



2016-2017 HANDBOOK
TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

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EAST LONGMEADOW CONTACT INFORMATION

for **POLICE & FIRE** emergencies
9-1-1 or *8-7-7 (on cell phone to Mass. State Police)

East Longmeadow Transportation Office
159 Denslow Road
Tel. 525-6616 Fax 525-9418

Gina Sarnelli	Driver/Monitor Manager gsarnelli@lpvec.org	455-9076 (cell)
Kim Gray	Supervisor kgray@lpvec.org	
Jim Hastings	Bus Maintenance Manager jhastings@lpvec.org	246-7331 (cell)
Dave Lemoine	Bus Mechanic dlemoine@lpvec.org	426-4414

AGAWAM GARAGE CONTACT INFORMATION

for **POLICE & FIRE** emergencies
9-1-1 or *8-7-7 (on cell phone to Mass. State Police)

Agawam / West Springfield Transportation Office
384 Shoemaker Lane
Tel. 789-3291 Fax 789-6953

Jill Nehmer Manager/Routing Coordinator 537-0997 (cell)
jnehmer@lpvec.org

Barbara Miles Dispatcher
bmiles@lpvec.org

Dave Benoit Bus Mechanic 246-7996 (cell)
dbenoit@lpvec.org 330-5847 (cell)

Ron Skiba Bus Mechanic
rskiba@lpvec.org

Geraldo Reyes Bus Mechanic
greyes@lpvec.org

WILBRAHAM GARAGE CONTACT INFORMATION

for **POLICE & FIRE** emergencies
9-1-1 or *8-7-7 (on cell phone to Mass. State Police)

Wilbraham Transportation Office
2045 Boston Road
Tel. 596-9560 Fax 543-1316

Charlie Crowe	General Manager ccrowe@lpvec.org	654-6390 or 246-7277 782-9527 (home)
Sherry Valiton	Manager svaliton@lpvec.org	519-2320 (cell) 246-7757 (cell) 596-9632(home)
Karen Gatto	Supervisor kgatto@lpvec.org	668-6518 (cell)
Earl Bagg	Bus Mechanic ebagg@lpvec.org	875-8860 (cell)
Dennis Hennihan	Bus Mechanic dhennihan@lpvec.org	575-8610 (cell)

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

LPVEC Central Office
174 Brush Hill Avenue
Tel. 735-2200 Fax 735-2209

Andy Churchill	Executive Director achurchill@lpvec.org	735-2200
Anna Bishop	Director of Finance abishop@lpvec.org	735-2200
Cheryl Wiblyi	Director of Human Resources cwiblyi@lpvec.org HR@lpvec.org	735-2200
Risa Knight	Payroll Accountant rknight@lpvec.org	735-2200

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES & GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Transporting students to and from school is a necessary part of a sound education program. **The primary purpose of LPVEC Transportation Department is to provide safe and efficient transportation services for students of LPVEC and its member school districts.** Competent transportation employees and standard bus operations are necessary for this to occur.

This handbook serves as a source of policy information, procedures, and responsibilities for the transportation employees of LPVEC. It is meant as a supplement to the information outlined in your job description and to the comprehensive policies set forth in LPVEC General Employment Policies.

This guide does not represent a contract between LPVEC and the employee. LPVEC has the right to change the policies in this guide at any time, for any reason, and you will be notified as such. This handbook does not create any contractual rights. Unless you have a written contract of employment with LPVEC for a specific period of time, your employment is at-will, meaning that either you or LPVEC may terminate the employment at any time, with or without cause or notice.

This manual provides baseline information. Your professionalism, training, people skills, knowledge of policies, driving and emergency expertise will enable you to make appropriate decisions; however, when encountering situations that raise questions, transportation employees should look to their Supervisor or Transportation General Manager for assistance. One focus should be in mind at all times, the **safe and efficient transportation of the students in your care.**

Some specifics in this handbook will apply to Special Needs Drivers and others to Regular Education Drivers. These will be readily apparent. Anything not already apparent will be clearly communicated to you by your Transportation Office.

Violation or failure to comply with the standards and policies outlined in the Transportation Handbook will be grounds for corrective action up to and including termination.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE

Our transportation employees play an important role in the education system. In many instances, you are the first representative of the school system to meet the children in the morning and the last to see them at the end of the school day. You are in a position to have a large influence on a child's attitude toward school.

The roles of Bus Driver and Bus Monitor include a number of responsibilities that the transportation employee must willingly accept. The safety of your passengers is in your hands, and your dedication and commitment are essential to safe school transportation.

You are responsible for how you feel about the students, coworkers, and school staff. A positive and caring attitude is essential to being a safe and successful transportation employee who enjoys their work. It is this positive attitude, along with your kindness, knowledge of pupil safety, and continual awareness that positively influence the success of a child's educational experience.

You are a critical member of the Safety Team. Safety starts with you! Perhaps no other area of educational operation demands more responsibility for student welfare than the transportation of students in buses on public highways, streets and roads. Transportation employees must be mentally alert at all times and must keep their concentration on the tasks they are doing, as well as be prepared for every possible emergency.

Student passengers and their parents place a great deal of confidence in you. You should act deserving of this confidence, including being:

- ◆ A dependable person who can be relied upon to carry out your duties;
- ◆ Able to maintain appropriate and professional boundaries with students and coworkers, at all times;
- ◆ Able to work patiently and effectively with students, parents, school officials, and the public;
- ◆ Able to cope with unexpected and unusual situations;
- ◆ Aware of the welfare and needs of others;
- ◆ Willing to practice patience and understanding;
- ◆ Observant of all traffic laws, regulations, rules and policies;

- ◆ Neat and clean, as a symbol of the entire school system;
- ◆ Refrain from using profanity or inappropriate language;
- ◆ Well rested, so you are free from fatigue, and;
- ◆ Free from the effects of alcohol and drugs.

TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Transportation employees are expected to meet high standards of conduct. You are expected to conduct yourself in such a manner that your actions on and off duty will not be open to criticism. You are a role model for the students and a representative of the school district and your employer.

You are placed in a position of great responsibility. Other people trust you every day with their children. Decisions you make in your personal life with regard to medication, alcohol and illegal drugs can create problems with your driving abilities. Remember, your conduct can greatly affect a child's life.

Transportation employee's behavior and attitude will set the tone for conduct on the bus. Always be aware of your attitude, behavior, and emotions while on the job.

Apply all rules equally, fairly and consistently, and never lose your temper. Your language must always be appropriate. If you become angry, call for assistance immediately.

Never touch a student without knowing LPVEC policies and consequences. Younger students may seek comfort from you but touching should be limited with these students also. Consoling on your part could be subject to misinterpretation by a third party.

We expect that employees will maintain the highest degree of integrity and honesty. Please remember that we are guests in the member districts and communities, as well as representatives of LPVEC. It is expected that LPVEC professional staff be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the member districts.

Contact with students or parents outside of the scope of transportation is discouraged. All communications should be directed through LPVEC Transportation Office. Exchange of personal information, including exchange of cell phone numbers and personal email addresses with students or parents is **prohibited**.

No employee of LPVEC will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with the duties and responsibilities of LPVEC. Nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during work time or on LPVEC property. Employees will not engage in work of any type, where information concerning students, member districts, coworkers or employer, originates from any information available to them through LPVEC sources.

Transportation employees are prohibited from purchasing anything from student fundraisers due to the personal transaction that would occur between employee and student. Cash must never be given to a student.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

You have more contact with the public than any other representative of LPVEC. Your attitude, behavior, and professionalism directly reflect on LPVEC and its member districts. Our reputation in the member districts and communities we serve will be determined by the work we do, the services we provide, and by the employees who represent us. We are proud of our employees. You can be proud of the position of trust you hold within the organization and the community. We must continue to earn that trust in everything we do.

Public relations are directly related to the opinion people have of LPVEC transportation employees and the school district. This opinion is formed by the way you complete your daily responsibilities. This responsibility is an implied part of the transportation employee's role, as it is for all school district staff members.

- **Developing and Maintaining a Professional Attitude**

There is no magic formula for developing a good attitude. It is a matter of understanding the work and its responsibilities and consistently doing the best job possible.

- **Attitude and Image Building**

- **Personal appearance.** Look as good as you can. Clean and well-maintained clothing, hair combed, etc.

- **Give yourself credit for what you do well.** Take a moment to mentally reflect how important your role is.
- **Don't dwell on negative events.** Don't continually relive, or rethink negative events.
- **Develop a positive attitude about yourself and your job.** Recognize yourself as a professional and take pride in the job you do. Present a courteous attitude toward the motoring public. Show consistency and fairness in handling discipline problems.
- **Become involved with your work and LPVEC culture.** Be pleasant and helpful toward fellow employees. Establish good relationships with school principals and school staff. Take part and be active at employee meetings.
- **Perform your daily tasks to the best of your ability.** Do your best in performing the task of driving your school bus or monitoring students.

One discourteous, irresponsible act reflects poorly on all members of the student transportation team, and more significantly, can create a safety problem. In many school districts, the transportation employee is the only contact parents have with school personnel other than teachers. Good or bad impressions of the district and LPVEC can be conveyed by the employee's attitude towards students and their parents. You should strive to be flexible and treat everyone in a courteous and professional manner. Your reputation in the community, your courteous treatment of students and their parents, and your willingness to better prepare yourself for your position, will help parents and students have confidence in you.

Good relations within the organization are also essential. Public relations begin with fellow employees. An organization whose members have mutual civility and respect meet a major requirement of good public relations. Building desirable public relations is a continuous process.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The school districts and their students are the customers of LPVEC. In LPVEC transportation agreement with the member districts, each school department is afforded the right, upon written notification, to determine in its sole discretion that any person is or would be an unsatisfactory driver or monitor of any vehicle used to transport its students. Each school district may have requirements, rules, or policies pertaining to its transportation services that differ from another district. Check with your supervisor on the special requirements for the district in which you drive.

DIVERSITY

Due to the diversity of students being transported, transportation employees must realize that students' language, slang expressions or body language are not necessarily personal attacks on you or other students. Transportation employees need not have a comprehensive knowledge of all cultural dialects and mannerisms, but must respect the differences without creating a hostile or confrontational situation when dealing with students. The transportation employee should react or discipline based only on the students' actions.

Transportation employees may also encounter a population of students with diverse disabilities. Disabilities may affect any aspect of their physical functioning, learning ability, judgmental and decision-making skills, visual and hearing acuity, and emotional or behavioral capacities. Reasonable accommodations for students should be discussed with your supervisor.

CONFIDENTIALITY

By law, all student information including medical and personal information must remain completely confidential. On occasion, you will have to talk to parents and teacher about transporting a student. Apart from these practical conversations, do not discuss anything concerning students, parents, teachers, classes, or vehicles with parents or neighbors. If anyone raises a question, refer them to the proper source, i.e., teacher, principal, or supervisor. **Never hold any discussions in front of the students.**

As a transportation employee, you may be provided with certain information regarding a child's disability that could affect transportation services. **It is your duty to keep the information confidential.** This information must not be shared with anyone including parents, guardians, sitters, or the students themselves. You may not ask a parent or guardian about a child's disability. The Transportation Office may notify transportation employees of confidential medical conditions for students they transport (MGL Ch.766, sec.804.3).

Medical and emergency information may be provided to you from your transportation director or supervisor. Note any unique behavior patterns to watch for and procedures for managing any circumstances that might arise while the student is under your supervision. If you feel behavior patterns warrant additional attention, contact your supervisor.

EXTENSION OF THE CLASSROOM

Take time to think about your bus as an extension of the classroom. What are you teaching your passengers?

- Are you courteous by using please and thank you?
- Are you concerned about the well-being and safety of your passengers by enforcing bus-riding rules in a positive manner?
- Do you obey the speed limit and all other traffic signs?
- Do you yield the right of way and are you considerate of other drivers?
- Do you get to your bus on time so that you are not rushed from the start?
- Do you keep the bus clean and in good condition?

The school bus is the perfect environment for teaching by exhibiting appropriate behavior as a professional driver or monitor. Take this opportunity to make it enriching.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

SMOKING PROHIBITED

Smoking or the use of any tobacco products on LPVEC properties (including transportation facilities) or within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds, on school buses or within twenty (20) feet of any School Department building by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited by law (M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 37H) and by City ordinance and is strictly enforced. For the purpose of this policy, electronic cigarettes or vaping are prohibited. Enabling or permitting students to smoke on the school bus is grounds for corrective action.

NO EATING or DRINKING

Eating or drinking is not permitted by the Driver, Monitor, or students while traveling to and from school unless special circumstances exist and are approved by the Transportation General Manager.

DRESS CODE

As a Driver or Monitor, it is necessary to identify oneself as an adult, not a student. Transportation employees must dress in a manner designed to instill a degree of respect from the students that can contribute in maintaining good student management.

The transportation employee must wear clothing that is modest, functional, and contributes to the safety, public relations, and student control. You must dress neatly and conservatively. Proper attire that would be acceptable in a classroom is appropriate while transporting students. The following articles are prohibited: short shorts or skirts, sleeveless or overly revealing shirts, loose fitting pants off the waist, and articles of clothing that display inappropriate messages. Hair should be clean, well groomed, and away from the eyes

The type of shoe you wear could affect your ability to perform in a safe manner during an emergency situation. LPVEC policy prohibits wearing of high heels, open-toed shoes, sandals, clogs, wooden-soled shoes of any type, or flip-flops. The best shoe is one that has a flat sole, covers the entire foot, and fastens securely. You may be required to return home to change if found in violation of this policy.

ABSENCES

Regular and reliable attendance is an essential duty of your position. Excessive tardiness or excessive absences are a violation of LPVEC attendance policy.

To report an absence, all Drivers and Monitors must call **both** LPVEC Central Office, 735-2200, and their Supervisor. The Supervisor must be notified at least two (2) hours before the employee is scheduled to work (though no calls before 5:00 AM) and the Central Office must be notified at least one (1) hour prior to the start of work. Additional details regarding LPVEC Attendance Policy can be found in the General Handbook.

There is an answering machine at LPVEC Central Office when that office is closed. You may leave a message stating your name AND the reason you will be absent. You must make the call yourself unless you are physically unable to do so.

Transportation Supervisors can be reached by cell and home phone. Please be considerate of the time you call your Supervisor as no business occurs before 5:00 a.m or after 9:00 PM. If you cannot reach your immediate Supervisor, call another Supervisor at that site until you actually speak to a Supervisor, Manager or General Manager. Leaving a message for a Supervisor will not be considered reaching them.

Failure to make these calls could result in a loss of pay for that day. It should be noted that any absence of 3 days without proper notice provided to LPVEC, will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment with LPVEC.

All absences must be pre-approved in accordance with applicable policies. Complete a Request for Leave Form and submit it to your Supervisor, with a brief explanation for your absence and the hours you will need to be covered (actual route time and Drivers pre-trip time only). If your leave can be covered, your Supervisor will submit the form to Human Resources who will either approve or not approve the time off based on LPVEC policy. The paperwork will be returned to your mailbox directly from Human Resources. Management reserves the right to deny anticipated absences based on the needs of LPVEC transportation department. Approved absences with pay will include your actual route time and Drivers pre-trip time only. You will not be paid for any cleaning, fueling, field trips, athletics, weekend trips, or training.

Absences due to illness of three (3) consecutive workdays will require medical documentation received by your supervisor before an employee can return to work. A physician's certificate will be requested for any disability. A physician's certificate will be required for absences due to illness before or after holidays or school vacations.

Any unexcused absence of more than 3 days may result in the loss of his or her route.

PAID TIME OFF (PTO) POLICY

Eligibility: School-Year Hourly Employees (Drivers and Monitors), not considered Substitutes

Up to ten days of flexible Paid Time Off (PTO) can be earned each year. The PTO may be used by employees to: (1) get paid for holidays, vacation days, or other non-school days during the year, (2) cash out as an end-of-year bonus for all unused days, or (3) use when absolutely necessary for a limited number of days off on scheduled school days.

