a foot brake pedal, accelerator (gas) pedal, and emergency or parking brake pedal must be covered or equipped with a non-slip surface or pad.

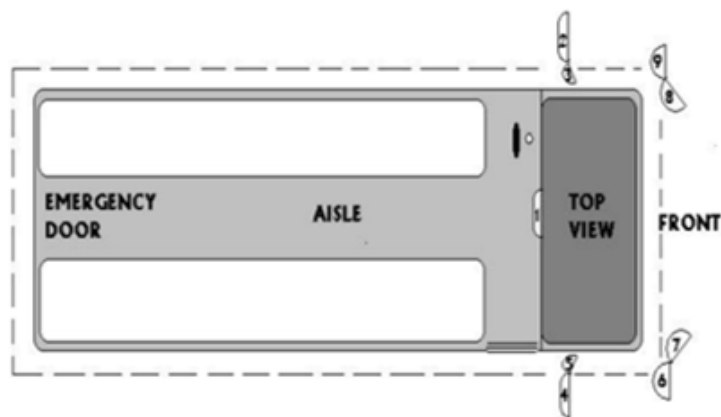
10. Heaters

- a. Each school bus must be equipped with a heating system capable of sustaining a temperature inside the bus of not less than fifty (50) degrees Fahrenheit, at average minimum January temperatures for the Rhode Island area as established by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Weather Bureau.
- b. All heaters shall bear a name plate which shall indicate the heater rating in accordance with the Standard Code for Testing and Rating Automotive Bus Hot Water Heating and Ventilating Equipment, said plate to be affixed by the heater manufacturer, which shall constitute certification that the heater performance is as shown on the plate. Exhaust heaters shall not be used.

11. Lights

- a. Each school bus shall be equipped with warning lamps, headlights, side marker lamps, tail lights, stop lights, clearance lights, interior lights, directional lights, a stepwell light, and reflectors meeting the applicable requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 571.108 (2018), incorporated herein by reference, not including later amendments or editions thereof.FMVSS 108.

12. Mirrors



Key

1. Inside emergency door, roadway, and bus interior
2. Left side flat, rectangular rearview
3. Left side body wide angle
4. Right side flat, rectangular rearview
5. Right side body wide angle
6. Right side convex
7. Right front convex crossover
8. Left front convex crossover
9. Left side convex

— — — — indicates path of measuring rod one foot from bus.

- a. Standard size school buses usually need 9 mirrors to meet the lawful mirror requirements. Extra large or extra wide angle mirrors will be allowed to serve more than one requirement as long as the mirror meets the lawful intended minimum requirements without separate adjustments.
- b. 16 passenger or less buses may need additional convex entrance door mirror if door is not equipped with safety glass in the lower portion.
- c. Each school bus shall have a system of mirrors that will give the seated driver a view of the roadway to each side of the bus, and the area immediately in front of the front bumper, in accordance with the following specifications and the diagram on previous page:
 - (1) At least 7.5-2 inches of a 30-inch long rod shall be visible to the driver, either by direct view or by means of an indirect visibility system, when said rod is placed upright on the ground at any point along a traverse line extending one foot from the forward-most point of the bus and extending the width of the bus and at any point along a line one foot from and parallel to the side of the bus.
- d. Every school bus owner shall maintain a measuring rod thirty (30) inches in length with distinctive identification marks located at seven and a half (7.5-2) inch intervals for purposes of adjusting the system of mirrors required by this section in accordance with these specifications.
- e. Other mirrors shall be located and adjustable so as to meet their intended minimum requirements, and may be incorporated in the system of mirrors required by this section.
- f. Each school bus shall be equipped with at least two (2) flat-surfaced rectangular exterior mirrors, one situated on each side of the bus forward of the operator and any entrance door. The reflecting surface shall not be obscured and shall have a minimum reflective surface of 50 square inches. Said mirrors shall be firmly supported and adjustable, and shall afford the driver a clear, stable reflected view of the road surface at each side of the vehicle for a continual distance beginning at a point not greater than 200 feet to the rear and continuing to the horizon when measured on a straight and level road. The above exterior mirror mounts shall include a

wide angle adjustable convex mirror to provide a close-in field of vision to the operator.

