

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL BUS POLICIES & PROCEDURES – May, 2015

School bus policies and procedures are necessary to reduce risk and ensure the safety of all who uses the school bus.

1. SELECTION AND GETTING STARTED

You should possess the following qualification for the job of School Bus Driver

1. Must have a valid and suitable-class bus drivers licensed
2. Should have had a driver's license for a minimum of five (5) years
3. Have a clean driving record
4. Be physically capable of performing job duties.
5. Must pass a pre-employment physical and Medical examination
6. Be of good moral character to work with children as evidence by a police record
7. Like children
8. Be able to work on different shifts
9. Be able to read and write
10. Must be able to work as part of a team

2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BUS DRIVER

- I. The School Bus Driver is expected to get the students to and from school safely and supervise them well. You are also expected to observe the traffic rules, as well as the established rules, guidelines, policies, procedures, and practices of the Ministry of Education. Students and their parents/guardians, as well as school personnel count on you to be polite, courteous, and on time. Remember Respect earns Respect!
 - You shall never use a school bus for personal business unless given permission from the Permanent Secretary.
 - Bus driver shall only transport authorized passengers. Authorized passengers are determined by Permanent Secretary, Chief Education Officer and/or School bus supervisor.
 - Smoking is not permitted on or near school buses.
 - No one may bring or carry firearms, knives, or other potential weapons on the school bus.
 - If you will be absent or late, you must notify, in advance, the school bus supervisor and the principals or the person who hired the bus.
 - Cell phones should not be used while driving. If you must take the call, find a safe place to pull over and stop.
 - You are required to complete and submit annual visual, physical and medical examinations.

II. . Dress Code

- You are to follow the uniform dress code established by the Ministry of Education.
- Your uniform must be clean, properly fitted and worn as designed.
- You must wear your Identification badge while on duty.

III. Inspection of the school bus

Before the trip

Check and inspect the inside and outside of your bus in the morning, in the afternoon and again when you park it up at the police station. This means that you must thoroughly perform an inspection of your bus each time before you start the route and at the end of the day.

If you find a defect(s), you must note each problem and/or malfunction and submit it to the supervisor.

Never drive the bus if you find something wrong with it unless the mechanic or the supervisor advises you to do so.

Procedures for after the trip and at the end of the day

At the end of the last trip the school bus must be parked at the assigned police station or at the agreed location.

The bus driver should then perform the post-trip inspection.

Post Trip Check

- Turn off the ignition, and all electrical systems in the bus.
- Check for students. Walk from the front to the back of the bus and to the front again checking under all seats to ensure there is no one hiding or sleeping in the bus. Leaving a child on the bus could result in child abuse charges.
- Sweep the bus floor and clean the bus as needed.
- Close all windows and emergency doors.
- Lock the main door when exiting the bus.
- Perform a walk around the outside of the bus after parking it to ensure that the bus in the same condition as you got it in the morning.
- Note any problems and report to the supervisor.

After the inspection the keys should be handed to the police on duty.

3. Following Route and Time Schedules

- The bus driver must follow all route and time schedules. The entire route should be run, regardless of starting time, unless the Supervisor directs you otherwise.
- The bus should arrive at the schools each a.m. and p.m. within the time limits established by the Principals and supervisor.
- Notify the Principals and supervisor in advance, if you are running late or unable to run the route.

- Do not make any changes to your route(s) without prior approval from your supervisor.
- Report schedule changes immediately to your supervisor (If Principals change venue).
- You are to permit students to get on or off the school bus **only at** their assigned bus stops, except upon authorization from the school's Principal or the supervisor.
- The bus driver should give reasonable waiting time for passengers to board the bus.

4. Responsibility for the Safety and Wellbeing of Students

- You are always responsible for the safety and wellbeing of the students on your bus.
- Do not leave the driver's seat until the parking brake is applied, the engine is turned off, and the ignition key is removed.
- If students are aboard, never leave the immediate vicinity of the bus.
- ✦▪ No child under school age should drive in the front of the bus.
- Never allow live animals, extra-large musical instruments or boxes, or unauthorized passengers on your bus.

5. Driving Performance

As a bus driver you must know and obey all the traffic laws, signs, and signals as outlined in the Driver's Handbook. This is in order to keep yourself, students and others on the road users safe.

- You are to wear your seat belt.
- You are to keep both hands on the steering wheel at all times while driving the school bus.
- You must never drive any school bus while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, or while taking legal medicines or drugs which could impair your judgment, perceptions, or reaction.
- The bus should never be driven in excess of the posted speed limit: it is recommended that the bus driver drives the bus at a speed 5 m.p.h. below the regulated speed limit.
- Drive the school bus reasonably, cautiously, and safe under existing weather, road, or traffic conditions.
- Cell phones are to be turned off and never utilized while buses are in a gas station
- **Never move or drive the school bus if:**
 - The passenger door or emergency doors are open
 - Any student is standing on the steps
- **Never speed for any reason**
- **Reversing the Bus**
Bus drivers should not attempt to reverse, except in unusual or exceptional circumstances. In cases where reversing is unavoidable, the bus driver shall exercise extreme care and caution.
- The bus driver should always:
 - i. Maintain plenty of visibility making sure that you see far in advance.
 - ii. Maintain plenty of space between you and the vehicle in front.

- iii. Maintain plenty of time to think and react.
 - iv. Always indicate and give plenty of time before pulling out.
- If you follow these principles, you will avoid preventable traffic accidents.

6. VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS

If you are involved in a vehicular accident in a school bus, you must report it immediately to your supervisor. You will also be required to write a report of the accident.

Only give statements to the police responding to the accident. Choose your words carefully.

7. HIRING OF BUS

Any person other than the Ministry of Education, who wishes to use the school bus, should apply in writing to the Supervisor. The supervisor shall notify the Permanent Secretary of the person or organisation who hired the bus, giving the dates, times and places where and when the bus will be used.

The person or organisation who hired the bus is responsible for paying for or putting fuel in the bus. If the bus is hired after working hours, the person or organisation who hired the bus is expected to pay the driver at the same rate as that of the Ministry of Education for time and a half. If the driver is expected to work on Sundays or public holidays he/she should be paid for double time.

8. SALE OF ABANDONED BUSES

The sale of old or abandoned buses or parts of the bus must be authorised by the Permanent Secretary.