Each Hourly Employee is responsible for managing the usage of his or her PTO account in accordance with this policy. Employees must be approved for and include PTO hours on their time sheets in order to receive payment.

PTO is earned on a school-year basis (September through June) with one day credited on the first day of each month to a maximum of ten days each year. Employees may request an advance on the PTO on a case-by-case basis by submitting a request to Human Resources. If an employee is advanced PTO and leaves employment prior to accruing the day(s), the final paycheck will be docked for the deficit amount.

New employees hired after the school year will begin accruing PTO on the first day of the month following their date of hire. New employees may not utilize nor be paid out any PTO earned until they have been employed for three months.

All ten PTO days may be used, if desired, to reduce unpaid days when school is not in session (non-school days), for example: snow days, holidays, school vacation days, or teacher in-service days). PTO used on non-school days will be paid based on the employee's assigned route hours, which will include pre and post inspections but will not include cleaning and fueling. PTO used on non-scheduled days will be used in full-day increments. All PTO time not used during the school year will be paid out on the last scheduled payroll in June.

Mid-day routes are considered an extra piece of work and are not considered for PTO. For example: if an employee is absent for just the mid-day route, he or she will not be paid for, nor charged PTO for, the absence. Or, for example, if an employee is absent due to illness for the morning and mid-day or mid-day and afternoon, he or she would be charged for a half day of PTO and paid for a full day.

PTO may not be used on scheduled school day(s) before or after scheduled holidays or school vacations for the purpose of extending the holiday or vacation period. Any absences on scheduled school day(s) before or after scheduled holidays and school vacations will be unpaid and may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

To use PTO on scheduled work days, employees must request PTO in advance and the request must be approved by the employee's supervisor, except for cases of illness or emergency. A maximum of five (5) PTO days may be used each year on scheduled school days. PTO used on scheduled school days must be used in half or full day increments. Employees may miss a maximum of three consecutive scheduled school days, except in the case of illness where they will be required to present medical documentation from their physician to the Human Resources department.

Additional days taken off on school days beyond the initial five will be unpaid and PTO credits will be lost for those days, unless conditions for accessing Long-Term Medical Leave are satisfied. Employees with chronic and/or recurring medical conditions should contact Human Resources to determine next steps for accommodating those times when the employee periodically needs to be absent.

If an employee has a doctor-certified illness lasting more than five days and is expecting to be out longer, they or a family member must contact Human Resources to obtain forms to request either Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or Long-Term Medical Leave. In approved cases, the employee's remaining PTO will be used first and then the employee will be paid from his/her accrued time in the Long-Term Medical Leave program.

Time taken off on scheduled school days beyond the annual five-day limit indicated above can result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

Any employee who misses three consecutive days of work without notice to his/her supervisor and the Human Resources department may be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

LPVEC will not make payment for unused PTO to employees who are terminated for violation of LPVEC rules or regulations or to employees who resign without appropriate notice (two weeks).

LONG-TERM MEDICAL LEAVE

Eligibility: Regular Hourly Employees (Drivers and Monitors), not considered Substitutes

Employees will be covered by Long-Term Medical Leave for a serious health condition, long-term illness, recuperation from operation, etc., that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider and that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's position. Employees accrue 5 days of Long-Term Medical Leave for each year of employment, up to a maximum of 100 days. Current employees with more than 100 days of accrued time are grandfathered in with the same number of Long-Term Medical Leave days.

Long-Term Medical Leave may be used during scheduled school days and, with approval, during the summer months. Employees who schedule elective surgery during the summer months rather than during the school year can use accrued Long-Term Medical Leave to get paid for that time, up to 30 workdays. Use of Long-Term Medical Leave is limited to two leaves within a rolling five year period.

In order to qualify for Long-Term Medical Leave, medical certification containing appropriate medical information must be provided to the Human Resources Department within 15 days of the request. Approval from the Human Resources Department must be received prior to qualifying for the Long-Term Medical Leave, except in emergency circumstances. To use Long-Term Medical Leave during the summer months, the request must be submitted to your supervisor prior to June 1.

The medical information appropriate for inclusion will vary depending upon the nature of the health condition and is to be determined by the health care provider, but must be sufficient to support the need for leave. The information requested may only relate to the health condition for which the employee is seeking leave. A complete and sufficient Medical Certification form must include:

- Contact information for the health care provider, including name, address, telephone number, fax number, and type of medical practice/specialty;
- When the health condition began;
- How long the health condition is expected to last;
- Whether the employee is unable to work, and the likely duration of this inability, and
- Appropriate medical facts about the condition.

At the health care provider's discretion, the medical facts may include information on symptoms, doctor's visits, or a diagnosis. LPVEC will provide a form for employees to use upon request. LPVEC reserves the right to reject incomplete or insufficient Medical Certifications.

Employees will qualify for Long-Term Medical Leave after one calendar year from date of hire. Leave taken under the Long-Term Medical Leave that also qualifies as Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) will be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

Employees on Long-Term Medical Leave must provide a Fitness-for-Duty Certification from the treating physician prior to returning from the leave.

PAPERWORK

You are responsible for submitting the following forms on time:

- ✓ **Weekly Time Sheets** – LPVEC workweek starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Weekly Time Sheets must be submitted EVERY WEEK on Friday at the conclusion of the workweek unless otherwise directed. All sites have an after-hours box. Time sheets submitted after the established deadline may result in delayed compensation.

You must use a separate line, as well as, a beginning and end time for each line entry on your time sheet. Use actual start and end times. Each run of your day, fueling (max. 1/4 hr. at the pump), vehicle cleaning (max. 1/2 or 1 hr. as described in "Cleaning of Vehicles"), mechanical service, authorized absence, etc. will have a separate line and start and end time. Except for the ten minutes before each route when you are required to be in the office, all other work time outside your regularly scheduled hours must be pre-approved by your supervisor.

The time for each route will be pre-determined. If route time varies from that predetermined amount, you must put the explanation for it on the entry line. Any exceptions or additions to your time must be pre-approved by your Transportation Office. There is no paid time between any worked segments. If your time sheet is incorrect, you will need to correct and initial your time sheet.

All driver route times will be figured to and from your site. All monitor time will be figured to and from a meeting location to be decided by the Monitor Supervisor. Monitors must work only when their assigned students ride. When a Monitors assigned student is not on the vehicle, the Monitor must contact the Monitor Supervisor. There is no payment for commute time to a vehicle-housing site; monitors do not get paid for any commute time to a meet location. No one gets paid for a commute time from home to a fueling site.

- ✓ **Vehicle Inspection Report Books** – Must be completed daily by checking off each item. Drawing a line through all the items is not satisfactory. The white copies must be turned in once a week with your time sheet. For any vehicle problems, complete the report immediately and submit the white copy to the Driver Supervisor. This book must remain on the vehicle at all times. The Driver may not carry it with them or use it with other vehicles.
- ✓ **Fuel Logs** – Must be submitted on the last day of the month. Fill out and submit a separate fuel log for every vehicle you fuel during the month.

- ✓ **Bus Conduct Reports** – Must be submitted on the day of the misconduct. Contact the Transportation Office as soon as the misconduct occurs if it involves physical contact or threat.
- ✓ **Incident Reports** – Must be submitted the day of the incident. An Incident Report is required anytime there is exposure, physical contact or injury to you or a student. You will need to fill out one form for yourself and for any student who received physical contact/injury. In the event of a vehicle accident, you must fill out an Incident Report and a State Accident Report, even if there is “no injury.”
- ✓ **Student Conduct & Accident/Incident Reports** –As part of the requirements of your job, you are responsible for writing up student conduct reports, accident reports and incident reports during your normal work hours. Adequate opportunities are available within your scheduled work hours to accomplish this task while meeting all other necessary deadlines. You are not permitted to complete paperwork or to work outside your scheduled work hours without prior approval from your supervisor. Failure to complete these required reports in a timely manner may result in corrective action up to and including termination.
- ✓ **Request for Leave** – Must be submitted in advance of any planned or foreseeable absence to your Supervisor. Submit your request to your Supervisor with as much advance notice as possible. You must provide the reason for your requested leave and provide any required documentation. Fueling time, cleaning time, field trip time, athletic trip time, weekend trip time, and training time cannot be submitted for pay during periods of approved leave. The supervisor’s signature on the form indicates receipt of the form, not approval of request. Requests for time off will be either “Approved” or “Not Approved”, by the Executive Director or HR Director, based on company policy, accrued time earned, and the company’s ability to replace an absent worker. A copy of the Request for Leave will be returned to your mailbox.

You are responsible for the timely receipt of mail placed in your LPVEC mailbox. Check your mail daily before the start of each portion of your route. Route changes and notices may be communicated through LPVEC mailbox. Monitors will have mailboxes at sites and are expected to check it daily.

DRIVER PAYROLL PROCEDURE

All routes will be compensated from the start time to the end time according to the route sheet. Any route or time changes resulting from additions or deletions to the routes must be specifically noted on the employee’s time sheet and are subject to verification by the Driver Supervisor. Ten minutes will be added at the start of each route to allow for the completion of the required daily vehicle circle checks.

All employees are required to verify their attendance at work. Times entered on your weekly time sheets must be accurate to your actual start and completion time of your work schedule. Time sheets should be left in your office box and turned in after Friday’s pm schedule or as directed by your supervisor.

Substitute school bus drivers and substitute school bus monitors who have worked a minimum of 540 hours (3 hours per day on average) in the previous school year will be entitled to the step increase upon reappointment. In order to remain on the substitute school bus driver or school bus monitor list each year, a minimum of 30 hours must be worked in the previous school year.

FIELD TRIP FORMS

When assigned a field trip, you will receive a trip form, which must be completed with accurate information as you do the trip. All trip sheets must be turned in to your Transportation Office within 24 hours of completing the trip in order to receive prompt payment for the trip. Drivers DO NOT stay with field trips and monitors DO NOT go on field trips unless instructed by the Transportation Office to do so.

PETTY CASH EXPENSE

The Driver or Monitor must obtain Supervisor’ prior approval for petty cash purchases and provide a receipt for any on-the-road expenses incurred (i.e., tire repair, parking lot fee, emergency fuel) and submit the receipt to the Transportation Office for expense approval and reimbursement.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

It is your responsibility to know when your students have Half-Days or No School and respond appropriately.

Early dismissals do occur during the school year due to weather, school-related emergencies, and Parent-Teacher conferences. We will transport students home following the school building schedule each day. Note: Occasionally LPVEC classrooms remain in session when the regular education classrooms in the same building are closed for Parent-Teacher conferences.

Check the Combined School Calendar for the schools to which you transport. It is your responsibility to know whether your students are in LPVEC programs or non-LPVEC. For LPVEC program students, follow LPVEC dates, not the dates of the town. If there is a conflict in your schedule of schools for early dismissal days, inform the Transportation Office immediately.

SNOW DAYS

The transportation system will follow the calendar of the school district and the building in which the classroom is located. In the event of EMERGENCY WEATHER, the transportation system will also follow the closings of the home district of each student. If the home district for the student is closed OR if the town the student is transported to is closed, the student will not be transported. LPVEC provides weather related closing announcements on local radio stations, television and media websites.

The Transportation Office is not notified that a town is closed until the Executive Director has been notified by the town's Superintendent. You may call your Transportation Office to confirm. If there is no cancellation at that point, you must prepare to come to work. Please drive cautiously and safely. If school is cancelled after your scheduled check-in time, you will be paid three hours at minimum wage.

CLOSINGS: LPVEC does not drive students from a town that does not have school, nor do we drive students to a town that does not have school.

DELAYED OPENINGS: Be extra careful regarding delayed openings. DO NOT bring a child to school prior to the delayed opening time. If there is a conflict with your schedule because of the later opening, call your Transportation Office immediately. Be aware with delayed openings, that if a LPVEC program student is already on board the vehicle and then his/her town cancels school, but LPVEC hasn't, you will still need to bring that student to LPVEC program. LPVEC teachers are required to be at school; parents on the other hand, may no longer be at home. See your Driver route sheets to know if you have any LPVEC program students.

EARLY CLOSINGS: We will provide transportation home from school according to the schedule of that school building for that day.

DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for a school pupil transport driver's license (7D) or a school bus operator's license (CDL) must be at least 21 years of age and have been duly licensed for three continuous years prior to applying for a 7D or CDL license. All persons operating a LPVEC vehicle must be properly licensed and carry the license on their person at all times. The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities requires a School Bus Driver Certificate in addition to the CDL license. Applicants must be of good moral character, pass an eye exam, written test, and have a physical as determined by the Registrar. Applicants must have CPR certification and Epi-Pen training before being hired.

SCHOOL PUPIL'S TRANSPORT VEHICLES, known as 7D vehicles are generally vans which according to Chapter 90 Section 7D, do not exceed eight (8) passenger seating capacity and are used to transport pupils to and from school.

SCHOOL BUSES are vehicles with a greater seating capacity than eight (8) pupil seating capacity and are subject to Chapter 90, Section 8A licensing, which include nine (9) or greater student passenger capacity vehicles and larger seating capacity school buses.

Those persons who have been convicted of operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, narcotics, hallucinogens, depressants, stimulants, and other illegal substances and those persons who have been convicted of child molestation, rape, sodomy, or unnatural acts will be terminated from employment with LPVEC immediately.

TRAINING

School Bus Operator's License training is available to LPVEC 7D Drivers and Monitors. Training is provided by LPVEC Certified Instructors. If you are interested in obtaining your CDL to drive a LPVEC school bus, or a 7D license to drive a LPVEC van, see your Supervisor for information. For prospects of employment with these licenses, contact the Transportation General Manager.

LPVEC will provide more than the eight (8) hours of required in-service training during the course of a school year. If you fail to acquire the minimum 8 hours of required training by your expiration date, you will not get your school bus certificate renewed and you will be unqualified to drive and ineligible for pay. No make-up training time will be conducted for any individual who failed to complete the scheduled trainings, without cause. Each driver is responsible to track their required training hours.

TESTING FOR DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

It is the policy of LPVEC to comply fully with the Rules issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation under the 1991 Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act dealing with limitations on alcohol and drug use by any employee who transports students, drug and alcohol testing of such employees and the reporting/record-keeping requirements relative to such testing. The Rules found in 49 C.F.R. §382.100 et seq. apply to all interstate and intrastate truck and motor coach operators, including but not limited to, school bus drivers, all LPVEC drivers with commercial drivers licenses and/or 7D licenses, and any other employee who transports students.

The following conduct is prohibited:

1. Reporting for duty or remaining on duty requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions with a breath/blood alcohol content of 0.04 percent or greater or under the influence of drugs;
2. Use of drugs or alcohol within the four (4) hours prior to performing a safety-sensitive function like driving;
3. Use of drugs or alcohol on the job;
4. Use of drugs or alcohol during the eight (8) hours following an accident;
5. Possession of any drugs, medication or food containing alcohol while driving a vehicle;
6. Refusal to take a required drug or alcohol test.
7. Use of controlled substances on or off duty unless a doctor has prescribed the controlled substance and the doctor has informed the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to operate a vehicle safely.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

LPVEC is a zero tolerance employer. The LPVEC cooperates fully with local, state, and federal authorities in matters pertaining to the use, possession, or sale of controlled substances by anyone on LPVEC or member district premises.

A. Applicants

All final candidates for safety-sensitive positions must pass a pre-employment, post-offer drug test as a requirement for employment. Any applicant for a safety-sensitive position who refuses to take a drug test or who tests positive will be considered to have failed to meet the criteria for employment.