- g. Each school bus shall be equipped with convex mirrors that shall be mounted at the left front corner and the right front corner of the vehicle, sufficiently adjustable to enable a seated operator to observe a reflection of the area in front of the bus where children might stand or pass.
- h. Each school bus shall be equipped with interior mirror(s) that shall afford the driver a view of the bus interior, emergency door, and the roadway to the immediate rear of the bus.
- i. Every school bus with a seating capacity of 16 passengers or less shall have a convex rearview mirror located near the right front corner, so as to provide the operator with a view of the ground area at the entrance door when said door is not equipped with safety glass in the lower portion of the door. (See Entrance Door, § 10.2(A)(6) of this Part).

13. Seats

- a. Adequate seating space for all passengers shall be provided.
- b. All seats shall be securely fastened with bolts or rivets to the part or parts of the school bus designed to support them; no bus shall be equipped with jump seats or portable seats.
- c. All seats shall have a minimum clearance of twenty-four (24) inches at seat line, between the front of the back cushion and the nearest forward obstruction. All seats shall be of forward facing type.
- d. Longitudinal seats are not permitted. Seats shall be made of leather or other washable material, at least three (3) inches thick, and at least twelve (12) inches from front to back. Seat backs shall be of similar material, and shall be padded.
- e. The maximum seating capacity shall be painted on the body of the bus to the left of the entrance door and shall be in the following form:
 - (1) Capacity Not Over _____ School Children
 - (2) No Standees

14. Safety Belts

- a. A safety belt installation shall be provided for the operator which shall conform to the requirements of R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-23-41.
- b. The safety belt assembly shall adjust to fit operators whose dimensions range from those of a 5th percentile adult female to those of a 95th percentile adult male with the seat in any adjusted position, by means of an automatic locking retractor on each side. The retractor shall keep the belt off the floor when not in use.
- c. Safety belts, modified seats, wheelchairs, and harnesses may be allowed for transportation of ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities if approved by the Board of Regents.

15. Speedometer and Odometer

- a. Every school bus is required to be equipped with speedometer and odometer in good working order at all times. The odometer may be installed separate and apart from the odometer normally included in the speedometer head.

16. Ventilator

- a. Adequate ventilation shall be provided.

17. Warning Devices

- a. Each school bus shall be equipped with warning devices that shall be used to warn traffic in the event of prolonged stops on the highway when the bus is disabled. Each school bus shall be equipped with:
 - (1) At least three (3) flares or three (3) red electric lanterns each of which shall be capable of being seen and distinguished at a distance of five hundred (500) feet under normal atmospheric conditions at nighttime.
 - (2) At least three (3) red-burning fuses unless red electric lanterns are carried.
 - (3) At least two (2) red flags, not less than twelve (12) inches square, with standards to support same.
- b. NOTE: At least three (3) portable reflector units on standards may be used in place of the above, providing the portable reflectors are

of a type that meet the requirements of ~~Rhode Island General Law~~R.I. Gen. Laws § , Section 31-23-31, which must include two (2) reflectors (one above the other) or three (3) equilateral triangles meeting the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 571.125 (2018), incorporated herein by reference, not including later amendments or editions thereof. FMVSS 125.

18. Warning Lamps

- a. Each school bus shall be equipped with either: A four (4) red signal lamp warning system; or a four (4) red signal lamp warning system with four (4) amber signal lamps which conform to the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 571.108 (2018), ~~Paragraph S4.1.4 of the FMVSS 108.~~

19. Four Lamp Warning System

- a. School buses operating in this State that were manufactured prior to July 1, 1984 shall be equipped with four (4) exterior mounted red warning lamps located as follows:
 - (1) Two (2) located in the front at least two (2) feet left and right of center above the windshield and showing to the front.
 - (2) Two (2) located in the rear at least two (2) feet left and right of center above the rear window and showing to the rear.
 - (3) Lenses in the school bus warning lamps showing to the front and the rear shall be red in color.

