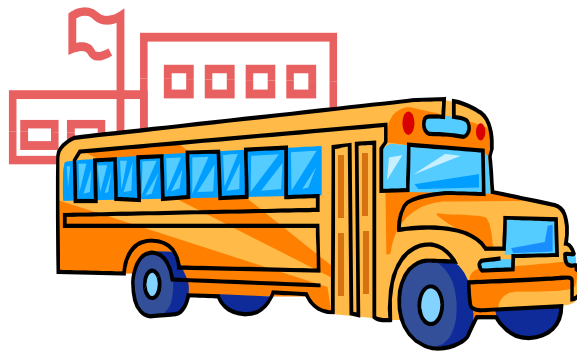


## **Department of Transportation**

### **Contractor's Manual**



*Mrs. Lisa Vainieri-Marshall*  
*Director of Student Assignment Services*

*Ms. Teresa Afonso*  
*Transportation Supervisor*

## **Contracts**

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-9.9 all transportation contracts shall be submitted to the County Superintendent of Schools on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> or within 30 days of award of contract for transportation after September 1<sup>st</sup>.

To ensure that all contracts are submitted in the time frame regulated by law, the Paterson School District shall require all contractors to submit executed contracts to the district within ten (10) working days of receipt.

## **Contract Breach, Failure to provide, Cancellation of contract**

In the event the contractor fails to provide service in accordance with the contract, the specifications and stated requirements, the contractor shall be considered in breach of contract. Cancellation of the contract and/or enforcement of Contractor's Performance Bond may result in accordance with New Jersey State Law.

## **School Closings**

The school calendar is part of the specifications and of the contract. Contractors are advised to listen to school closing announcements broadcast over local networks. If the Paterson School District is closed due to inclement weather, no transportation of any Paterson pupil to any destination will be provided.

If inclement weather occurs during extended vacation recesses for the Paterson School District i.e. December Holiday Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, it will be the determination of the Superintendent of Schools of Paterson in consultation with the Board President whether Paterson resident students attending out of district schools which are not on vacation are allowed to be transported to school. **The safety of the student is the district's paramount concern.**

## **Training Programs: Drivers and Aides**

New Jersey Administrative Code N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.3 requires that all employers of school bus drivers and school bus aides ensure that they are properly trained in all of the functions necessary for them to successfully perform their duties. Those duties include safe driving practices, as well as student care and discipline. This applies regardless of whether the school bus drivers and aides are employed by a local board of education, a coordinating transportation services agency (CTSA), or a school transportation contractor. Local boards of education must ensure that all CTSA's, school transportation contractors, or other school districts acting as a host comply with these training requirements. Training should include all subjects itemized in the administrative code governing student transportation,

as well as any specialized information a driver or aide might need based upon the students they transport on their school bus routes and the characteristics and conditions of the roadways on which they travel. Employers must make sure that their drivers and aides receive this instruction prior to beginning work on a new school bus route. In addition, they should regularly provide their drivers and aides with training updates, reminders when a refresher is needed, and new information when a new student is added to an existing bus route. The contractor shall administer a driver safety-training program for all drivers, substitutes and aides. The contractor shall also provide training to all drivers and aides concerning;

- Rules, regulations and procedures developed by Federal State and Local authorities
- Sensitivity awareness of working with special needs students.
- Contractor rules, procedures, and practices.

The Paterson Public School District requests that a copy of each contractor's rules, procedures, and training program be submitted with the initial contract.

### **Training Programs: Drivers and Aides for Special Needs Students**

Training for Drivers and Aides who transport special needs students, or drivers who may substitute on a route transporting special needs students, should be trained in the specific needs of the students on board that route. This includes the handling of special equipment, such as wheelchairs and child safety seats, operation of wheelchair lifts and wheelchair tie-downs, and any special requirements in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The driver and aide should be made aware of any special environmental considerations necessary for the students (i.e., temperature or noise level on the school bus). If a student's medical or psychological condition could change or be impacted by anything during the bus ride, the school bus driver and aide should be made aware of this, and be trained in both recognizing this change and what needs to be done, if anything, in reaction to this change. Both school bus drivers and school bus aides are considered to be school officials who have legitimate educational interest to the parts of a student's record related to transportation without parental consent, including the student's IEP, under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. section 1232g.