B. Employees

Reporting to work in an impaired or unfit condition because of the use or consumption of controlled substances or alcohol is strictly prohibited. Any employee who uses, possesses, or is involved in the sale or purchase of any substance covered under the federal Controlled Substances Act, while on LPVEC or member district premises, conducting LPVEC business or operating LPVEC vehicles or equipment, is considered to be in violation of this policy. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to immediate termination from employment.

This policy also applies to the use of prescription drugs that impair an employee's ability to safely perform his/her job. Use of prescription drugs other than as prescribed by an employee's own physician, is a violation of this policy. An employee who takes medication prescribed to another person will be considered to be using an "illegal" substance and if tested will produce a positive test result.

C. Drug and Alcohol Testing

Drug and/or alcohol testing of employees, including testing as prescribed by the Federal Department of Transportation, may be conducted under some or all of the following circumstances:

Safety Sensitive Positions

For the purpose of this policy, and as defined in Section 382.107 of the FMCSA safety regulations, designated "safety-sensitive" work includes the operation, supervision, maintenance or dispatch of any vehicle. A driver, mechanic or dispatcher is considered to be performing a safety-sensitive function during any period in which he or she is actually performing, ready to perform, or immediately available to perform any safety-sensitive position. A driver, mechanic or dispatcher is also considered to be performing a safety-sensitive function while inspecting, servicing, or conditioning any commercial motor vehicle at any time.

All transportation employees are subject to the following tests:

- **Random Testing:** Random selection process ensures each employee the same fair and equal chance of being selected. Selection of employees for random testing will be conducted through the use of a third party random number generator selection process. Due to the nature of the random selection process, an employee could be randomly selected to test more than once a year. An employee randomly selected will be notified by his or her supervisor of the selection and instructed to immediately go to the designated collection site. Each year, LPVEC must conduct random alcohol tests on at least 25% of all the covered employees and random drug tests on at least 50% of all covered employees.
- **Return to Duty After Leave of Absence:** Employees in safety-sensitive positions who are returning from any type of leave of 30 days or more, including but not limited to, leave for workers' compensation, pregnancy or personal reasons, or to serve in the military will be tested before they will be allowed to return to work.
- **Post-Collision Drug and Alcohol Tests** following a collision that involves a commercial motor vehicle if:
 - The collision involved a fatality, **or**
 - LPVEC driver receives a citation for a moving traffic violation arising from the collision, **and**
 - An individual involved in the collision receives immediate medical attention away from the scene of the collision, **or**
 - There was disabling damage to one or more vehicles involved in the collision requiring them to be towed from the scene of the collision, **or**
 - The circumstances of the accident indicate that the driver could have been impaired at the time of the accident.

It is the employee's responsibility to make him/herself available for testing. Generally, the employee will be accompanied to/from the testing site by a LPVEC employee/supervisor.

Refusal to be tested or to otherwise comply with this requirement will result in corrective action up to and including termination, even for a first offense.

In any of these incidents, Drug Tests are required immediately, but no later than thirty-two (32) hours following the collision, and a Breath Alcohol Test is required immediately, but no later than eight (8) hours following the collision.

Reasonable Suspicion

Reasonable suspicion drug and/or alcohol tests are conducted when there is reason to believe any employee is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol and is based on exhibited behavior, speech, appearance, etc. as observed by their supervisor, whether or not that employee works in a safety-sensitive position. Employees directed to submit to reasonable suspicion testing will be escorted directly to the testing facility. The employee will not be permitted to return to duty unless the test results indicate that the employee was not under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol while on LPVEC premises or while conducting LPVEC business off premises.

PROCEDURES - Alcohol and Drug Testing Pursuant to 49 C.F.R. §382.100 et seq

Conducting Tests

1. **Alcohol:** DOT rules require breath testing using evidential breath testing (EBT) devices. Two breath tests are required to determine if a person has a prohibited alcohol concentration. A screening test is conducted first. Any result less than 0.02 alcohol concentration is considered a "negative" test. If the alcohol concentration is 0.02 or greater, a confirmation test must be conducted. Refusal of an employee to complete and sign the breath alcohol testing form to provide breath or otherwise to cooperate shall be deemed to be a refusal to test. In addition, blood alcohol testing can be used in reasonable suspicion and post-accident testing where an evidentiary breath-testing device is not available or where an employee is not capable of producing adequate breath. Refusal to be tested or to otherwise fail to cooperate with the requirements of this section will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination, even for a first offense.
2. **Drugs:** Drug testing is conducted by analyzing a driver's urine specimen, and must be conducted through a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services certified facility. Specimen collection procedures and chain of custody requirements ensure that the specimen's security, identification and integrity are not compromised.

DOT rules require a split specimen procedure. Each urine specimen is subdivided into two bottles labeled as primary and split. Both bottles are sent to the laboratory. Initially, only the primary specimen is opened and used for the urinalysis. The split specimen remains sealed at the laboratory. If the analysis of the primary specimen confirms the presence of illegal controlled substances, the driver has 72 hours to request that the split specimen be sent to another DHHS certified laboratory for analysis.

Testing is conducted using a two-stage process. First, a screening test is performed. If the test is positive for one or more of the drugs, a confirmation test is performed for each identified drug. Sophisticated testing requirements ensure that over-the-counter medications or preparations are not reported as positive results.

All drug tests are reviewed and interpreted by a physician designated as a Medical Review Officer (MRO) before they are reported to the employer. If the laboratory reports a positive result to the MRO, the MRO will contact the Driver and conduct an interview to determine if there is an alternative medical explanation for the drugs found in the urine specimen. For all the drugs listed above, except PCP, there are some limited, legitimate medical uses that may explain a positive test result. If MRO determines that the drug use is legitimate, the test will be reported to LPVEC as a negative result.

3. **Refusal to Participate/Tampering:** Any refusal to participate in any of the types of alcohol and or drug tests authorized in this policy will be treated as a positive result.

If there is any evidence that an employee engaged in sample tampering, such conduct shall be treated as a refusal to participate in testing for purposes of imposing corrective action.

D. Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medication

In addition to controlled substances and alcohol, LPVEC employees shall not report for duty while under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter medication that might impair the employee's ability to perform his/her job safely. As a condition of continued employment with LPVEC, an employee who is required to operate a motor vehicle or assist students must advise his/her supervisor if he/she is taking prescribed or non-prescribed medication that may or does impair his/her ability to safely perform his/her job. Failure to report the use of such medication may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

E. General Guidelines for Drug and Alcohol Testing

There are certain situations that may arise during the testing process that employees sometimes do not understand, leading them to violate the procedures and be considered to have a "positive" test result. Knowing what to do will help avoid incorrect behavior when in these situations. The following are some of the instances that need explanation. It is the employee's responsibility to ask questions and to read those documents containing the complete testing information.

- Once an employee has been notified that he/she is selected for a drug test, or a drug and alcohol test, he/she MUST go immediately to the testing site. If the time from when the employee leaves to be

tested and he/she arrives at the test site is much longer than what is usually required to travel, the employee will be asked to provide an explanation.

- Once an employee arrives at a test site for a drug test, he/she may not leave until the test is complete. Leaving the site while the test is in process will, by law, be counted as a positive test result.
- Another common problem is when an employee is notified he/she is selected, but refuses to go because he/she has other plans made. It is very important to know that once informed it is **REQUIRED** that the employee go for testing. Not doing so results in a "refusal-to-test" that equals a failed test. **There is no way to reschedule the test for another time.**

F. Refusal to Test

Refusal to submit to testing as required under this policy is prohibited and will result in termination of employment. Refusal to test includes:

- Failure to appear for any test within the designated time frame.
- Failure to remain inside the testing collection site until the process is complete.
- Failure to provide sufficient urine specimen for drug testing where there is no adequate medical explanation provided as a result of a medical evaluation.
- Failure to provide an adequate amount of saliva or breath for alcohol testing.
- Failure to permit an observed collection when required.
- Failure to undergo a medical examination or evaluation as directed by the Medical Review Officer (MRO).
- Failure to cooperate with any portion of the testing process (i.e., refuse to empty pockets or behave in a confrontational manner that disrupts the collection process.)

G. Consequences of Violation of the Policy

Controlled Substance – a positive test results in termination of employment.

1. If the employee tests positive for any drug, the employee will be notified by the Medical Review Officer (MRO).
2. The MRO will review the test results with the employee for a possible medical explanation, i.e. prescription drug or over-the-counter drug that was taken at the time of the test.
3. The MRO may also call the physician or drug store for confirmation.
4. LPVEC will not be informed of a positive test result until MRO contact procedures have been completed.
5. If there is no medical explanation:
 - 1 The employee may not be returned to duty and is subject to immediate termination.
 - 2 Employees who test positive will be allowed 72 hours following notification of their drug test results to request a re-test of the original split test sample.
 - 3 Any re-test of the split specimen will be at the employee's expense.
 - 4 The employee will be suspended without pay until the re-test results are received by LPVEC.
 - 5 If re-test results are negative, initial test results will be cancelled, and the employee will be fully reinstated with back pay.
 - 6 If the re-test is positive, or if a re-test is not requested within the designated time period, the employee will be terminated.

Alcohol – If the employee tests 0.02 or higher, a second confirmation test must be given within 15 minutes.

- If the confirmation test is less than 0.02, the employee may be returned to duty.
- If the confirmation test is 0.02 or greater, the employee's supervisor will be notified. The employee will be driven home from the collection site, and the employee will be terminated.
- Drivers who have any alcohol concentration (defined as 0.02 or greater) when tested just before, during, or just after performing safety-sensitive functions must be removed from performing such duties for 24 hours and will be suspended without pay until they have completed a program of rehabilitation that has been approved by LPVEC.

H. Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) Resources

- The Lexington Group (800)571-0197
- Employee Assistance Program (800)252-4555

Questions about this policy should be referred to LPVEC Human Resources Director or Executive Director.

LICENSE RENEWAL

Renewals of School Pupil Transport Driver's Licenses and School Bus Operator's Certificates must be completed every year and may only be issued to those who have not passed their seventieth (70th) birthday. After age 70, Drivers must renew the license for six months and thereafter, every six months.

It is highly recommended that you **begin the license renewal process 90 days prior** to the expiration of your license to ensure adequate time for processing. The Department of Public Utilities will notify School Bus Operator's for license certificate renewal. The Registry of Motor Vehicles will notify School Pupil Transport Driver's for license renewal. If you do not receive your renewal application in the mail **within eight weeks of your license expiration date**, contact your Supervisor. It is your responsibility to get your physical in time and to get your renewal application processed in time.

Supervisors will make the appointment for all physicals up to 90 days prior to your certificate expiration date. The physical will be scheduled with Occu-Health, 200 N. Main St., E.Longmeadow and will require no payment by you. All drivers 70 years of age and older must have a physical twice a year, 6-7 months apart. If the physical is arranged with a Driver's personal physician, LPVEC will pay up to \$50 for the D.O.T. portion of a personal physical.

There is a turn around time of up to 28 days from when the DTE or RMV receives your completed paperwork to when you receive your new license, so plan accordingly. You will be unable to drive (suspension without pay) if your license expires due to delay or error (incorrect/incomplete paperwork) on your part.

To be reimbursed for your physical, or 7D or school bus certificate relicensing fees, you must bring in your money order receipt, cancelled check, or bank statement and your new certificate, DPU or 7D certificate, and submit an expense report with copies attached, to your Supervisor. LPVEC does not refund state driver license renewal fees. Requests for expense reimbursement must be submitted to LPVEC business office at the end of each calendar month and after obtaining supervisor approval, no later than 60 days after the date of expense. Expense reimbursement requests greater than 60 days old will not be reimbursed. Where there are extenuating circumstances, the Director of Finance may approve reimbursement requests subsequent to the deadline.

A copy of your current physical, medical card, current license, and school bus certificate must be on file with your Supervisor. You must carry your valid license, your medical examiner's card, and your school bus certificate with you whenever you are driving for LPVEC. Anyone driving without a valid driver's license is subject to discipline.

PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR DRIVERS

LPVEC school bus drivers are required to meet the physical qualifications for commercial motor vehicle operators as provided in Section 391.41 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). If, at any time, a CDL/7D certified physician deems any school bus driver to be unfit for duty, that driver will be placed on a medical leave for as long as accrued time is available and the CDL/7D license is still valid. Upon expiration of accrued time or expiration of the CDL/7D driver's license, employment will be terminated or the employee may request an unpaid Leave of Absence from the Board of Directors (See General Employment Policies and Guidelines Handbook – Leave of Absence Section.) Reasonable accommodations may be granted as appropriate. Please see that policy in the General Employment Policies and Guidelines Handbook for more information.

DRIVER BIDDING AND SENIORITY

LPVEC driver seniority will be based upon the driver's date of full-time, regular employment with LPVEC. Any work performed for LPVEC prior to the driver's employment as a full-time, regular bus driver will not count for purposes of calculating seniority.

When there is more than one driver with the same date of employment, seniority will be based on their date of employment with any previous school bus contractor. Should this secondary criterion be the same, the date of application for a position with LPVEC will be used as a third criterion. If that date of application is the same, LPVEC will use the last two digits of their Social Security number to establish their seniority (higher number, greater seniority).

When a driver has transferred from one transportation location to another, the driver's date of employment from LPVEC-wide seniority list will transfer to the seniority list for that location and be placed appropriately on that location's seniority list. Should the date of employment be the same as another driver on that location's seniority list, the criteria outlined in the above paragraph will be utilized to establish the location seniority list.

Route assignments are assigned by seniority and by classification. The location seniority list will be established for both special needs transportation routes and for regular transportation routes. Once the location seniority list is established, drivers will be allowed to bid on the routes available according to their seniority. Special needs drivers will bid by seniority for special needs transportation routes, and regular transportation drivers will bid by seniority on regular transportation routes.

Drivers may bid in another classification only when a vacancy exists in that classification and the route/work will be awarded out of classification only if no other driver in that classification bids on the route/work. Any driver changing classification will maintain their seniority date from the prior category. Any transfer of drivers between regular and special needs routes will be at management's discretion but only when necessary and when vacancies exist. Any routes remaining unfilled will be advertised LPVEC-wide before being filled with newly hired drivers.

Drivers who voluntarily resign and obtain re-employment with LPVEC will be subject to LPVEC Rehire Policy detailed in the General Employment Handbook. According to the Rehire Policy, all individuals rehired after voluntary resignation are considered new hires. The seniority date will commence on the first day the employee returns to work, NOT their original hire date.

In the essence of saving time, the bidding process may begin several minutes prior to the posted start time as long as the most senior individuals are present. Once a driver's name is reached, who is not present, the bidding process will be suspended until the actual bid time or until that driver arrives, whichever occurs first.

Any driver who does not possess a valid CDL, medical card, and DPU or valid driver's license with 7D endorsement at the time of bidding will not be permitted to bid on routes. Drivers on approved leaves of absence will be allowed to bid on routes upon presentation of valid CDL, medical card, and DPU or valid driver's license with 7D endorsement at the end of the leave. Drivers returning from a medical leave of absence will be given priority for selection of available routes at the time of return.

SPARE DRIVERS

CDL Drivers may bid, apply for and be hired, or be offered (after the loss of an assigned route) a "Spare Driver" position. The Spare Driver positions assigned to each site will be divided between Special Needs Transportation (SNT) and Regular Needs Transportation (RNT) Drivers, one position for each category. Bidding for these positions will occur prior to the route bid for SNT and RNT drivers. Should one category have no interested parties bid, the other category will be offered both positions to bid.

When a Spare Driver no longer holds that position due to bidding on another route, end of the school year or end of summer route transportation, that driver will revert back to the classification held prior to becoming a Spare Driver for the next route bid. Abiding by the Driver Bidding and Seniority procedure above, a Spare Driver can bid on a route during the year based on their original classification.

The work priority for Spare Drivers is the same as all Drivers. Home to school, school to home route coverage is primary and trips are secondary. Spare Drivers are required to report to their assigned sites at 6:00 a.m. for a minimum of two hours and at 1:00 p.m. for a minimum of two hours. Spare Drivers will be required to cover for RNT, SNT, 7D, Monitor and field trips as directed.