20. Eight Lamp Warning System

- a. School buses operating in this State that were manufactured on/or after July 1, 1984 shall be equipped with four (4) exterior mounted red warning lamps and four (4) exterior mounted amber warning lamps located as follows:
 - (1) Four (4) located in the rear at least two (2) feet left and right of center above the rear window and showing to the rear.
 - (2) Four (4) located in the front at least two (2) feet left and right of center above the windshield and showing to the front.

- (3) Two (2) of the lenses in the warning lamps showing to the front and the rear shall be red in color and two (2) shall be amber in color.
- b. Both red and amber lamps shall be installed in accordance with Society of Automotive Engineers Standard J 887 (a) (2015), incorporated herein by reference not including later amendments or editions hereof, ~~SAE Standard J 887 (a)~~, except that each amber signal lamp shall be located near each red signal lamp, at the same level, but closer to the vertical centerline of the bus.

21. Switches for Four Lamp Warning System

- a. School buses operating in Rhode Island that were manufactured prior to July 1, 1984, shall be equipped with switches and devices to operate the four lamp warning system as follows:
 - (1) A manual (master) switch to cut off power to the lamps when the bus is not in service.
 - (2) A manual switch which can be used to turn on the red warning lamps while the entrance door is closed.
 - (3) A switch that will automatically operate the red warning lamps each and every time the entrance door is opened.
 - (4) A device in the circuit that causes the warning lamps to flash when lighted.
 - (5) A monitor light installed in view of the operator which indicates when the warning lamps are operating. One or more combinations of such switches are permitted, except that the warning lamps must be on a circuit that is not connected to the brake pedal so that said lamps light up only when the switch controlling the lamps is turned on by the bus operator, or when the lamps are automatically lighted as when the entrance door is opened.

22. Switches for Eight Lamp Warning System

- a. School buses operating in Rhode Island that were manufactured on/or after July 1, 1984, shall be equipped with switches and devices to operate the eight lamp warning system as follows:

- (1) A manual (master) switch to cut off power to the lamps when the bus is not in service.
- (2) A manual switch which can be used to turn on the red warning lamps while the entrance door is closed.
- (3) A manual switch which can be used and controlled by the bus operator to turn on the amber warning lights before bringing the bus to a complete stop, and which will automatically cancel the amber light warning system and activate the flashing red light part of the warning system each and every time the door is opened, without reactivating the amber lights.
- (4) A switch that will automatically operate the red warning lamps each and every time the entrance door is opened when the bus is in service.
- (5) A device in the circuit that shall cause said amber warning light system and red warning light system to flash said light systems at 60 to 120 cycles per minute.
- (6) A monitor light installed in view of the operator which indicates when the amber and/or red flashing warning lamps are operating.

- b. One or more combinations of such switches are permitted, except that the warning lamps must be on a circuit that is not connected to the brake pedal so that said lamps light up only when the switch controlling the lamps is turned on by the bus operator, or when the lamps are automatically lighted as when the entrance door is opened.

23. Width

- a. No school bus shall exceed 102 inches in outside width.

24. Windshield and Windows

- a. Every school bus must be equipped with a windshield. All glass in the windshield, windows, and doors shall be of safety glass approved by the Deputy Director for Motor Vehicles. All glass must meet the standards of the 49 C.F.R. § 571.205 (2018), incorporated herein by reference, not including later amendments or editions thereof, American National Standards Institute, and Department of

~~Transportation Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 205~~ in order to be approved. All such glass that has been approved, will be edge marked with the symbols AAS-1", AAS-10", or AAS-14" for glass used in the windshields, and AAS-1", AAS-10", AAS-14", or AAS-2" for glass used other than in the windshields.