In accordance with P.L. 2016, c.123, the New Jersey Department of Education has developed a training program for school bus drivers and school bus aides on appropriate procedures for interacting with students with special needs. Below you will find the link to access the training.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/finance/transportation/training/dis/>

## **Vehicles**

Transportation equipment shall be properly registered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, meet all current specifications in accordance with Federal and State law, the rules of the State Board of Education, and any additional specifications of the Paterson Public School District. All vehicles shall be equipped with a two-way communications system (CB or standard two-way band) and illuminated stop side arm. All equipment must be maintained in proper operating condition.

All vehicles shall be systematically inspected twice within the year to ensure that such vehicles and equipment are in safe and proper operating conditions as stated in 6A: 27-7.1. School buses, Type I and Type II, as defined by N.J.S.A. 39:3B-5.1 which are registered and inspected in this State, manufactured on or after April 1, 1977, other than those of the transit type whose gross vehicle weight (GVW) exceeds 25,000 pounds, shall not be utilized for student transportation purposes beyond the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> year from the year of manufacture, as noted on the vehicle registration, or at the end of the school year in which that year falls, whichever is later. Such buses, when used beyond the 10<sup>th</sup> year, shall have an annual in-depth inspection by the Department of Transportation prior to the ensuing school year.

All vehicles must be equipped to install video cameras at the request of the district, to ensure the safety of passengers and for behavioral management. The videotapes shall only be used for district purposes and shall not be released to any other entity or person unless instructed to do so in writing. At the request of the Transportation Supervisor, contractors must purchase video cameras at no cost to the District.

The Paterson Public School District or designee reserves the right, during the term of the contract, to inspect for approval any vehicle in use on routes covered by the contract and further reserves the right to ride any vehicle or route covered by the contract.

The Paterson Public School District will not reimburse the contractor for the cost of repairs for any damage to vehicles caused by students or other occurrences.

The contractor shall supply special education and pre-school students with the appropriate child restraint systems.

The contractor shall provide and maintain an adequate number of school buses, including spares, to safely transport any and all students assigned to the routes contained in this bid and to assure uninterrupted service in the event of mechanical breakdown.

In case of a vehicle breakdown, the school bus driver shall immediately ensure the bus is removed from a dangerous situation and that all students on the vehicle are safe.

The driver should immediately;

- Contact the company dispatcher to send a backup vehicle and to notify parents
- Contact the police if the need warrants police assistance.
- Contact the receiving school principal of vehicle disability.
- Contact the Transportation Department, 973-321-0830.
- Maintain good order of students on or off the vehicle depending on the situation.
- Follow all rules and regulations as listed in the New Jersey School Bus Driver's Manual.

### **Arrivals and Departures**

School arrival/dismissal hours as shown on the route description will be adhered to throughout the school year, except for any planned early dismissals or emergency closings, or as instructed by the transportation department. All vehicles shall arrive and/or depart the assigned school/destination as indicated on the route descriptions.

Early/Late arrivals and departures will not be tolerated and shall be considered as a failure to provide service in accordance with specifications and contract. Cancellation of the contract and/or enforcement of Contractor's Performance Bond may be a result of these violations.

### **Accidents and Reporting**

The safety of pupils on the vehicles is paramount. Bus drivers and aides must take appropriate actions to ensure their safety. School bus accidents shall be reported in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:27-12.2.

Contractors will ensure that every school bus driver will immediately inform the principal of the receiving school following **all** accidents. In addition to the Principal, the Transportation Supervisor must be informed of accidents by calling the Transportation Department at 973-321-0830.