Spare Drivers may be required to travel to any of the transportation sites that are in need of a driver, even if that site is not his/her regular site and may be required to use their personal vehicles for transport to the site. Spare Drivers will be paid for mileage and time traveling from their regular assigned site to any alternate location or compensated for any travel time and mileage in excess of their normal commute when traveling from home to an alternate location.

ATHLETIC & FIELD TRIP BIDDING

Regular business priority is home to school and school to home for all transportation employees. Athletic and field trips that are not part of a bus driver's regular route will be made available for bid and assigned by seniority date. All field trips and any athletic trips that begin after 3:00 p.m. are placed on an information sheet for Drivers to use on Trip Bid Day. All athletic and field trips scheduled to begin at or before 3:00 p.m. will be assigned to spare and/or substitute drivers or as management is able to cover the work.

Trip meetings are to be held a minimum of every two weeks at all locations. All trips are noted by date of the trip, its destination, and approximate times. The most senior Driver may select any one trip in seniority order. All other Drivers will make their selection in the same rotating seniority order until all trips have been awarded. If a driver is

absent on Trip Bid Day or unable to attend the bid session due to work assignment or approved absence, it is permissible to have someone else make the selection for them. If a Driver is out for an extended period of sick time or on a leave of absence at the time of a Trip Bid Day, that Driver is not eligible to bid or to have anyone bid for them until the Driver has returned to work.

No Driver may bid on a trip that is scheduled on a school day that interferes with performance of an assigned morning, midday, or afternoon route unless the trip is scheduled for six (6) hours or more per agreement with the school districts.

If any bid trip is cancelled then rescheduled, the original Driver has first choice to do the trip. If the trip is not rescheduled, the original driver has first choice on any new field trip or athletic trip that comes in prior to or at the next bid day.

Substitute bus drivers will only be permitted to bid on athletic and field trips if there are no regular, full-time drivers available for the assignment. If substitute bus drivers are permitted to bid on jobs, the assignments will be awarded based on the substitute bus driver's seniority date.

LATE ATHLETIC & FIELD TRIP CHARTERS

Late Athletic and Field Trip Charters are those received after a bid meeting but scheduled before the next bid meeting. A separate seniority sign up list consisting of drivers, who indicated willingness to accept late trips, will be used to assign these trips on a rotating basis. If a driver is offered a new late trip that would conflict with another s/he has for the same date and time, that new late trip would be offered to the next senior driver on the list. The driver with the conflict would be offered the next late trip not in conflict with his/her route/trip schedule. The seniority rotation would then continue with the next senior driver.

PEAK-TIME ATHLETIC AND FIELD TRIP CHARTERS

When Athletic and Field Trip Charters start during peak operational periods of regular scheduled routes, and open charters remain after all drivers have been assigned work, charters may be merged or assigned to existing routes.

SPLIT CHARTERS

Charters may be split at management's discretion to cover open existing work. The pick-up end of the charter may be assigned under Late Athletic and Field Trip Charter coverage.

NOTIFICATION OF CONVICTIONS FOR DRIVER VIOLATIONS

Drivers convicted of driver violations must report this conviction as provided in this policy and as required by Part 383.31 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Regulations. This information must be provided within 30 days after the conviction. Failure to notify LPVEC may result in corrective action up to and including termination. These regulations apply to every driver with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) who is convicted of violating, in any type of motor vehicle, a State or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control (other than a parking violation.)

If the conviction occurred in a State or jurisdiction other than the state that issued the CDL, the driver must notify the state that issued the CDL. Regardless of where the violation occurred, the driver must notify LPVEC. The notification to the State official and LPVEC must be made in writing and contain the following information:

- a. Driver's full name
- b. Driver's license number
- c. Date of conviction
- d. The specific criminal or other offense(s), serious traffic violation(s), and other violation(s) of State or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control, for which the driver was convicted and any suspension, revocation, or cancellation of certain driving privileges which resulted from such convictions
- e. Indication whether the violation involved a commercial motor vehicle
- f. Location of offense
- g. Driver's signature.

It is important to understand that FMCSA definition of "convictions" includes *Failure to Pay* and *Failure to Appear*.

NOTIFICATION OF SUSPENSION, REVOCATION, OR CANCELLATION OF LICENSE

Each driver who has a driver's license suspended, revoked, or canceled by the State or jurisdiction, who loses the right to operate a commercial motor vehicle in a State or jurisdiction for any period, or who is disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle for any period, must notify the Transportation General Manager of such suspension, revocation, cancellation, lost privilege, or disqualification before the end of the business day following the day the employee received notice of the suspension, revocation, cancellation, lost privilege, or disqualification. Failure to notify LPVEC may result in corrective action up to and including termination.

SAFETY POLICIES

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT

LPVEC hires qualified, well-trained drivers and monitors to provide excellent services to our member districts and their students. We rely on your common sense, knowledge, and experience to handle most situations in your day-to-day role; however, there are times when an unusual circumstance will occur or where you may not have a solution to the situation you are facing. Should this occur, contact your supervisor IMMEDIATELY. Do not place yourself in a situation of making a wrong decision. Following the directive from your supervisor relieves you of that burden.

HANDS-FREE MOBILE DEVICE

NO OPERATOR OF A SCHOOL BUS SHALL USE A MOBILE TELEPHONE, HANDS-FREE MOBILE TELEPHONE OR OTHER MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHILE OPERATING THE SCHOOL BUS UNLESS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

Massachusetts State Law defines an emergency to mean that the operator must communicate with another to report: 1) that the school bus is disabled, 2) that medical attention or assistance is required for a passenger on the bus, 3) that police intervention, fire department or other emergency services was necessary for the personal safety of a passenger or to otherwise ensure the safety of the passengers, or 4) that a disabled vehicle or an accident was present on the roadway.

PERSONAL CELL PHONES

It is strongly recommended that personal cell phones be turned OFF through the entire duration that the Driver and Monitor is on duty, including wait time. Instruct family members and friends to contact the Transportation Office in the case of a personal emergency. The Transportation Office will contact you.

COMMUNICATION RADIOS

Communication Radios provided by LPVEC are for emergency and transportation business use only. The communication radio must be plugged in and turned on at all times when you are in the vehicle. For the communication radio to work in certain buses, the key needs to be in the accessory position when the vehicle is not running. Before operating the vehicle, ensure that the communication radio is on. The communication radios are preprogrammed for radio use only. Attempting to alter the program will damage the unit. Refer any usage inquiries to your Supervisor.

Communication radios are for business use ONLY, as required by the FCC and are subject to FCC monitoring. Radio communication between drivers is to be avoided, except for emergencies. All communication is to go through the transportation office. No conversational bus-to-bus use is allowed. Radio abuse will not be tolerated. Persons using the airwaves for non-business purposes and/or in a non-professional manner will be subject to fines by the FCC and corrective action by LPVEC.

When it is necessary for a Driver to communicate on LPVEC communication radio, **the Driver must pull over in a safe location.** If you are unable to pull over safely, assume that it was the Transportation Office that called. Call the Transportation Office back as soon as you can pull over safely.

BUS ROUTES AND ROUTE SHEETS

Route sheets contain PERSONAL and CONFIDENTIAL information for students regularly transported on your vehicle. Do not disclose this information to anyone.

Drivers must follow the route sheet as it is written for drop off and pick up times. The time schedule printed is given to parents, guardians, and teachers to plan for the arrival and departure of the transported students. If the route sheet needs to be changed in order to make the route more efficient or the transportation safer or if there is a discrepancy with the drop off or pick up times, you must notify your Transportation Office. A new route sheet will be generated to reflect the new changes.

It is essential that Drivers notify the Transportation Office of all pertinent changes to be made to the bus route after the first two weeks of the run and throughout the driving year. At all times, the route sheet must be complete and accurate so substitutes on the run can provide safe and efficient transportation services. An up-to-date route sheet must be available in your vehicle at all times.

When assessing your route or route sheets, consider:

- ✓ Bus turnarounds (or where not to)
- ✓ Construction, traffic, or road hazards to avoid
- ✓ Parking restrictions or particulars
- ✓ Routes of travel to eliminate backing up or students' crossing streets
- ✓ Fuel requirements for at least one day's operation of the route
- ✓ School drop off and pick up locations

Other information to have on your vehicle:

- ✓ Vehicle inspection report books (pre-trip log)
- ✓ Special hookups or car seats needed for the run
- ✓ When and where Monitor meets Driver
- ✓ The Seizure Protocol
- ✓ LPVEC Employee Handbook

NOTE: Parents and guardians may make requests that the route or times be changed for their own convenience. DO NOT make any changes. Refer them to the town's Special Education Office or the town's Superintendent's Office as appropriate. That town office will notify the Transportation Office, and then the Transportation Office will notify the Driver of any approved changes.

Drivers are not responsible for transporting students' personal belongings. Drivers should check to see that all personal belongings are taken from the vehicle with each student.

Transporting medication is prohibited except in an emergency with prior approval from LPVEC and school nurses.

If a teacher has any changes or concerns, they should address them with their Supervisor. Their Supervisor will address them with the Superintendent's Office or the Special Education Director.

If a child will not need a ride on a given day, the Driver should instruct the parent/guardian to contact LPVEC Transportation Office. For any permanent or more-than-one-day's transportation changes, the parent is to call the Special Education Office in their town.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Defensive driving definition: Driving to prevent collisions despite the actions of others or the presence of adverse weather conditions.

An area that often separates a "professional driver" from an "amateur" is defensive driving. A school bus driver is a professional driver. This means and includes:

- ◆ Having the necessary skills and being competent in using them.
- ◆ Knowing the correct thing to do and doing it accurately every time.
- ◆ Knowing and following the rules and regulations pertaining to operating a school bus.
- ◆ Knowing and practicing pertinent LPVEC policies and procedures.

There is no room for error. Mistakes can result in injuries and fatalities. The professional driver needs to set aside emotions, mental stress, and frustration to arrive at the intended destination safely and comfortably. This often means bearing the brunt of another driver's mistake. You can never allow the actions of others to affect your safe driving.

As a good defensive driver, you will:

- ◆ Inspect your vehicle carefully and correctly.
- ◆ Handle your vehicle skillfully.
- ◆ Know and use all safe driving practices.
- ◆ Know how to drive on all types of roads in different types of weather.
- ◆ Know the hazards of drugs, alcohol, fatigue, stress, and impatience when driving.
- ◆ Keep a positive attitude so you can drive collision free.

Driving courteously is a part of driving safely. School buses are very visible to the public and should present a professional image.

It is a serious responsibility to transport a bus load of children to school every day in a wide variety of road and weather conditions. A safe and defensive School Bus Driver must exercise self-control, alertness, foresight, judgment, and skills in handling and maintaining control of the bus at all times. A good attitude about safe driving and safety procedures is the best guarantee to the safest trip possible.

PRE-TRIP AND POST-TRIP INSPECTIONS

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations 396.11 require a driver to submit, at the end of each day, a written report on defects or deficiencies discovered, during pre-trip and post-trip inspections. All vehicles have a Vehicle Inspection Report Book and it is to be completed by the driver for each and every vehicle they operate.

The driver is an important part of a successful maintenance program. Drivers are most intimately acquainted with the operation and performance of their equipment/vehicle, and so they should be the first to recognize that something is wrong with the unit. The pre-trip inspection is the first step in establishing a long life for the equipment and the safety of its passengers.

Pre-trip inspections must be performed prior to the commencement of any trip. The following are some general steps for a pre-trip inspection:

- ◆ As one approaches, look for vehicle problems, e.g., fluids on the ground, hoses or wires hanging, etc.
- ◆ Step firmly on service brake to see if assist brake motor is working and not going to the floor.
- ◆ Start the bus. Listen to the engine for abnormal noises. Pump service brakes and check if pedal is working properly and not going to the floor.
- ◆ Check and read gauges, warning buzzers and lights, oil pressure gauge, fuel gauge, voltmeter, horn, etc.
- ◆ Check that wipers, defrosters and heaters are working properly.
- ◆ Check all steps, handrails, aisles, seatbelts and seats for damage.
- ◆ From the interior, check the side, top and rear emergency exits and buzzers.
- ◆ Locate and check the first aid kit, body fluid cleanup kit, reflectors, spare fuses, and fire extinguisher.
- ◆ Check all lights, glass, body damage and mirrors at the front of the bus.
- ◆ Check the driver's side for glass or body damage, tires, rims, lug nuts (secure), reflectors, lights, signs and lettering and battery box.
- ◆ Check the stop sign for damage and proper operation.
- ◆ Check underneath bus, exhaust, drive shaft, leaf springs, shocks and shackles, etc.
- ◆ Check all lights, glass and body damage and the emergency exit at the rear of the bus.
- ◆ Check that exhaust tail pipe is secure, license plate and all proper signs and lettering are in place.
- ◆ Look for glass and body damage along the right side of the bus. Check fuel compartment and cap, mirrors, tires, rims, lug nuts (secure), signs and lettering, reflectors, and lights.
- ◆ Check that service door is working properly.
- ◆ Move vehicle. Check that brakes and steering is working properly.

The key to a pre-trip inspection is routine. Follow LPVEC's written procedures to develop a regular routine for conducting the inspection. By performing your inspection the same way each time, you are more likely to check all of the required items.

Drivers prohibited from disconnecting, removing or altering any equipment on the vehicle.

Post-trip inspections are required by State law requiring School Bus Drivers to check the bus for students and their belongings at the conclusion of each run, including checking behind and underneath each seat. After completing the inspection, all School Bus Drivers are required to place a placard reading "EMPTY" on the inside rear window of the vehicle. The placard must be plainly visible from the outside of the bus. The placard is to be removed from the window and returned to storage whenever anyone (including the Driver) is on the bus. Never place a placard or sign of any kind in the front windshield.

If any items are left on the bus, notify the Transportation Office. It is essential that Drivers do a thorough check at the end of each run. The Driver should also close all windows, check that all lights are off and lock the vehicle.

SAFE LOADING & UNLOADING PROCEDURES

- **Always park extreme CURBSIDE RIGHT when loading and unloading pupils to ensure that no vehicle (motorcycle, bicycle) can come up on your right.**
- Drivers will not block roadways in school areas or park in "No Parking" zones.
- Drivers will not block the way of school buses or go around school buses.

LOADING PROCEDURE

- ✓ Load students only at designated bus stops approved by LPVEC. NEVER change a bus stop without approval by your supervisor.
- ✓ Students should wait at a specific designated place. This place should be at least 10 feet from the edge of the street at the approved bus stop. You may have to remind students after they board to stay back from the bus as it approaches.
- ✓ Tell students to be at the bus top five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. The driver and students share the responsibility of maintaining the bus schedule.
- ✓ As a bus operator, if you are running late, don't speed to make up the lost time. Contact your supervisor to make him/her aware the route is running late. Remember, it is safety first and schedule second.
- ✓ If you arrive at a pick-up location early or on time and the student is not present, proceed with extreme caution. The student may be running late and rushing to catch the bus. If you proceed without double checking, you may miss the location of the approaching child.

UNLOADING PROCEDURE

- ✓ Do not permit students to leave the bus except at regularly assigned stops, unless you have been notified by the Transportation Office. It is illegal for you to discharge students at places other than designated bus stops.
- ✓ Have students exit in an orderly fashion, counting them as they exit; this will let you know if you have dropped off all the students to that stop. Observe students as they step from the bus to see that all move promptly away from the danger zone. Recount the students as they reach a place of safety outside of the danger zone, i.e. sidewalks, curbsides, or inside houses for door to door routes.