- b. Minor cracks in such glass may be allowed if separations or sharp edges do not exist. The glass is considered defective and must not be used if sharp edges exist or if any cracked area may be moved. Windshield glass that is cracked, broken, chipped, or damaged in the area that is wiped by the regular windshield wiper in front of the operator of the school bus shall be replaced.
- c. Minor discolorations around the edge of the windshield glass that do not interfere with the operators vision, will be allowed.
- d. Any windshield glass that has been tinted, painted, sprayed, or altered so as to change the characteristics of the glass from the standards of its original approval, must be replaced or restored to its original condition. Sun visors shall not interfere with the operators vision.
- e. Any side windows adjacent to and forward of the back rest of the operators seat that have been tinted or covered over so as to reduce the visibility of the operator must be replaced or restored to its original condition.
- f. All side windows shall be designed to prevent children from extending their bodies out of the windows. Windows that are of either the split-sash type with the bottom sash stationary and the upper sash so constructed that it may be lowered from the top, or of the single sash type which may be lowered from the top to provide ventilation shall be so constructed that when lowered may be opened no more than seven (7) inches.

25. Windshield Wipers

- a. All school buses shall be equipped with adequate power double windshield wipers, which together with the windshield wiper blades shall be kept in good working order.

26. Body

- a. All body construction will meet or exceed all applicable ~~FMVSS~~ requirements in effect on the date of manufacture of the body.

27. Tires

- a. Chains, snow tires, or all-purpose tires shall be installed on all school buses operating under emergency or storm weather conditions.

28. Public Address System

- a. Every school bus placed in service after January 1, 1987 shall be equipped with a public address speaker sound system which shall be audible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of not less than fifty (50) feet simultaneously in all directions from the center of the normal entrance door.
- b. The vehicle shall have a minimum of one speaker mounted outside the passenger compartment and a minimum of one speaker mounted inside the bus. The speaker system shall be operable by the driver when seated in the normal driver=s position

29. School District System

- a. Every school bus shall bear on the right and left side of the vehicle the name of the school district for which the bus is transporting children in black letters approximately eight (8) inches in height.

30. Inspection Approval

- a. In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 31-22-11, 31-22-12, 31-38-4, and 31-38-7(b) ~~of the Motor Vehicle Code Act~~, and effective July 1, 1986, all buses used for the transportation of school children shall be inspected for excessive emissions and/or safety items according to a staggered appointment schedule as determined by the Director of Transportation~~Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles~~, or his designee, and from time to time thereafter as may be required, and the vehicle owner shall display upon such vehicle the certificate of inspection and approval issued to such vehicle until the same shall expire.
- b. The Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles~~Director of the Department of Transportation~~, or his designee, shall visually inspect or cause to be inspected the lighting, equipment, safety, and sanitary condition of each vehicle to be used as a school bus before registering any such vehicle as a school bus. Upon approval, said vehicle shall be designated for a tear-down inspection by appointment at the State operated inspection facility

and inspected annually or semi-annually thereafter (regardless of any transfer of ownership) according to the staggered appointment schedule. Provided, however, that school buses less than ~~one year-old~~one-year-old from the first purchase date shall be exempt from this pre-registration requirement for the first ten (10) Division of Motor Vehicle business days from the date of registration.

- c. The Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles~~Director of Transportation~~, or his designee, may extend the time within which a certificate of inspection and approval shall be obtained by issuing a written notice to that effect, which shall be maintained in the bus at all times as evidence of such extension. Said written notice shall in no way relieve the owner of the duty and obligation to keep the bus properly equipped and in a safe condition if it is operated on the public highways.

31. Rejection Notice

- a. The Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles~~Director of Transportation~~, or his designee, may issue and/or affix a notice of rejection to any vehicle that fails to pass the required inspection requirements, or which fails to appear for a scheduled inspection. Said rejection notice shall not be destroyed or removed from the vehicle until said vehicle has passed the inspection requirements, or such removal has been authorized by the Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles~~Director of Transportation~~ or his designee.

32. Inspection Reports

- a. Inspection reports will be issued for each vehicle inspected. Reports of such inspections shall be filed with the Motor Vehicle Safety and Emission Control Division, and said reports shall be available for public inspection during the usual business hours.