The school bus driver must complete in quadruplicate the Preliminary School Bus Accident Report and deliver it to the principal of the receiving school for review and signature by the **conclusion of the next working day**. The driver is to obtain all necessary signatures and submit the report to Paterson Public School,

Transportation Supervisor. The Preliminary School Bus Accident Report can be found on the website listed below a

[www.nj.gov/education/finance/transportation/procedures/accident.xls](http://www.nj.gov/education/finance/transportation/procedures/accident.xls)

Failure to immediately inform the Principal of the receiving school and the Transportation Department following an accident, or failure to complete the preliminary report by the conclusion of the next working day will result in a penalty of \$250.00 per accident and may constitute a breach of the contract.

### **Emergencies**

In an emergency where the contractor is unable to meet the contracted scheduled time, the contractor is responsible to contact the Transportation and the School(s) that will be affected.

In the event of an emergency at a school where the students must be dismissed ahead of the scheduled contracted time, the contractor will still provide the transportation of students as needed.

### **Emergency Exit/Evacuation Drills**

N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.2 Emergency Exit Drills from School Vehicles:

Schools shall organize and conduct emergency exit drills at least twice (2 times) within the school year for all students who ride school buses.

The school bus driver and transportation aide (if one is assigned) shall participate.

Drills shall be conducted on school property and be supervised by the principal or staff person assigned. (See emergency exit drill package)

The Department of Transportation will keep a log of all emergency exit drills.

### **Dispatchers**

The Paterson School District should, at all times during normal working hours, be able to reach by telephone a dispatcher or a representative of the company. Answering machines during normal working hours will not be an acceptable form of communication.

## **Communication System**

All transportation vehicles shall be equipped, at all times, with a two-way communications system (CB/standard two-way band or cellular phone) in proper operation condition. The communication system shall only be used for business reasons during the transportation of Paterson students.

**Prohibition: While students are on the vehicle, bus drivers are prohibited from driving the vehicle and talking with a handheld two-way radio or cellular phone simultaneously. Drivers are to pull the vehicle to the side of the road and have the vehicle come to a complete stop before using the radio or phone.**

## **Drivers**

Drivers shall wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt whenever the vehicle is in motion. The driver will ensure "the direction of vehicle from the last stop shall be along the safest most direct route to the destination." Off route stops and pickups are strictly prohibited. Drivers and/or pupil transportation aides must not accept notes or transportation changes from the parents (change of address or different pick-up/drop-off). Parents who receive door to door transportation must make changes directly with the Special Education Department. **Drivers are not to stop for coffee, shopping or other activities while children are on the vehicle.**

Drivers are to ensure that all students are brought home in a timely fashion. If a situation arises where a driver becomes lost and there is a delay in getting students home, the driver shall immediately do the following:

- Contact company dispatcher and advise of situation – Dispatcher should contact:
  - Department of Transportation
  - Principal of School
  - Parents of Pupil
  - Contact the Police Department if situation warrants it.

Drivers must familiarize themselves with their routes and stops by doing a test/dry run of the route and noting stops before the first day of service. This requirement is to be completed at no cost to the Paterson Public Schools. All dry runs are to be submitted to the Transportation Department.

All bus drivers must always carry his or her CDL with P & S endorsements, insurance and registration cards. Failure to do so will result in a penalty.

The Paterson Public Schools requires that transportation contractors submit to the district the names of each bus driver and aide for each route in contract with the District. A Bus Driver/Aide form has been developed for such purposes. This information is required prior to the first day of service.

The Paterson Public Schools requires that either the bus driver and/or the pupil transportation aide on each route speak the English language fluently. It is imperative that directions given by the bus driver and/or pupil transportation aide be clearly understood by the students on the route. (N.J.A.C. 6A:27-12.1)

Smoking, eating or drinking by the driver or aide is prohibited on the school bus vehicle, at all times, whether students are on or off the vehicle.

### **Driver's Character: Qualifications**

The driver shall be a reliable person of good character who shall possess the qualifications and comply with the rules set forth for drivers in all federal, state and local regulations including, but not limited to, the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act and N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 through 20. The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act requires that all operators of commercial motor vehicles subject to the Commercial Driver's License requirements to be tested for controlled substances and alcohol.