Special Needs Drivers might be required to load and unload in the student's driveway. Backing up a school bus is strongly discouraged. Pick up at curbside whenever possible. The Driver and Monitor are to assist those students that may require help to enter or leave the vehicle. The role of the transportation employee does not include entering the residence of a student. On occasion it may be necessary to go to the door of a residence to get a student or to ascertain if someone is home to receive the child. Do not provide any further assistance. Supervisors will advise Regular Education Drivers of any students who require a parent or guardian to receive them at the stop.

No child may ride on a LPVEC school bus unless that child is assigned to that particular route. Children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews of employees or any other child/student assigned to the route may not be brought back to the garage either in the morning or upon return in the afternoon from the employee's route. If you drive the route the student is assigned to, the child must be picked up or dropped off at the assigned stop.

Students should never be left in the vehicle unattended. If an emergency situation does occur, refer to the Procedure for Vehicle Breakdown. If it is necessary for 7D Drivers to leave the driver's seat, the vehicle should be put in park and the motor turned off. The Driver should remove the keys from the ignition and secure the emergency brake. This will require the Driver to leave the driver's seat to open the door. Child locks cannot be used as all doors are emergency exits (unless there is a monitor).

Always turn off the engine and remove the ignition and door keys whenever you leave the vehicle. NOTE: There are a few "exception" buses that must have the key left in the ignition on accessories in order for the red stoplights and the lift to operate.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT PICK-UP

On special needs routes, if the child does not come out immediately, wait for three (3) minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. After three minutes, immediately call the Transportation Office to report that you are leaving without the child. The Transportation Office will then inform the Special Education Office that you were there.

DO NOT SOUND THE HORN at any time. Massachusetts law prohibits operators of motor vehicles from sounding a horn, bell or other device to make a harsh, objectionable or unreasonable noise.

DROPPING OFF A CHILD

Never drop off a child anywhere but at the assigned drop off point on the route sheet. The Transportation Office will instruct you if there is a change in the assigned drop off point. If asked by a parent/guardian to drop off the child somewhere else or to change transportation in any way, inform them that they need to call their School Department or Special Education Office.

Once a student is on the bus, you are prohibited from instructing the student to exit the bus except at the student's regular assigned drop off unless instructed by your supervisor.

On special needs routes, kindergarten students, door-to-door stops at school or at home, or as specified by member districts, you MUST wait to be sure children are met at before you drive away. If there is no adult home or at the stop when you are to drop off a child, keep the child on the bus and contact the Transportation Office immediately with your expected time back to the stop. You will be instructed further once arrangements have been made. Do not release the child to anyone else (e.g. a neighbor) without authorization.

Never drop off a student at a police station without authorization from your Transportation Office.

VEHICLE EVACUATION DRILLS

Drivers must perform evacuation drills at least two (2) times per year for all students you transport. The first evacuation drill must occur within the first ten (10) days of the opening of school. All drills must take place on school grounds.

Special Needs Drivers must make arrangements with a teacher at the school to inform them when the drill will occur and to have them present to witness the evacuation. After you have picked up all your students, go to the first school you transport to. Then, evacuate the vehicle. Have the teacher or other adult present sign your drill form. If you do not have all the students you transport on the vehicle at one time, you will need to repeat this for every segment of your run. Complete the drill form and return it to your Supervisor.

The Transportation Office will inform Regular Education Transportation Drivers of evacuation arrangements.

BACKING UP THE BUS AND BACKING TO TURN AROUND

All backing of any school bus/vehicle is strongly discouraged. If a mishap occurs while you are backing your vehicle, you are at fault. It is difficult to outline an acceptable method to execute a safe back-up on any roadway. You are afforded no protection when in the process of backing any vehicle and the size (you should know the length of the bus you are driving) and limited visibility of a school bus makes backing up even more dangerous.

If it is ABSOLUTELY necessary to back up the vehicle (except on the shoulder or roadway of a controlled access highway) you may do so only without interfering with other traffic or without risking injury to any person. When circumstances leave you absolutely no alternative and you have checked to make sure that conditions are as safe as possible:

1. Activate your hazard lights.
2. Check traffic movement to the front, rear, and sides.
3. Check for pedestrians.

4. Back up carefully, using the outside mirrors. Properly adjustment of outside mirrors is extremely important to safe backing maneuvers.
5. When you have backed up as far as necessary, turn off hazard lights.

Drivers are to give right of way to vehicles backing out of parking spaces in facility yards.

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

Vehicle accidents are considered to be any collision – regardless how minor – with another vehicle, object or person. The Driver must report the accident to the Transportation Office/Supervisor by phone or radio IMMEDIATELY, no matter how minor.

911 and *MSP (*877) will connect you to emergency services or the Massachusetts State Police most anywhere. The front of this handbook lists all LPVEC transportation staff and emergency phone numbers. Drivers with radios must immediately contact their Transportation Office who will call the police.

If there is any injury to the Driver and/or Monitor or the disabling of the vehicle prevents immediate contact with the Transportation Office, ask someone at the accident scene to call for you.

Keep calm. See to the safety and well-being of you and your passengers. Do not move your vehicle until instructed by the police to do so, unless it is unsafe to remain where you are. Do not offload any students unless it is unsafe to remain in the vehicle. Inform the Transportation Office of the names of all persons present on the vehicle and of all injuries.

Do not discuss the accident with anyone except the police or the Transportation Office, except to share basic information - driver's license, registration, and insurance company, with all parties involved. Do not make any statement of who was at fault. Do not make any statements that imply a contributing factor to the cause of the accident, except to the investigating officer. You are to provide straightforward, honest answers of fact, not speculation, to all questions the police in charge of the accident scene ask of you.

Insurance investigation will commence after the accident. If an insurance company contacts you, do not respond to these inquiries directly. Refer all calls or bring all papers to your Supervisor.

An accident report must be completed that day. An Incident Report will be required for all persons present on your vehicle.

RAILROAD CROSSINGS

State law requires that school buses stop at all live RR crossings. Live tracks are those with RR crossing arms or those with metal in the road, unless marked with an "Exempt".

7D Drivers will approach a RR crossing with their hazard lights on and come to a complete stop at the RR stop line. When the tracks are clear to the left and right and there is no traffic in your lane for 20 feet past the tracks, proceed across the tracks. Turn off your hazard lights after crossing the tracks and resume speed.

Each state has laws and regulations governing how school buses must operate at railroad-highway crossings. It is important for you to understand and obey these state laws and regulations. In general, school buses must stop at all crossings and ensure it is safe before proceeding across the tracks.

A school bus is one of the safest vehicles on the road. However, a school bus does not have the slightest edge when involved in a crash with a train. A train cannot stop quickly because of its size and weight. An emergency escape route does not exist for a train. You can prevent school bus/train crashes by following these recommended procedures:

Approaching the Crossing:

- Slow down, including shifting to a lower gear in a manual transmission bus, and test your brakes.
- Activate hazard lights approximately 200 feet before the crossing. Make sure your intentions are known.
- Scan your surroundings and check for traffic behind you.
- Stay to the right of the roadway if possible.
- Choose an escape route in the event of a brake failure or problems behind you.

At the Crossing:

- Stop no closer than 15 feet and no farther than 50 feet from the nearest rail, where you have the best view of the tracks.
- Place the transmission in Park, or if there is no Park shift position, in Neutral and press down on the service brake or set the parking brakes.
- Turn off all radios and noisy equipment, and silence the passengers.
- Open the service door and driver's window. Look and listen for an approaching train.

Crossing the Track:

- Check the crossing signals again before proceeding.
- At a multiple-track crossing, stop only before the first set of tracks. When you are sure no train is approaching on any track, proceed across all of the tracks until you have completely cleared them.
- Cross the tracks in a low gear. Do not change gears while crossing.
- If the gate comes down after you have started across, drive through it even if it means you will break the gate.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS:

Bus Stalls or Trapped on Tracks: If your bus stalls or is trapped on the tracks, get everyone out of the bus and off the tracks immediately. Move everyone far from the bus at an angle, which is both away from the tracks and toward the train.

Police Officer at the Crossing: If a police officer is at the crossing, obey directions. If there is no police officer, and you believe the signal is malfunctioning, contact your dispatcher to report the situation and ask for instructions on how to proceed.

Obstructed View of Tracks: Plan your route so it provides maximum sight distance at highway-rail grade crossings. Do not attempt to cross the tracks unless you can see far enough down the track to know for certain that no trains are approaching. Be especially careful at "passive" crossings. Even if there are active railroad signals that indicate the tracks are clear, you must look and listen to be sure it is safe to proceed.

7D BUS SIGNS

State law requires that "School Bus" signs must be in the down position whenever there are no students aboard. You must raise the sign at pre-trip (otherwise it is down when you arrive at your first stop) and lower the school bus sign after the last student passenger has exited the vehicle.

SEAT BELTS & SAFETY EQUIPMENT

State law requires that Drivers wear seat belt restraints when operating LPVEC vehicles. Monitors are required to wear seat belt restraints, on vehicles with seat belts, while the vehicle is in motion.

State law requires that all students wear seat belts on vehicles with seat belts. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all occupants of 7D vehicles and 18-student passenger or less school bus as described in Chapter 90 of the Regulations of the Registry of Motor Vehicles to use restraining devices (seat belts). Children in wheelchairs must be secured by a shoulder/lap seat restraint in addition to the wheelchair being secured to the vehicle by belts and clamps.

The Driver and Monitor are responsible to ensure that seat belts are properly secured. Do not rely upon the teacher, paraprofessional or parent/guardian to secure students' seat belts. If someone else places a student into the vehicle, the Driver and Monitor are responsible for ensuring that the restraining devices are properly secured.

All safety equipment or other requirements deemed necessary by the school department for a student and noted on the route sheet next to the student's name **MUST** be on the vehicle and used every day. The requirements may include harnesses, car seats, wheelchairs, air conditioning, monitors, etc. and must be in good working order. No driver, monitor, teacher, or parent can alter these orders. **ONLY** the school department can determine if the requirement is no longer needed for a student.

CAR SEATS

Children under the age of eight and measuring less than fifty-seven inches must ride as a passenger in a motor vehicle properly fastened and secured, according to the manufacturers' instructions, by a child passenger restraint.

Car seats are to be placed in automobiles in the middle bench position, if at all possible. Please note that some of our vehicles are equipped with an extra seat belt in these outside positions to attach to a car seat.

AIR BAGS

Children under the age of twelve (12) and small-sized youths are NOT permitted to ride in the front passenger position in vehicles equipped with air bags.

WHEELCHAIRS

Wheelchairs must be loaded and unloaded at ground level. Ideally, load and unload wheelchairs on the bus entirely in the student's driveway.

Parents, nurses, or teachers are to bring the wheelchair to the lift and receive the wheelchair at the lift. If there is no one to receive the child when he/she is offloaded, the Driver or Monitor must remain with the student until someone receives him/her.

Both Driver and Monitor need to know how to operate the lift and how to secure the wheelchair. It is the Monitor's responsibility to operate the lift and tie down the chair, except when the wheelchair student is the only passenger. The Driver may not leave the bus while there are students on the vehicle and the keys are in the ignition to operate the stop lights. The Driver can, however, leave his/her seat to receive the wheelchair or assist in any other way on the bus.

After locking the brakes of the wheelchair, the chair must be secured to the bus in four places by belts (tie downs) and two places by clamps. In addition, the child must be secured by a shoulder/lap seat belt. Under no circumstances can the belts or tie downs be tied to the wheels of the chair. Belts and tie downs must be tied to the mainframe of the chair ONLY.

BEFORE DRIVING AWAY, IT IS THE DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE WHEELCHAIR IS SECURED.

VEHICLE GUIDELINES

IDLING

As per the Massachusetts Commercial Motor Vehicle Anti-Idling Rule (MGL Chapter 90, § 16A, 540 CMR 27.03), no school bus may idle in excess of five (5) minutes. Drivers violating this policy will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination as per LPVEC policy.

FUELING

Each driver is responsible to fuel the assigned vehicle. **NO FUELING OF A VEHICLE SHALL OCCUR WHILE STUDENTS ARE ON BOARD.**

MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES

The transportation service we provide for our pupils depends upon our attention to safety, promptness, and preventive maintenance of our school transport vehicles. The Driver is responsible for a planned and systematic inspection of the vehicle before each trip. Do not fail to check your vehicle.

A vehicle inspection report book must be filled out daily and the white pages turned into the Transportation Office when you turn in your weekly time sheet on Friday. Daily service for the vehicle includes fuel checking, inspection of tires, lights, brakes, first aid kits, checking for registration and current inspection stickers, and vehicle condition.

The Vehicle Inspection Report Book is to be kept on the vehicle at all times. Use this book to report all vehicle defects to the Head Mechanic. When the mechanic has made all repairs, he will sign the white copy and return it to you. You will then put it back into the corresponding page of your inspection book. Should you be pulled over by the Registry of Motor Vehicles, the officer will be checking for violations and whether the driver was responsible for not reporting them or the mechanic was responsible for not fixing them.

All problems with your vehicle must be in writing to your Head Mechanic. The mechanic will not be responsible for anything that is not in writing. Turn in any and all problems as they occur.

At least bi-weekly, you MUST bring your vehicle in to have the mechanic check the fluids. The engine oil requires frequent checking and winter requires particular attention to the antifreeze solution, battery, and windshield washer fluid. Not complying with this mandatory servicing schedule will revoke the home-base arrangement.

Vehicles must have sufficient fuel for at least one day's operation at the end of every day. The vehicle should have minimally one-half (1/2) tank full of gas. The gas tank must be filled for all inspections. Each site's fueling procedures are different. See your Supervisor for details.

INSPECTIONS

Vehicles must be inspected for cleanliness, at the end of the school year and at the end of your summer run before keys are turned in. Cleanliness for a 7D vehicle includes exterior washing.

Vehicles need to be inspected, at the end of your run the last day before a school vacation, before parking it on site at LPVEC for the duration of the break.

Once in April, August, and December, all school buses must be inspected by the the Registry of Motor Vehicles. This requirement applies only to school buses. Your mechanic will notify you when to bring in your vehicle to the state inspector.

Supervisors will provide Drivers with an inspection checklist prior to all inspections. Do a meticulous, word by word, item by item run through of the checklist. Drivers are responsible for the reporting of all defects, the completeness of the vehicle (registration, full first aid kit, emergency equipment, etc.) and the cleanliness of the vehicle. Floor, seats, and driver area, as well as all interior windows, need to be exceptionally clean and free of personal items. Place any seat belts up over the seats. You will be held responsible if your bus fails the state's inspection due to your negligence.

The Driver is responsible to maintain the cleanliness of the vehicle. Drivers must do a daily pretrip inspection and report all problems or defects to the Supervisor. Vehicles should always be "inspection ready."

KEYS

Drivers are to check in the office daily to be issued vehicle keys for their route. All vehicle keys must be returned to the sites after the a.m. runs, midday runs, and p.m. runs.

Drivers are responsible for all keys. You will be assessed a key charge for any lost keys assigned to the vehicle in your care.

State law prohibits leaving keys in an unattended vehicle. LPVEC and the police will conduct periodic inspections for keys in vehicles. In addition, Drivers must close the windows and doors, and lock doors and gas caps before leaving the vehicles.

Gates at East Longmeadow and Wilbraham must be closed and locked at closing time. There is a lock on the gate. Any Driver will have to open and close the gates if they arrive after hours.

CLEANING OF VEHICLES

Drivers are responsible for maintaining the interiors of the vehicles. 7D Drivers are also responsible for maintaining the exterior of the vehicles.

7D Drivers will be paid ½ hour maximum weekly to clean the interior and exterior of the vehicle. See your Supervisor for a coupon for an exterior wash.

Cleaning supplies and brooms are available for Drivers use by contacting the site Mechanic. All brooms must be secured to the wall of the vehicle when not in use. Drivers must sweep the vehicle EVERY day. Bus cleaning will be completed during "wait time." "Wait time" is defined as time waiting prior to students boarding the vehicle. If this cleaning cannot be accomplished during periods of "wait time", Drivers must notify their Driver Supervisor. Drivers may be paid up to 1 hour maximum per week for cleaning the interior of the bus when pre-approved by the Supervisor when the cleaning cannot be completed during wait time.