33. Suspensions

- a. The Administrator of the Division of Motor Vehicles~~Director of the Department of Transportation~~, or his designee, shall suspend the registration of any school bus which:
 - (1) fails to appear for its appointed scheduled inspection at the State Inspection Facility;
 - (2) fails to pass inspection;

- (3) fails to comply with inspection requirements within five (5) days of the inspection date will be subjected to further suspension for failure to comply with inspection requirements;
- (4) is found to be in such unsafe condition as to brakes, steering, or other equipment as to be hazardous to permit it to be driven from the place of inspection;
- (5) is found to be transporting passengers after its registration has been suspended for failure to acquire a certificate of inspection and approval.

34. Approval Stickers and Notifications

- a. School bus approval stickers will be issued to every school bus upon final inspection and approval. School bus owners, school superintendents, and school committees will be advised of all school bus rejections, suspension, and approvals. The approval sticker ~~will~~ shall be placed on the windshield of the school bus in a location that will not ~~accordance with Inspection Regulation 1.11- being mindful not to~~ obstruct the operators direct or indirect vision through the mirrors.

35. All equipment and devices used in school busses shall be maintained in good operating condition.

~~10.3 Regulations for the Operator of a School Bus~~

~~A. An operator of a school bus must obtain from the Division of Motor Vehicles a School Bus Operator Certificate@ prior to operating any school bus.~~

~~B. To qualify for said certificate, the operator:~~

- ~~1. Must be at least twenty one (21) years of age and not over sixty five (65), provided, however, that an operator between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty one (21) who was certified as a school bus driver prior to June 27, 1986, shall be exempt from the age provision contained herein. Individuals over the age of sixty five (65) may be permitted to operate a bus if health and operating skills permit. An operator possessing a chauffeur=s license at the age of sixty five (65) may obtain a School Bus Operator Certificate, depending on driving experience and ability, with the approval of the Deputy Director for Motor Vehicles.~~

- ~~2. Must have held a motor vehicle operator=s license for at least one year~~

- ~~3. Must be subject to an annual physical and/or mental examination by a qualified physician as the Deputy Director for Motor Vehicles may prescribe. Physical examinations for all school bus operators over sixty-five (65) years of age are required every six (6) months.~~
- ~~4. Must successfully complete a School Bus Driver Training Course, consisting of classroom instruction and behind the wheel training as prescribed by the Director for Transportation.~~
- ~~5. Must have a good driving record and have no record of criminal offenses involving moral turpitude.~~

~~C. A school bus operator shall not:~~

- ~~1. Smoke or have in his possession a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or controlled substance; or~~
- ~~2. consume any beverages while operating the vehicle; or~~
- ~~3. wear any sandals or open ended shoes while operating the vehicle.~~

~~D. A school bus operator shall not carry on any unnecessary conversation while the vehicle is in motion.~~

~~E. A school bus operator shall not operate the vehicle with any door open.~~

~~F. A school bus operator shall not leave the bus unattended while passengers are aboard the bus.~~

~~G. A school bus operator shall not fuel bus while passengers are inside of bus.~~

~~H. The operator shall always perform a pre-trip walk around check of the bus to determine that all equipment is in proper repair and good, safe condition. If a defect is discovered, a written report shall be made with regard to any deficiency, malfunction, or questionable performance of any of said items to the vehicle owner and the transportation supervisor of the school district or his designee.~~

~~I. It shall be the responsibility of each school bus owner to conform to all the requirements of Title 31 of the Rhode Island General Laws and to verify that each school bus driver operating under its control is properly licensed by obtaining a certificate to that effect from the Division of Motor Vehicles. The vehicle owner shall verify to the local superintendent of schools prior to the commencement of each school year that all drivers are so licensed.~~

~~J. Effective January 1, 1987, the operator shall announce over the public address system the intention to proceed.~~

~~K. The operator shall display the license and school bus operator certificate in the display case provided by the bus owner, as required by Rhode Island General Laws Section 31-10-27.~~