If, in the judgment of the Paterson School District, any driver of a vehicle operating under a contract with the District be deemed to be an unsuitable person to drive a school bus because of lack of driving skill, reckless driving including speeding, inability to control students, failure to comply with the rules and regulations, incapacity, unbecoming conduct, or other good cause, the contractor may be required to remove the driver from the route or all district routes. If the contractor fails to comply with this provision, the contractor may be required to show cause why this failure to comply is not deemed to constitute a breach of contract and the district may set aside and annul the contract. All drivers are to be totally familiar with the contents of the New Jersey School Bus Driver's Manual and to observe, follow, and obey the contents within the manual.

### **Annual Certification of School Bus Drivers**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 and 18, all transportation companies shall furnish to the County Superintendent, the name, social security and certificate of



a valid school bus driver's license and criminal background check for each driver in employment with the company.

The Annual Certification form and request for abstract of driver record cards are to be given to the county office.

Office of County Superintendent  
501 River Street  
Paterson, NJ 07524

### **Bus Aides**

The Major duties of a transportation aide as required by the Paterson Public Schools are:

- To attend to special needs of identified students.
- To maintain order on the transportation vehicle and actively supervise students. **The aide must sit in the rear of the bus so they can better observe the students behavior.**
- The aide must assist students getting on and off the transportation vehicle. The aide must get off the vehicle and stand by the door to offer assistance when needed, especially for the younger children.
- To assist students in safely riding on the transportation vehicle.
- To participate in all training activities for the protection and safety of all students on the transportation vehicle, e.g. evacuation drills.
- To act in a courteous and professional manner to all students on the transportation vehicle and to all school personnel and parents involved with student transportation.
- To ensure that all students have their seat belts properly fastened while the transportation vehicle is in motion.

All transportation aides are subject to criminal background checks as prescribed by law. Each aide is to be properly identified on the School Bus Driver/Aide form that will be given to the successful contractor.

The Paterson Public Schools requires that either the bus driver and/or the pupil transportation aide on each route speak the English language fluently. It is imperative that directions given by the bus driver and/or transportation aide be clearly understood by the students on the route. (N.J.A.C. 6A:27-12.1)

Smoking, eating or drinking by the driver or aide is prohibited on the school bus vehicle, at all times, whether students are on or off the vehicle.

## **Management of Students**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2 "The driver shall be in full charge of the school bus at all times and shall be responsible for order; he shall never exclude a pupil from the bus, but, if unable to manage any pupil, the driver shall report the unmanageable pupil to the principal of the school which he attends."

Any student that is misbehaving must be reported to the transportation department and principal by completing a bus incident report.

Students may not board a vehicle unless the bus driver is already on the vehicle. No pupil(s) is to be left unattended on the vehicle at any time.

All bus drivers and aides are to inspect every seat of the transportation vehicle before a scheduled trip and after.

The abandonment of students on the vehicle is considered by the Paterson Public School District a serious infraction and would demand that both driver and the aide be terminated immediately.

All bus drivers are to report unmanageable students through the appropriate written incident report, provided by the Department of Transportation.

**A copy of each incident report must be submitted to the Department of Transportation, via email to [transportationdept@paterson.k12.nj.us](mailto:transportationdept@paterson.k12.nj.us) or fax to (973) 321-0484 immediately.**

**Students may only be released at their home address or at the school destination.**

## **Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco use**

Students are prohibited from possessing, consuming or distributing drug, alcohol or tobacco use of any form while at school, in co-curriculum programs, on school grounds, attending a school related function, on or off campus, and while being transported to and from school. Students are further prohibited from smoking cigarettes or using other tobacco products in any form, in school buildings or on school grounds.

If the driver or the transportation aide observes a student violating the above referenced regulations, by possessing, consuming, or distributing drugs or alcohol, or if a student appears to be under the influence of a chemical, that behavior must be reported to the school principal or administrator immediately.