If Drivers wish to have a wastebasket, it must be secured and lined with a disposable plastic liner. You will be responsible to clean the container and reline the receptacle daily. If you do not opt to have a wastebasket, it becomes your responsibility to dispose of trash in an appropriate manner. A hanging plastic bag for trash is not acceptable.

RADIO STATION BROADCASTS

Some drivers find it helpful to control student management by playing music the radio by rewarding good behavior. Other drivers feel that the additional noise too distracting. You, as the professional driver, can make the determination of whether to play the radio or not. Should you choose to listen to radio broadcasts while students are in the vehicle, it is imperative that content be monitored for appropriateness of language and message for the age of the students you are transporting. Refrain from listening to religious music or political talk radio while students are on board.

PERSONAL USE OF LPVEC VEHICLES

The automobile, van or school bus provided to LPVEC Drivers is for the exclusive transportation of LPVEC students. Unauthorized personal use of vehicles is not permitted. Drivers using LPVEC vehicles without proper pre-approved authorization from the Transportation General Manager will result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

A stop after the route, for refreshment, that would not deviate from your path of travel to where the vehicle is housed, is permitted. An appointment that does not deviate from the path of travel to where the vehicle is housed, and that you cannot otherwise get to in time between runs, must be pre-approved by the Transportation General Manager. A pre-approved stop of any kind cannot be submitted on your time sheet as part of your route time.

Unscheduled stops are not allowed with students on the vehicle at any time.

Only students assigned by the Transportation Office, will be transported to and from school. Do not make unauthorized transportation arrangements with students. Unauthorized persons are not permitted in LPVEC vehicles. The Transportation General Manager must approve any exceptions to this rule.

HOUSING VEHICLES AT HOME

No Driver will be permitted to park a vehicle at home at any time, during the day or overnight, unless prior approval is obtained from the Transportation General Manager.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In case of medical emergency, remain calm. **IMMEDIATELY CONTACT YOUR TRANSPORTATION OFFICE.** They may advise you to go to the nearest fire department, police station, or hospital. Drivers must radios are the Transportation Office, who will then call 9-1-1. **DURING A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, ALL OTHER DRIVERS MUST REMAIN OFF THE RADIO.**

Advise your Transportation Office of all actions you are taking. Communication is vital. The Transportation Office will notify all necessary persons. Administer emergency resuscitation or first aid if necessary. Immediately following the emergency, you must come into the Transportation Office to fill out an Incident Report and, if there was a seizure, a Seizure Report.

Seizures may not be a medical emergency even though they can be frightening to the observer. Persons with seizures need only to be protected from injuring themselves and others nearby. A period of quiet after a seizure is not uncommon and most students may be able to resume their daily routine. Advise the Transportation Office of a student's seizure. The Transportation Office will notify LPVEC and/or school nurse and may direct you to take additional actions.

All transportation employees are required to be trained in CPR and seizures. Mandatory trainings are provided by LPVEC during the school year. (Ch.766, sec.804.3)

SEIZURE PROTOCOL

1. **Stay calm.** Note the time the seizure started. For seizure activity, stop the bus as soon as safely possible.
2. **Contact your site** or another site immediately; tell them who is seizing, if Grand Mal or other. Move other students away from seizing child.
3. **Non-Wheelchair Student.** Clear the seat/bench of any objects and try to ease the student onto the seat. Try to position on their side (this helps breathing and evaluation).
4. **Wheelchair Student.** Watch to ensure airway is not blocked. Provide Seizure first aid. Do not take student out of the wheelchair. Make sure wheelchair is locked and student is strapped in.
5. **Pad the area** around the student, starting around and under the head. Try to loosen any tight clothing around the neck or tight belt around the waist.
6. **Do not restrain** the student; only try to stop them from hurting themselves, moving against fixed objects.
7. **Do not put anything in the student's mouth** or give him/her anything to drink, during or after a seizure.
8. **Let the seizure to run its course. Note its characteristics and its length and document.**
9. **WHEN TO CALL 911: **Note: for students with individual protocol sheets, call 911 when instructed to do so on their sheet!!!****
 - a. A Seizure that lasts 5 minutes, or restarts within 5 minutes, OR
 - b. Whenever a seizing student has signs of difficulty breathing: Blueness around the mouth or nail beds, no rise and fall of the chest, no air moving through nose/mouth OR
 - c. If an injury occurs during a seizure.
10. **Provide rescue breathing and/or CPR if needed.**
11. **Once the seizure is over:** Support their head if the student is in a chair and he/she is sleepy (helps them to breath). Check for injuries. Make student comfortable and provide emotional support. Stay with the student until they are fully alert.
12. **Review** the seizure activity with your supervisor at your site by radio or phone while still on the bus.
13. **Tell** whoever receives the child at school or at home that a seizure occurred.
14. **Fill in** the Seizure Report form and submit to your supervisor ASAP that day.
15. The Seizure Report must be sent to LPVEC Health Office or corresponding Student Service office in the school district as soon as possible.

STUDENT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

IF A STUDENT IS INJURED OR BECOMES ILL:

- Ensure that the student is comfortable;
- Contact the Transportation Department; **THEY WILL:**
 - Contact the school nurse/school office;
 - Call the parent; and/or
 - Call LPVEC Supervisor and LPVEC School Nurse (if appropriate).

NOTE: *If no one is in the Transportation Office, contact the Wilbraham Transportation Office and speak to the Transportation General Manager or available Supervisor.*

- You will be advised where to transport the student.
- Deliver a completed Incident Report: Accident/Exposure Report form to the Transportation Office, within 24 hours.

IN CASE OF AN EXTREME EMERGENCY: (severe bleeding, seizures, loss of consciousness, etc.) In addition to the above:

- Call for emergency medical help (e.g. 911).
- Contact the Transportation Department. **THEY WILL:**
 - Contact school nurse;
 - Call parent or other persons listed on Emergency Information Form;
 - Contact LPVEC School Nurse and LPVEC Supervisor or Director;
 - And, if situation is judged life threatening, contact the child's Physician/Medical facility immediately.
- Administer emergency resuscitation or first aid, if necessary;
- In all cases, the safety and comfort of the injured person is the first priority.
- Fill out an Incident Report: Accident/Exposure Report and if a seizure, a Seizure Report (if applicable) within 24 hours.

STUDENT SUICIDE/IMMINENT BODILY HARM

If a Driver or Monitor becomes aware of the possibility of a student committing suicide or of a student's imminent bodily harm, there is a duty to inform the Transportation Office immediately. The Transportation Office will then immediately notify the appropriate authorities.

Under no circumstances should a suicidal youth be left alone. Immediately talk to the student to determine if the student has any dangerous instrument(s) on or near him/herself. Calm student by talking and reassuring until assistance arrives. Try to have the student relinquish means of harming him/herself and try to prevent student from harming him/herself.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

All transportation employees and school staff are considered Mandated Reporters by state law. Mandated Reporters are required to notify their supervisor or the Director of Human Resources on the first day he/she first suspects that child abuse or neglect has occurred. LPVEC will report the information to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if sufficient suspicion is found. Mandated and non-mandated reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability as a result of filing a report of abuse or neglect, provided they immediately report, as required by the statute.

The law strictly forbids employers from penalizing any employee who reports actual or suspected child abuse or neglect. No LPVEC employee will be discharged, discriminated against, or have any negative action against his or her employment for a report made in good faith and the reporter did not cause the abuse or neglect.

The role of the mandated reporter is of utmost importance because victims of abuse and neglect are at increased risk of further harm if such abuse or neglect remains unreported. Therefore, pursuant to state law, any mandated reporter who has knowledge of child abuse or neglect can be fined up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 2 ½ years for failing to report such abuse and neglect.

Cases involving students who are 18 years or older and disabled will be reported to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission. Those involving children under 18 will be filed with the Department of Children and Families.

Staff is reminded that abuse/neglect reports are subject to the same confidentiality protection as any other personal information on a child. State and federal regulations regarding confidentiality will apply.

INFECTION CONTROL

The Department of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has set standards and guidelines pertaining to infection control in the workplace. This notice is intended as a review and to inform you of measures to be taken in Infection Control and of the use of universal precautions in the classroom and our vehicles.

Proper handwashing is crucial to preventing the spread of infection. Hands should be washed:

- before physical contact with students
- after contact is completed
- after contact with any equipment used by our students.
- immediately and before touching anything else, if your hands or other skin surface become soiled with blood or body fluids.
- whether gloves are worn or not
- after gloves are removed

Gloves are barriers utilized in infection control. Gloves should be worn:

- when direct contact with the student may involve contact with blood or body fluids
- for contact with urine, feces, and respiratory secretions
- when providing mouth, nose, or tracheal care

If a body fluid spill occurs in the vehicle, clean it up as soon as possible with appropriate materials. The use of gloves is recommended. Any items used from the spill kit or the first aid box must be **REPLACED IMMEDIATELY**. See your Transportation Supervisor.

SANITARY GLOVES

Sanitary gloves shall be worn whenever dealing with bodily fluids (blood, urine, feces, saliva, etc.). Gloves are to be changed and hands washed before and after working with each child. Staff is required to read and follow the universal precautions procedures adopted by LPVEC.

STUDENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

MAINTAINING GOOD DISCIPLINE

Remember, your primary responsibility as a transportation employee is to transport a group of individuals from one place to another safely. Your level of success depends predominately on three influences: the students' behavior, your professionalism in student interactions, and your driving techniques.

Students riding the bus must understand from the outset that you cannot allow anyone's actions to keep you from providing for the safety of your passengers and yourself. The climate that exists on the school bus is up to you. Without a clear understanding of who is in charge, the conditions could become unmanageable and potentially dangerous for everyone. It is important to establish this climate at the beginning of the school year and consistently reinforce it throughout the year.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

School Bus Drivers have a significant responsibility to transport their students safely and efficiently to and from school. In order to do this effectively, you must create a positive atmosphere for travel, by implementing the following points:

1. Familiarize yourself with and abide by all rules, policies and procedures relating to student transportation.
2. Familiarize yourself with all assigned routes and designated school bus stops.
3. Establish a student seating plan the first week of school and maintain your passenger lists so they are up-to-date. These will be critical in an emergency or to assist a substitute driver.
4. Recognize the importance of establishing solid working relationships with students, parents, supervisors, and school administrators, especially when working to ensure proper student conduct.
5. Begin the school year by addressing the students and instructing them on behavioral expectations as well as the potential consequences of improper behavior. Provide and enforce general policies regarding riding the bus, and instructions during emergency evacuation drills.
6. Conduct yourself in a professional manner.
7. Avoid becoming too closely acquainted with students; maintain a friendly but firm adult/student relationship.
8. Avoid the trap of allowing the students to get away with things because you want to be a "nice" driver or because you don't want them to dislike you. It is always more important that students respect you.
9. **Never put your hands on a student**, nor should you grab, slap, hit, or shake a student.
10. Maintain order and safety on the bus at all times. Create an atmosphere where the rights of others are respected on the school bus and at the school bus stop. You can do this by:
 - a. Requiring an orderly entrance and exit;
 - b. Minimizing interior noise;
 - c. Controlling passenger movement;
 - d. Requiring silence at railroad crossings; and
 - e. Prohibiting transportation of unauthorized materials.
11. Keep rules of conduct reasonable and simple for students to understand. Deal with infractions promptly, firmly and fairly. Review these rules with students periodically.
12. Handle minor infractions with firm and direct instructions of expected behavior. Report behavior on a Conduct Report on that the same day.
13. Present a positive image in dress, hygiene, language, and manner while on duty because you represent the school district and LPVEC.
14. Be considerate and patient with all children, especially young students or students with special needs. These children may be entering school for the first time and may be intimidated or frightened by all the new experiences. It is important to make these children feel safe and welcome. Some students with special needs will require repetition and practice to become clear on expectations. Others may react strongly to changes in routine or environment.
15. Keep the bus clean during both regular route and extra-curricular trips.
16. Remember to inspect the interior of the bus before a new group of students enters and again after they exit. This can help identify students who may be tampering with or destroying parts of the bus.
17. Consider keeping a daily log of events at the end of your routes.
18. Have a readily-available emergency contact list in case of an emergency, and ensure your communication system is operational.
19. Avoid negative verbal interactions, such as sarcasm, put-downs and mockery, as these are not an effective tool for student management and often inspire a negative student/driver relationship.

STUDENT SEATING PLANS

Always use seating charts for morning and afternoon runs. These charts are helpful in controlling student behavior and assist you in getting to know the students' names. This is particularly useful for elementary age students. Seating charts are especially helpful for a substitute driver and during an emergency.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Explain the rules of riding the bus at the beginning of the school year. Clear and set rules will help to gain the cooperation and respect of your passengers. Students will more likely follow the rules and accept your authority when they understand that you are fair and that you will enforce rules with their safety in mind.

1. Be respectful of the rights of other students.
2. Be on time at bus stop locations at home and at school. They should leave home in time to reach the bus stop five (5) minutes before scheduled pickup and avoid playing when waiting for the bus.
3. Enter and leave the bus at school loading and unloading zones and at bus stops in an orderly fashion (no crowding or pushing), and follow instructions.
4. Upon entering the bus, go directly to their seats, and remain seated until instructed to stand and unload.
5. Keep the aisle clear at all time. Books, lunch boxes, instruments and book bags must be placed under the seat or held on the student's lap. **DO NOT BLOCK THE AISLE!**
6. Refrain from loud conversation, unnecessary noise and boisterous conduct.
7. Use appropriate language (e.g., no profanity permitted).
8. Never bring tobacco, glass containers, weapons, drugs, alcohol, or any other item that is not allowed in school.
9. Keep all body parts and other objects inside the school bus. The driver will tell students when they may open and close windows.
10. Never tamper with or block emergency exits.
11. Keep hands and feet off other children and their possessions. Throwing materials, hitting, pushing, spitting, biting, tripping and rough behavior will not be tolerated.
12. Never tamper with or destroy the school bus. Students can be prosecuted for doing so.
13. Remain silent while the school bus is stopped at railroad crossings.
14. Be aware that transportation can be ultimately denied by the school district to students who act inappropriately.
15. Keep the school bus clean. Do not leave trash behind.
16. You cannot maintain control and respect if you are too harsh or too lenient. Drivers who handle discipline problems fairly, consistently, and according to the rules earn the respect of their passengers.
17. The after-school route may be more demanding on the driver when compared to the morning route. After being in a classroom all day, students may have a lot of energy and a desire to release tension. You will need to develop a higher tolerance for the students' behavior on the after-school route, without allowing flagrant abuse of the privilege to ride the school bus.

DRIVER/MONITOR & STUDENT INTERACTIONS

As a professional school bus driver, you should always have a general knowledge of each of your passengers, including their names and general behavior. Since you have contact with the students for only a short time each day, you may not initially know as much about the students as their teachers, but the use of seating plans would undoubtedly assist in the learning of student's names. You may be assigned to a route transporting the same students for several years. This may give you a chance to develop relationships with students that other district staff may not have. You must not only know how to perform your job as a driver, but you must also know something of your riders' behavior patterns and a great deal about their reactions in order to safely pick up and deliver your passengers. Your main function is to transport the students to their destination and discharge them safely.

You must also know how to approach students in a way that will gain their respect. It is better to talk to students without shouting, showing anger or displaying irritation. Be careful to never threaten them with any action you cannot enforce. Give your instructions to the students without favoritism. If you overlook poor behavior by one student, you lose the respect of the other students. Strike a happy medium by being neither too lenient nor too harsh; both extremes are equally bad for the morale of the students on your bus. Your attitude should be friendly, cheerful and professional.