~~L. The operator must be able to communicate with his passenger at all times.~~

~~10.4 School Bus Operator Training Requirements~~

~~A. Training Prior to Licensing~~

- ~~1. All training and retraining shall be performed on a centralized statewide basis by an agency approved by the Director of the Department of Transportation. No school bus certificate shall be issued for the operation of a school bus until the applicant for such certificate has passed a written examination and a driving test in a school bus and has successfully completed a minimum of ten (10) hours in a safety training course of the operation of school buses administered by an agency approved by the Director of Transportation.~~

~~B. Behind the Wheel Instructions~~

- ~~1. Behind the wheel instruction shall be limited to actual driving of a school bus and shall not include the use of driving simulators or other non-operational instruction. A minimum of three (3) hours of behind the wheel experience shall be required in a school bus of the same type as the applicant will be operating.~~

~~C. Training Prior to License Renewal~~

- ~~1. No school bus certificate shall be renewed until the applicant for such renewal has successfully completed a safety training course in school bus operation within the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the renewal of the school bus certificate. Each safety training course required as a prerequisite for renewal of a school bus operator's certificate shall provide a minimum of three (3) hours of instruction conducted by an agency approved by the Director of Transportation.~~

~~D. Instructor Certification~~

- ~~1. No person shall be considered qualified to give the instruction required herein unless he has been approved by the Director of Transportation or his designee.~~

~~E. Operation~~

1. ~~A school bus shall not be driven at any time at a rate of speed exceeding forty five (45) miles per hour on limited access highways, or thirty five (35) miles per hour on all other highways, and is subject to all laws, ordinances, or other regulations of speed limits set forth herein.~~
2. ~~A school bus shall be brought to a stop not less than fifteen (15) nor more than fifty (50) feet before reaching the nearest track of a railroad or interurban electric railway grade crossing. Upon coming to a complete stop, the entrance door shall be opened and the driver shall listen for the sound of an approaching train prior to proceeding. Gears must not be shifted while passing over any such crossing.~~
3. ~~The operator, when intending to bring a school bus to a stop in order to receive or discharge passengers, shall signal such intentions by: (a) activating the amber school bus warning lamps at least two hundred fifty (250) feet before the scheduled school bus stop; or (b) activating the red warning lamps, at least one hundred (100) feet before the scheduled bus stop if the bus is not equipped with amber warning lamps. When the operator has brought the school bus to a full and complete stop, the operator shall turn on the red warning lamps and shall not open the entrance door to receive or discharge passengers until it is clear that all vehicles approaching or overtaking the school bus have fully stopped in recognition of the red flashing signal lamps.~~
4. ~~After all passengers to be taken on are safely aboard the bus, or all discharged passengers are safely off the traveled portion of the roadway, the operator shall switch off the school bus warning signals. If the operator intends to remain stationary in any position on the highway for an extended period of time, and not take on or discharge passengers during that period of time, he or she shall make certain that no signals are activated, so that the operators of vehicles approaching and overtaking the bus may know that they may safely and legally pass the bus.~~
5. ~~Under no circumstances are buses allowed to pick up or discharge passengers on limited access highways.~~
6. ~~The operator shall admit or discharge passengers as close as practicable to the right hand curb or edge of the roadway.~~
7. ~~No standees shall be permitted while the bus is in operation.~~
8. ~~No additional passengers shall be permitted to board the bus after the maximum seating capacity has been reached, and no overloading of the bus by any other means is permitted.~~