## **School Bus Equipment**

The following equipment must be present on every school bus vehicle as outlined in N.J.A.C. Title 13:

- Working two-way communication system (CB/standard two way band)
- Seat belt cutter
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Three (3) reflective triangle warning devices
- Other emergency equipment as outlined in the code.

All equipment on and in the bus shall meet the current specifications for transportation as set forth by the District of Paterson, and all federal regulations.

## **Passengers**

According to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1.6, bus contractors shall ensure that only enrolled eligible students, assigned by the Paterson Public School District, and authorized school bus aides shall be transported on the school bus. No unauthorized personnel especially children of bus drivers, aides, and parents of students may ride on school bus vehicles without express written consent of the Paterson School District.

Parents, guardians, relatives, friends of students, and the general public are prohibited from entering a school bus unless expressly invited by the Paterson School District in cooperation with the bus contractor.

All passengers on a school bus vehicle must be seated while being transported. There shall be no standees on the transportation vehicle.

## **Loading and Unloading of Students**

All students are to be picked up and dropped off at authorized stops as designated in the route description or assigned by the Department of Transportation. Drivers may not release students at any other location unless the contractor has received written or verbal direction from the Department of Transportation.

All door to door students (special education) are to be loaded and unloaded off the bus on the same side of the street where they reside. This does not apply to pickup and drop-offs on one-way streets. The aide assigned to the vehicle must assist students in getting to the side of the street where they reside, safely.

A parent/guardian or authorized responsible adult must be present before a child is allowed to leave the vehicle, unless the pupil is authorized to be a latch-key pupil. If an authorized adult is not present to receive the child, the driver shall make every effort to contact the parent such as:

- Contacting the Department of Transportation
- Waiting a minimum of three (3) minutes
- Sending aide to ring doorbell
- Keep child on the bus until the completion of the run and make one more attempt to deliver the child

### **Penalties/Breach of Contract**

In the event the contractor fails to provide service in accordance with the Paterson Public School District, Transportation Specifications and stated requirements, the contractor shall receive the following penalties or be considered in breach of contract. Cancellation of the contract and/or enforcement of contractor's performance bond may result.

#### **Accident: Failure to Report**

Any contractor who fails to immediately report an accident as previously outlined, or disregards the district's accident reporting policy shall face a penalty deduction of \$250.00 per accident.

#### **Arrivals, Departure**

It is understood that on occasion, lateness will occur due to inclement weather, vehicle problems or traffic situations however, lateness without just cause, will not be tolerated. In the event that this occurs, the contractor will face a penalty of one hundred dollars \$100.00 for the first violation and any lateness after that will be increased.

#### **Routes: Commingling of Students**

Any contractor found to be engaging in the practice of commingling students will immediately face the first violation of \$1,000.00. If the violation is repeated, the contractor shall face a second penalty of \$2,000.00 and the third will be deemed in breach of contract as per N.J.A.C. 6:21-16.3.

#### **Transportation Aides**

Any contractor failing to provide for an aide when a route specifically calls for one will receive a penalty of \$200.00 per AM/PM run.

**Service: Failure to Provide**

A contractor must transport assigned students every scheduled school day during the length of their contract. A contractor who misses a pick up will immediately receive a penalty of \$200.00 for the first violation per route.

The contractor shall provide and maintain an adequate number of school buses, including spares, to safely transport any and all students assigned to the routes contained in this bid and to assure uninterrupted service in the event of mechanical breakdown. Immediate notification of an interruption of services must be made to the Paterson Public School District's Department of Transportation. Failure to do so will result in a per diem penalty of \$100.00, per day.

**3 day No-Show**

If a pupil is not present at their assigned pickup stop (door to door stop – home address) three (3) consecutive days, the contractor shall notify the Department of Transportation immediately. Failure to do so, contractor will be penalized \$300.00 for the first violation and this will be increased for every violation thereafter.

## Transportation Department Contacts

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