Building good bus conduct starts the first day of the school year. After arriving at your first destination and prior to unloading, stand and state the rules very clearly. Be sure to deal with the very first infraction promptly and firmly. It is much easier to prevent a bad situation than to correct one.

Work to build cooperation with your students by being friendly, courteous and helpful. Over time, high student morale will help you control the worst offenders. When offenders find that improper conduct is unacceptable to the group, they will think twice about doing things that cause them to "lose face" with the group.

INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS: GENERAL GUIDELINES

You can avoid many problems on the bus by recognizing good behavior and using proper techniques to reinforce that behavior. While it is often easier to use negative terms when dealing with behavior, it is much more effective to use positive comments to reinforce the good things that happen on the bus. Learn to recognize desirable behaviors and emphasize them with positive comments.

For example:

- "I saw you pick up that gum wrapper, Fred, and I appreciate it."
- "Jane, you were at the stop on time this morning. Good for you."
- "That's what I like to see."

If you learn to stress specific, positive and behaviorally-related activities on your bus, you will eventually eliminate the negative ones. Work to develop this skill. It will mean many safe and pleasant trips.

Remember the following points, when dealing with students:

- Though each student is different, do not allow special privileges for any student unless requested by the school administration or LPVEC.
- Observe the rights and privileges of each child only as long as he or she obeys the rules of good bus behavior. Riding is a privilege for regular education students, not a right. The moment a student "gets out of line", deal with the offender fairly, impartially and in the same manner you treat all such offenders.
- Remember that all eyes are on you while you are driving the bus. Your words and actions have tremendous influence on your passengers. Speak quietly, clearly, confidently, and firmly when talking to the students on your bus.
- Praise students generously when they accept responsibility and show a general pattern of good behavior.

If you are faced with a discipline problem, pause and relax for a few seconds. Use this time to think about what you are going to say and do next. How you handle behavioral situations, whether appropriately and inappropriately, will be watched closely by the students for consistency, fairness and understanding.

1. If you yell, expect yelling back, if not at you, then at someone else.
2. If you praise, expect it to be picked up by others.
3. Expect and encourage discussion and openness with students and you will get it.
4. Keep discussions short and simple.
5. Never use profane or obscene language or raise your voice above a level necessary to be heard.

A word of warning directed to the offender may be enough for a minor infraction. Avoid getting into lengthy discussions while the bus is moving.

CLASS: A STUDENT MANAGEMENT MEMORY AID

To help you remember important student management techniques, learn the rules represented by the letters of the word "CLASS". By remembering one easy word, you will be able to remember five simple rules for student management.

C = Consistent...Always be consistent with praise and discipline. Whenever a student behavior problem arises, follow through with the appropriate consequences.

L = Limits...Set limits and make sure the students are aware of them. Post 3 or 4 simple and clearly stated rules. They should be the same for all students. For example: 1) Face forward and remain seated at all times, 2) Speak quietly and kindly, 3) Respect the personal space of others.

A = Attitude...Have a positive attitude. A cheerful smile may change the behavior of a student. The attitude of the driver often becomes the attitude of the student, or even the entire atmosphere on the bus.

S = Share...Share with the students what is expected of them. State the rules and their consequences. If the students do not know the rules, they cannot be expected to follow them.

S = Support...Support other drivers and exchange experiences. Other individuals may be able to assist in difficult situation. Also by sharing, common problems may be discovered and new techniques explored. Support is also available from your supervisors and from the school district, usually via the principal, when transporting regular education students.

SERIOUS DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

For problems of a more serious nature, such as a fight on the school bus, apply the following general procedure:

1. Drive out of traffic to a safe location, stop and secure the bus. This may be in a parking lot or side of the road. The fact that you have taken this action makes the students realize the situation is one out of the ordinary.
2. After stopping the engine and removing the ignition key, get out of your seat, and stand and face the students. Address the offenders in a courteous manner, but in a firm voice. Don't show anger, but all students must realize you expect an immediate, positive response.
3. Address the student(s) involved by name and state specifically what behavior you will not allow. Explain that you expect the student to obey the bus rules and you can enforce. Maintain control of yourself and avoid projecting hostility.
4. Relate your comments to a specific unacceptable behavior you want changed; don't humiliate the child involved. This may require repeating the action you expect (using the same words) several times. Limit this communication to what is not acceptable and what must occur to remedy the situation. Suggest an action that can be performed successfully.
5. Before you specify related consequences, be sure they are supported by existing policy, you are willing to follow through, and **THEY ARE WITHIN YOUR POWER TO INITIATE.**
6. Once you are sure you are on firm and acceptable ground, and you have committed yourself, and THEN relay the consequences. You cannot afford to initiate hollow consequences. You must take the action you have indicated. This emphasized the point made regarding your relationship with your transportation director/supervisor and with the school principal.
7. Don't forget to inform your supervisor as soon as possible after any confrontation. Make sure you document the incident, children involved and actions taken so a record is on file.

If these steps don't work, radio the supervisor; don't start the bus until you get a response. **NEVER** ask or send students to telephone school officials. You are responsible for all students; keep them on the bus. If you are near the school, your supervisor may instruct you to turn the bus around and drive back to the school. **NEVER** order any student off of the bus. **ALWAYS** call for assistance and be prepared if there is not a response. A call to the local police is not out of the question if the violator(s) are creating a hazardous situation which would make transporting the students unsafe.

When working through more serious discipline problems, never physically move a student. In fact, be extremely careful about physically touching a child. If a change in seating is needed, do not direct the student to sit directly behind you, but to a seat where you can more closely observe the behavior. Also keep in mind you have no legal right to put the student off the bus, except at the student's regular bus stop or at school. Similarly, you cannot deny the student a seat on the bus the next morning.

Keep in mind there are behavioral approaches to help you with student management; however, it is most important to consistently follow established school district procedures.

If the situation escalates or requires additional attention, do not try to handle serious discipline cases by yourself. Refer all such cases to your supervisor or the school principal. Give all the facts, in detail, and be sure the entire problem is stated clearly. Usually the child who causes problems on the bus is also causing problems in the classroom. The school administrator has the whole picture of the child, while you, as a driver, know only about his or her bus behavior.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

As described below, kindergarten and elementary students behave differently than middle school and secondary students. By learning some of these characteristics, you will be better informed when managing the students on the bus.

KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS (GRADES K-5)

The kindergarten or elementary school age student tends to prefer a great deal of physical activity. Normally, these students have a problem staying in their seats. When they can't move, they often talk instead. Loud talking on the bus is a problem you will need a lot of patience to deal with, but absolute silence among students is not a healthy

school bus atmosphere. Students vary in the amount of activity they need, and their behavior will vary from day to day. Students of this age have limited attention spans and short memories, and the day after an occurrence they may have forgotten all about it. For this reason, they rarely hold grudges against those who discipline them. Beginning bus drivers should not try to gain the children's favor by letting small misdeeds go unnoticed. Take prompt and continued action for all infractions of bus conduct.

These younger students tend not to pay attention to the feelings of adults, but, on the other hand, they care a lot about what the adults think of them. Some children can be actively rejected by their peers, sometimes because they are perceived as odd or have poor social skills. They also are sensitive to the opinions of other youngsters and sometimes tend to pick on children who do not fit in well with the group. If you transport students in special education and students in general education in the same bus, be alert to ensure the exceptional students are not being insulted or targeted.

Bullying can also emerge among older elementary school students. Bullying and other forms of victimization reflect individuals' lack of self-control, and bullies tend to seek victims who are insecure, anxious and isolated. Bus drivers should monitor children's behavior and provide appropriate intervention when bullying or harassment occurs or is reported. See the section below on bullying and harassment.

Be careful not to allow individual children to hurt themselves socially by setting themselves up as the "driver's pet." Some students who have not yet learned to get along with others may also misbehave to attract attention.

Given the way students of this age behave, you may be able to promote a group spirit "to make our bus the best." Many bus drivers have achieved excellent results by discussing bus rules with their students and making them "our rules." Some drivers develop a game of having each busload try to excel in keeping the bus clean, behaving well on the bus, and staying orderly when loading and unloading. This method requires considerable skill, and new bus drivers should consult experienced drivers before attempting to start this type of competition. Keep in mind, however, that art work, festive decorations, etc., should not be displayed on the bus. These can interfere with safe operations.

MIDDLE-SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS (GRADES 6-8)

Students in the middle school are often centered on themselves and will argue to convince others or to clarify their own thinking. They begin to think more independently and critically, and also tend to become more focused on acceptance and popularity among peers. With adolescence and hormonal changes, middle school students may experience mood swings and begin to test the limits of adult authority. Social interactions may involve changing seats or loud conversations. Verbal and sometimes physical aggression can occur, sometimes in the form of bullying and harassment. Fads and conformity in communication and dress develops among peer groups. Some youth begin exploring with sexual activity, and a small percentage may become involved in gangs and other delinquent social activities.

SECONDARY AGE STUDENTS (GRADES 9-12)

In the junior and senior high school age groups, girls tend to be more mature than boys, but teens remain highly socially self-conscious. Relationships between romantic couples emerge, and sometimes may cause trouble on the school bus when some of the students are "going steady." Other students often shield "making out" in the rear of the bus. Be alert to stop such actions as soon as you spot them. Ingenuity in seating arrangements can help to prevent this problem. For instance, placing the senior girls opposite seventh grade boys may help.

Students of this age are very concerned about their dignity and want to be treated like adults, although they do not always act the part. They are apt to be erratic in their behavior, and they are usually very anxious to dress and act the same as all members of their group.

You must be very careful not to make remarks about administrators and teachers. Secondary school students are chronic gossips, and any belittling remark you make may be widely circulated and magnified when retold. Students may also pass on remarks unintentionally to parents and others.

Young bus drivers must expect the older students to resent any great show of authority. Do not hesitate to ask for help from your supervisor or principal to solve problems involving these students.

SUMMARY OF AGE-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS

The behavioral characteristics of elementary and secondary students are presented in summary form to assist you in dealing with these age groups.

Kindergarten and Elementary Students can be expected to be:

- Physically active;
- Talkative (loud);
- Forgetful (predictably unpredictable);
- Insensitive to the feelings of others (may pick on students with physical or mental disabilities);
- Sensitive to adult criticism;
- Willing to cooperate in group projects; and
- Harder to handle in the afternoon than in the morning.

Middle-School Age Students can be expected to:

- Change at different rates;
- Be vulnerable to bouts of low self esteem;
- Have new interests and abilities as well as many new feelings, thoughts, and concerns;
- Identify with their peer groups and want to belong;
- Seek limited independence and autonomy;
- Question rules and beliefs they had accepted at face value until now;
- Be easily offended and sensitive to criticism; and
- Behave erratically and inconsistently.

Secondary Students have the following characteristics:

- Dating or romantic relationships between students will likely develop;
- Concerned with their dignity (image);
- Gossipy, repeat things to their parents;
- Resent authority;
- Organize in groups;
- More prone to vandalism; and
- Try to disturb the driver.

CONTROLLING STUDENT BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

The following pointers can help you prevent and/or control discipline problems you may encounter on your bus.

KEEP DISCIPLINE PRIVATE WHENEVER POSSIBLE

- If an individual breaks the rules of bus conduct, do not reprimand him or her in front of all the students riding the bus. Individual behavior problems that do not affect the others on the bus are best handled in a private manner.
- Avoid a showdown with a chronic troublemaker in front of the other students. Instead, report an incident to the principal or supervisor, and request their help in the matter.
- Do not threaten the entire busload for the misdeeds of a few. Focus your attention on the students creating the disorder; avoid disciplining all of the students when restoring order.
- It is a good rule never to say anything unpleasant to more than one person at a time. On the other hand, if general bus safety is being threatened by one or more students, a driver should point out their misbehavior in front of all bus passengers. A case in point is the lighting of matches by students riding the bus. Stop the incident immediately in front of the entire busload of students.

STAY PROFESSIONAL

- Young people greatly resent any sign of favoritism. Avoid being too lenient with normally well-behaved students and too harsh toward those who have been causing trouble.
- Never lose your temper. In the event of an argument or misunderstanding, the less emotion you display, the less emotion you will rouse in the student. Avoid using threats or physical force. Be consistent in your actions.
- Young people tend to test adults to see how far they can go or how much they can get away with doing. Deal with this behavior fairly and firmly, avoiding harshness or unfriendliness. If students know

that reasonably good behavior is expected of them at all times on the school bus, then you may not have any real disciplinary problems.

- Start out the school year being extremely strict and gradually lessen discipline, if bus behavior remains satisfactory. Students may also calm down during the course of the year. If a difficult child shows signs of calming down, do not hold a grudge; rather, show encouragement.
- Do not exchange wise cracks and gossip with the students, as your actions should aid the educational program of the school district. Avoid shouting, arguing, and obscene or profane language.
- Avoid biases against students. Do not prejudge students because of family name, background, appearance or neighborhood. Avoid being overly suspicious, but be alert for potential discipline problems.
- Act in a responsible manner. Show the importance of your job in your actions.
- Always be courteous to children. Provide compliments whenever possible.
- Keep alert. Do not ignore minor incidents; they can easily become major problems.

SET DISCIPLINE STANDARDS

- Do everything possible to inform students they have important responsibilities in ensuring group safety.
- Settle discipline problems quickly.
- Handle serious discipline problems only when the bus is stopped.
- Seat any troublemakers near you where you can see them and observe their behavior.
- Display smooth driving skills; poor driving habits often increase student misbehavior and frighten younger passengers.
- Be firm, fair, impartial and consistent.
- Never lose your temper.
- Treat students as you would like your child to be treated.

CONDUCT REPORTS

Discipline on school buses is the biggest problem confronting school bus drivers, and the critical relationship to nurture is the one with school authorities.

While a school bus driver is not alone when it comes to solving discipline problems, he/she may be alone when a disturbance occurs. You are responsible for the conduct of students on your bus, but you have the backing of your supervisor and the school administration to effectively discharge this responsibility.

Special Needs transportation employees MAY NOT talk with teachers or parents regarding problems with children. Regular Education transportation employees may inform Principals of bus conduct reports directly. Conduct Reports must be filed with the Transportation Office. If any Driver or Monitor has a problem with a student that he or she has not been able to resolve one-on-one, the following procedures must be followed:

- Driver or Monitor writes up problem on Bus Conduct Report form. Do not make judgments about the students or give advice to parents or supervisors in the report. Simply write up a detailed description of what occurred. Never refer to other students in the report by name.
- Submit the Conduct Report to the Transportation Office the same day.
- Reports should be filed for each incident of misconduct as it occurs. School Administrators can only take action when they know a problem exists!
- If there was any physical contact involved ("hit another person," "scratched another person," etc.), contact the Transportation Office immediately. School Administrators want to address such conduct immediately, not wait for the bus conduct report to arrive.
- If the student or you were subjected to any physical contact, you must fill out an Incident Report, in addition to a Bus Conduct Report, the same day.
- Copies of the Bus Conduct Report are faxed to the town's Special Education Director, School Principal, and/or LPVEC Special Education Supervisor and may be forwarded to the parent.
- Each town's Special Education Administrator or School Principal will decide what corrective measures will be taken.
- Under no circumstances shall the Driver or Monitor decide the "punishment" of the child nor should the problem be discussed with the child's parent/guardian.
- If the problem continues, inform your Transportation Office.

In many school districts, the first action taken is a reprimand. For regular education students, a withdrawal of bus privileges for a short period of time may occur next. If the student's behavior does not improve after returning, the

privilege to ride the bus for the balance of the school year may be denied or the student may be transferred to another bus (regular education students only).

Never put a student off of the bus for misconduct; you are not empowered to make the decision yourself. School officials may take this step after all other measures have failed to improve the situation. Keep in mind some districts will discipline a student while in school so as not to interrupt their educational experience. Some students will not come to school, if they are denied a ride on the bus.