~~10.5 Regulations for School Bus Passengers~~

- ~~A. The bus operator is in full charge of the bus and all passengers must promptly obey the bus operator=s directions and instructions.~~
- ~~B. Pupils shall ride their regularly assigned bus at all times, unless permission has been granted by the school authorities.~~
- ~~C. Except by written permission of school authorities, no pupil shall be permitted to leave the bus except at his or her regular stop.~~
- ~~D. Each pupil may be assigned a seat in which he will be seated at all times while on the school bus, unless permission to change the assigned seat is given by the school principal and/or bus operator.~~
- ~~E. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct must be observed on the school bus.~~
- ~~F. Pupils shall assist in keeping the bus clean by keeping their wastepaper off the bus floor. Pupils shall also refrain from throwing refuse out of the windows. To help keep the bus clean, eating and drinking is not allowed.~~
- ~~G. No pupil will smoke or light matches on a school bus or consume or possess any alcohol or controlled substance.~~
- ~~H. No pupil shall extend his or her head, hands, arms, or legs out of the windows, at any time regardless of whether the school bus is in motion or standing still.~~
- ~~I. No pupil shall open a window on the school bus without first getting permission from the school bus operator.~~
- ~~J. Pupils must not have in their possession anything that may cause injury to another passenger, such as sticks, breakable containers, any type of firearms, straps, or pins extending from their clothing. No animal is permitted on a school bus, except for muzzled Aseeing eye@ dogs.~~
- ~~K. Each pupil must see that books and personal belongings are kept out of the aisle. Special permission must be granted by school authorities and the bus operator to transport any large items.~~
- ~~L. No pupil shall talk to the operator more than is necessary while the bus is in operation.~~
- ~~M. No pupil shall sit in the operator=s seat, nor shall any pupil be transported while located to the immediate left or right of the driver.~~

- ~~N. Pupils are to remain seated while the bus is in motion, and they are not to get off or on the bus until it has come to a full stop.~~
- ~~O. Pupils shall exit the bus in an orderly manner, and must obey all orders of the school bus operator. They must not cross the highway in front of the bus until given consent to do so by the school bus operator. When boarding or exiting the bus, pupils should remain in full view of the operator at all times.~~
- ~~P. Pupils must remain outside of the danger zone and must cross the highway at least ten (10) feet in front of the school bus and never behind it.~~
- ~~Q. Pupils must not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus, and should arrive at the bus stop before the bus is due to arrive.~~
- ~~R. Self discipline should be exercised by pupils at the bus loading area. Pupils should refrain from pushing and shoving other pupils while boarding or exiting the bus.~~
- ~~S. Pupils who have to walk some distance along the highway to or from the bus loading zone, where practicable, must walk on the left hand side facing the oncoming traffic.~~
- ~~T. Student misconduct on a bus, after an oral or written warning to the student and parent, by the school committee or its designee will be sufficient reason to discontinue providing bus transportation to the student involved.~~
- ~~U. In the event of an actual emergency, emergency exit procedures, as established by the emergency exit drills, will be followed.~~
- ~~V. Parents of students damaging school buses will be responsible for proper reimbursement to the school district or bus owner.~~
- ~~W. Pupils shall not throw any object in, at or out of the school bus.~~

10.3 Regulations for School Committees

A. Disciplinary Rules

1. All school committees shall adopt written rules designating the disciplinary action to be taken against students engaged in misconduct on school buses. No disciplinary action related to bus riding privileges or suspension thereof shall be taken unless in compliance with the school committee=s written policies on the matter.

B. School Bus Routes

1. Each school committee shall establish and maintain a record of all school bus routes within their jurisdiction within thirty (30) days of the start of the school year, and the public shall have a right to inspect same during regular business hours. The school bus routes shall be sent to the local police chief for review of possible safety hazards within ninety (90) days of the start of the school year.

C. School Bus Monitors

1. Each school committee shall provide a bus monitor sixteen (16) years of age or older on all school-bound and home-bound bus routes for grades kindergarten through grade five (5), unless a variance has been obtained from the Department of Education.

10.4 Responsibilities of the Coordinator of School Bus Transportation

- A. The Coordinator of School Bus Transportation shall assure that every applicant approved for a School Bus Operator Certificate is of good character, good health, and has a good driving record, by performing the following actions:

1. Obtaining a written State and Local criminal record
2. Review of a physical examination report completed by a physician
3. Initial Review of a Certified Driver record to determine the operator driving history and a periodic check of the operator=s driving record will be conducted to determine whether the operator is still entitled to a school bus certificate.
4. Establishment of a file for each school bus driver containing the following information and documents:
 - a. Application for a school bus certificate
 - b. Physical examination report
 - c. State and Local Bureau of Criminal Investigation reports
 - d. Driver records
 - e. Reports of involvement in any school bus accident
 - f. Road test results
 - g. Driver Training and retraining reports and certificates

- h. Correspondence
 - i. Certificate Number and Date issued
 - j. Other appropriate records
- 5. Periodic review of all records pertaining to certified school bus operators with regard to established criteria for denying a school bus certificate.
 - 6. Establish in conjunction with the agency designated by the Director of Transportation a ten (10) hour education program, a three (3) hour recertification program, and a road test if required.
 - 7. Promote school bus safety throughout the State of Rhode Island.
 - 8. Assist in development of the inspection process for school buses.

10.5 Regulations of the Board of Regents Governing Transportation of ~~Handicapped~~ Children With Disabilities

A. Transportation

- 1. Responsibility
 - a. All ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities who need special transportation as a related service and as determined by the evaluation process and described in the IEP shall be provided such service. It shall include free transportation to and from home (door to door, if necessary) to the educational program in which he/she is enrolled. It shall also include free transportation to and from clinical, diagnostic and therapeutic facilities when the clinical, diagnostic and therapeutic services are necessary either to complete the child's evaluation or to provide the services required by his/her IEP.
- 2. Transportation Needs of ~~Handicapped~~ Children With Disabilities
 - a. ~~Handicapped~~ Children with Disabilities needing transportation as a related service are those children ~~whose mental, emotional or physical handicaps are such that they need this related service who~~ need transportation to assist them to benefit from special education, that is they need special transportation to get them to the special education program in order to benefit from it. The determination as to whether their ~~handicapping condition~~ disability requires this service (special transportation) is made through the evaluative process, the requirement that the service be provided is

contained in the child's individualized education program. When such transportation is provided, it must meet the requirements of the Registry of Motor Vehicles for the transportation of school children and the following regulations of the Board of Regents for the Transportation of ~~Handicapped~~ Children With Disabilities.

- (1) Seat belts or harnesses shall be used to secure the children while the vehicle is in motion.
- (2) A minimum of one aide assigned to each bus. Such aide, in addition to providing general care and supervision of all ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities on such bus shall also provide assistance (from street level entrance of dwelling) to such children lacking the mobility to leave the home and board transportation vehicles, and shall further assist such children in debarking the vehicle and entering the school. When children are transported to clinical, diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, determination of whether a bus aide is necessary shall be based on a judgment of the LEA Multi disciplinary Team.
- (3) Hydraulic lifts or other appropriate special devices shall be provided on special buses to accommodate children with unique problems, whose lack of mobility to enter or exit vehicles would pose potential harm to themselves or those trying to help them.
- (4) School districts shall provide in-service training for administrative personnel, drivers and aides affiliated with special transportation services in order that they may effectively deal with ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities and understand the problems faced by the parents of such children.
- (5) In order to insure that safety and well being of all ~~handicapped children with disabilities~~ on any given vehicle, the transportation of children with known disruptive behavior problems shall be done in a selective manner and with sufficient assistance by aides (more than one aide, if necessary) who are appropriately trained and physically able to cope with such behavior.
- (6) Scheduling of transportation vehicles shall be planned whenever possible in such a manner as to provide the least

amount of travel time necessary to transport ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities from home to school and back home again.

- b. There is a second category of ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities who require transportation to school. It is not because of their ~~handicap-disability~~ that these children must be transported, but rather, because of the distance between their home and school. For these children, transportation must meet the requirements of the Registry of Motor Vehicles for the transportation of school children. The Regulations of the Board of Regents for Transportation do not apply, because transportation is not provided as a ~~A~~related service~~@~~ but merely as a service provided to all children in the district who live a certain distance ~~form~~from the school.
- c. The third category of ~~handicapped~~ children with disabilities includes those who do not need transportation, since their ~~handicapping-condition~~disability does not require it and since the distance from their home to school is not sufficient to require it.