Remember the following pointers:

- Always follow the local policy above.
- Supply a copy of the bus rules to each student and post a copy of the rules so every student is aware of your expectations.
- If any action taken by the school administration does not promote good or safe school bus behavior, ask to meet with your supervisor to discuss the matter. They can work with administration to emphasize the safety of the entire busload of students is threatened, if no action is taken against chronic offenders.
- Maintain close contact with the principal and secure their cooperation.

DON'T DEAL WITH ON-BUS PROBLEMS WHEN LOADING AND UNLOADING

In order to get students to and from school safely and on time, you need to be able to concentrate on the driving task. Loading and unloading requires all your concentration, especially considering the number of injuries and other incidents that occur during these times. Don't take your eyes off of what is happening outside the bus. If there is a behavior problem on the bus, wait until the students have finished loading or have unloaded to a place of safety. If necessary, pull the bus over to handle the problem.

ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

There are many differences between the students of today and the students of past decades, and past disciplinary techniques used by transportation employees and other school officials/personnel are no longer as useful as they once were.

While there are many theories regarding behavior management for children, one respected set of guidelines and disciplinary skills known as assertive discipline, can assist school personnel, including transportation employees with handling disciplinary problems. Assertive discipline was developed for classroom situations so teachers and other personnel would be able to understand and communicate their needs to students in order to meet the needs of the students. A more productive environment results when needs of students and teachers are met. Essentially, a key to this technique is catching students being "good," recognizing and supporting them when they behave appropriately, and on a consistent basis letting them know you like what they are doing.

Assertive discipline can and should be applied to transportation employees/student situations. School bus drivers need to have an orderly and quiet bus; students need a safe ride to and from school. The ride is much safer for the students when your needs are met. Along with the differences in today's students, individual bus drivers also differ. Each bus driver operates in a different manner and may allow behaviors other bus drivers will not allow. This creates a conflict for the student who expects you to react in the same manner previous bus driver. Assertive discipline can help you communicate your particular needs to the students. Although you should effectively maintain order on the school bus, you also need to avoid alienating students or infringing upon their rights. Setting limits for the students must be balanced with showing compassion and warmth.

An assertive discipline plan can be used by you to:

- Provide students with clear expectations;
- Help you handle all behavior (major and minor) problems consistently;
- Provide a common approach everyone understands;
- Prevent you from reacting emotionally or overreacting; and
- Remind you to frequently praise students and acknowledge positive behavior.

Disciplinary measures can be categorized into three types: non-assertive, hostile and assertive. These terms describe the methods used, not the person using them.

NON-ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

There are two basic situations that can be classified as non-assertive discipline. First, if you do not clearly convey your wants and needs, then the student cannot be expected to follow them. A second non-assertive technique is to state your needs, but not back up the statements with actions. Transportation employees who act in a non-assertive manner is passive. Students will not usually cooperate with a non-assertive individual. If you feel you cannot handle student behavior, let students misbehave, back down when challenged, or feel overwhelmed, you are most likely a non-assertive driver, and you will need to change to manage student behavior.

HOSTILE DISCIPLINE

On the other hand, hostile transportation employees express their wants and needs in (negative) ways that may violate the rights of the student. While students usually obey a hostile transportation employee, they may become afraid of you and act more aggressively when threatened. If you find yourself yelling constantly, threatening students (and not following up), or using physical force, you are acting in a hostile way, which is not appropriate for a school bus operator.

ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

Assertive discipline creates a positive environment in which the needs of you and your students are met. It creates a balance between the rights of each person, and a balance between the limits you place on students and the support you show for students, because of this, the students trust and respect you.

Assertive transportation employees are neither hostile nor passive. They clearly state their needs and back up their statements with appropriate actions. Assertive transportation employees have a positive outlook and believe in their abilities. They communicate effectively and plan how to respond with actions. They are persistent and quick to respond in a meaningful way, operating in a take-charge manner, but aware of the support needed by each individual child. To summarize, assertive bus drivers:

- Are the boss on the bus;
- Say what they mean and mean what they say;
- Clearly and firmly tell students exactly how they want them to behave;
- Stay calm and use a normal tone of voice;
- Have a plan of action when students do not behave; and
- Reward students when they do behave.

To become an assertive transportation employee,

1. Start with an assertive and positive attitude—No student will stop me from driving a safe bus;
2. Speak assertively—calm, firm, clear, and without anger;
3. Have an assertive discipline plan:
 - a. Set clear, simple rules for behavior on the bus
 - b. Have consequences when students don't follow the rules and be sure consequences match the problem behavior; and
 - c. Provide positive rewards when students do behave.

Several obstacles may stand in your way as you try to achieve assertive discipline. First, you will not be able to influence a student, if you do not believe you can. It's easy to make excuses for poor student behavior, such as heredity, ignorance, peer pressure, inadequate parenting, socio-economic background, or environment. You need to recognize the difference between students who cannot control their actions and those who can, but choose not to control them. Even many students with disabilities can choose whether to display good or poor behavior.

Don't forget you must identify a student's individual needs for a given bus trip; they may be different for field trips than for routine trips. You must also be able to clearly state these needs to all students on the bus. Tell all students you expect them to behave well and tell them the consequences, should they choose to behave poorly. Reinforce these directives by following through with appropriate actions. This includes praise when a student does something well and discipline for poor behavior. All students must receive the same disciplinary sanctions, but recognize some students need more attention and support than others. Misbehavior in a student may indicate the need for extra attention.

No disciplinary plan is foolproof. Some students will continue to misbehave even when you have acted correctly. Sometimes you will need to ask the help of your supervisor, other drivers, a teacher, or the principal in dealing with a particular student or situation. The assertive discipline plan is a necessary tool for routine student management.

MANAGING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS GUIDELINES

To manage students with disabilities while transporting them, you must know individual specific behavior patterns and required treatments. All students are affected by other people's actions, particularly people who play significant roles in their lives. Students with disabilities may be especially sensitive to the behavior and moods of others.

Parents, teachers and special education professionals may give you information about the nature and extent of a student's disability along with other relevant information.

In addition to following the previous guidelines for managing students, keep these points in mind when working with students with disabilities:

- Be observant and try to anticipate problems. Always expect the unexpected.
- Keep your supervisor informed of problems with the student or significant changes in behavior.
- **When working with individuals' whose disability affects their ability to communicate, it is important to work with the classroom teacher to learn the best way to effectively communicate with the student. Some students may use an augmentative communication device such as a laminated card with pictures or a computer with a voice simulator to express their needs. It may be helpful to ask simple yes/no questions in order to communicate effectively.**
- Give students with emotional or behavioral disorders some responsibility in setting the standards of behavior they must meet.
- If a student with an emotional disorder becomes agitated or loses self-control, you should verbally intervene and attempt to calm the situation. Do so in a calm, directive manner.
- Do not take student comments and behaviors personally.
- Each day, your attitude and behavior should welcome a fresh start for each student. In other words, do not hold grudges from past problems and behaviors.
- Be aware that "bad days" happen. The student's efficiency and self control may vary from day to day or from week to week. These puzzling shifts may lead you to feel much of the student's behavior is willful disobedience. Remember, these fluctuations may not be under the student's control. Document these incidents and report them to your supervisor, if you feel additional attention is needed. In some cases, transportation management may work with a classroom teacher and other educational professional to implement a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) reflecting the goals identified for that student's development.
- Always put safety first. If a student's behavior is distracting or dangerous to others, report the situation to your supervisor immediately.
- Introduce a substitute driver to the students in advance, if possible, since a change in routine or environment (e.g., driver change) may cause some students to react emotionally. Substitute drivers or aides must also be made aware, and be properly trained to understand and work with each student on the bus. Make sure the new driver has explicit, written instructions about the route and pick-up and drop-off times for each student.

"START" - A MEMORY AID FOR MANAGING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

You will likely carry at least one student with a disability on your bus during your driving career. A bus operator may not even know he/she is transporting a student with a disability; therefore, all operators should be aware of the special concerns relating to these passengers. An easy way to remember these special concerns is with the word "START."

S = Special...Every student is unique. You should get to know each one and learn their individual traits. Students, even those who have similar conditions, are different. The more you know about their needs, the better you can accommodate them. Be aware some information is confidential.

T = Treat Equally...Students with disabilities want to be treated the same as all other students. Although there are many differences, whenever possible, all students should be required to follow the same rules.

A = Attention...You must pay specific attention to students with disabilities. Some students will behave poorly in order to get your attention. By paying attention to them when their behavior is appropriate, you may improve their behavior. They may require more of your time than other students.

R = Restraints...Students with physical disabilities often require special seats or restraining devices. If you are driving a bus equipped with these devices, learn to properly secure these students in their seats. Wheelchairs used by students need to be properly tied down.

T = Techniques...One particular method may not work in all situations with all students. If you are having trouble maintaining control of a student, change your method and try something new. Keep trying until you find something that works. The old saying "try, try, try again" is particularly appropriate when it comes to

working with students with disabilities. Be sure to ask other drivers or your supervisor for helpful suggestions in working with particular students or situations.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

In addition to the general guidelines above, you should understand the different types of disabilities that students you transport may have, and the specific procedures used in managing each type. Many of these conditions may not be visibly apparent, so drivers must be prepared to work with different conditions.

As mentioned earlier, some students with disabilities outlined below will require specialized transportation services often involving different types of vehicles and procedures. At the same time, some students with disabilities will be included in general education transportation, so you need to be aware of any unique guidelines or specialized procedures that are required.

AUTISM

Autism is defined as, “a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three adversely affecting a child’s educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.”

Autism spectrum disorders are viewed on a continuum. Students with severe autism may be nonverbal and often have mental impairment as a co-existing condition while students with milder symptoms may have some social skills deficits and a limited range of interests. Some students with autism may be included in general education transportation while others may require specialized services.

Behaviors that may be evident in students who are autistic include:

- Indifference to other people – Students with autism sometimes treat other people as if they were objects and just in the way. They may bump into you as if you were a piece of furniture, without excusing themselves or noticing they bumped into another person.
- Difficulty looking people in the eye – When you talk to students with autism, you may have to work hard to get and keep their attention, especially if they are not facing you. The students may not notice or pay attention to other students or adults.
- Problems with their speech and language – Some students with autism cannot speak at all, and others may just scream or make other noises. Students who do speak may have some unusual speech patterns. For example, some students have trouble with pronouns and may use “you” instead of “I” when speaking. Some students tend to repeat what they hear instead of responding in a more typical way. For example, a student may repeat, “How are you?”, instead of responding to the question.
- Unusual reactions to different parts of their environment – They are very resistant to any change in routine or environment. They are easily upset and anxious about changes other students may not even notice, such as if a different type of bus picks them up, if they are in the window seat instead of the aisle seat, or if they are sitting next to someone new. They are often very sensitive to changes in temperature, loud noises, or physical touch, and may have a panic reaction at times to some of these changes.
- Unusual interest in objects – They may cling to objects, and examine and reexamine them. They may also be fascinated by various kinds of movements, for example, becoming completely absorbed by a spinning wheel or fan.
- Problems with their own movement – They may repeat movements over and over again without any particular purpose, for example, swaying, rocking, banging their head, or flapping their hands.
- Non-age appropriate behavior – Some students with autism may display behavior more typical of much younger students.

When working with students who are autistic, remember these students are affected by a disorder; their conduct is not necessarily willful. They cannot always control or stop their behavior upon request. These students need sameness, calmness, structure, and firmness along with gentleness, and patience. Here are a few pointers:

- Stick to a routine with the students. It will be critical.
- Prepare students for changes, such as detours, new passengers or substitute bus drivers.
- Use short, simple sentences and concrete concepts when communicating. For example, “Stay in your seat.”
- Recognize when students may be experiencing stress from changes in the environment.

- Do not insist on eye contact.
- Some students respond well to music. Parents may be able to help you determine what medium will provide a calming effect during the bus ride.

VISUAL SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

Some students may have vision capacity, which even after correction, is limited, impaired, or absent and results in one or more of the following: reduced performance in visual acuity tasks; difficulty with written communication; and/or difficulty with understanding information presented visually in the education environment. The term includes students who are blind and students with limited vision.

Students who have visual impairments may have partial sight, meaning they can only see low light or shapes, or be legally blind. While the visual impairment may affect their educational performance, it will not affect their intelligence unless they have cognitive disabilities as well. The educational development of students with visual impairments may not be very different from students without a visual impairment. The inclusion of students with visual impairments in general education transportation is fairly common.

Students with visual impairments should be allowed to move independently, but they should be monitored for safety. Students with visual impairments may use a cane, service animal or other mobility device, and may rely on auditory and tactile information. Consultation with an orientation or mobility specialist may be warranted when transporting students with visual impairments.

If a student with a visual impairment rides your bus, provide descriptive feedback during the ride to help the student orient, especially in advance of their stop, so they can prepare. Having the student sit near the driver can help with this. Some students may need assistance navigating the narrow steps and aisles on the bus. Also, be sure to address the student clearly and specifically by name so he/she is sure you are communicating with him/her. As the student becomes more familiar with riding your bus, he/she may need less assistance as the school year progresses. Exercise particular caution during pickup and drop off.

HEARING SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

Students with hearing sensory impairment may have the capacity to hear with amplification, is limited, impaired, or absent and results in one or more of the following: reduced performance in hearing acuity tasks; difficulty with oral communication; and/or difficulty in understanding auditorally-presented information in the education environment. The term includes students who are deaf or students who are hard of hearing. Students who have hearing impairments may require special transportation though the inclusion of students with hearing impairments in general education transportation is fairly common. Hearing impairments may range from some degree of hearing loss to totally deaf.

Students who are deaf are taught and communicate through their other senses and therefore rely on visual and tactile information. Their greatest difficulty is to learn speech and language. To communicate, the student often learns to respond to lip movement, facial expression, signs, and/or finger spelling. When reading lips, students may not understand all of what is said, so repetition may be necessary. As a driver, you may need to gain the student's attention by tapping him/her on the shoulder or waving your hand. Remember to look directly at the student, maintain eye contact, and speak clearly, naturally and slowly; shouting is useless. Repetition, facial expressions and gestures can also help with communication. Ask the teacher or parent to explain the nature and extent of the student's hearing loss, and the best way to communicate with him or her. If the student communicates using sign language, you should attempt to learn a few common, useful 'signs' the student will understand.

DEAF-BLIND SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

Students with deaf-blind sensory impairment may have simultaneous hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs.

Drivers and monitors should learn signals for help, distress, toileting needs, illness, hunger, and any other daily events that may occur on a bus as these signals are the only means by which the student can communicate. Consider seating students who are deaf and blind close to the bus door for ease of exit/entry and to avoid objects or people who may block movement in the aisle. Also, avoid seat reassignment for behavior management to ensure a consistent orientation route from the stairwell to their seat.

EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENT

Students who are emotionally impaired have a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects their educational performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors;
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers;
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The inclusion of students with emotional impairment in general education transportation is fairly common. These students may act in ways that are inappropriate, either in their nature or in their timing or degree. Since many have unusual difficulties maintaining interpersonal relationships, they can be aggressive, withdrawn, anxious, or easily frustrated. These students may be unable to express feelings and needs. They may be loud, excitable, defiant and aggressive, particularly when confronted by adults setting rules, such as bus drivers. Behavior may include destroying property, starting fights, and using offensive or inappropriate language. On the other end of the spectrum, some students who are emotionally disturbed have a pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and do not cope well with stress. They may be excessively shy and withdrawn, and avoid contact with their peers and adults alike.

As a transportation employee, it is likely you will encounter students with emotional impairments. Therefore it is important to be calm, firm, fair, and consistent. Pay attention to your students and immediately report any threats of suicide to the school. It is a difficult challenge to maintain a professional distance and to stay involved with the students, but it is an important responsibility of the bus driver.

INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT

Intellectual disability is defined as, "permanent capacity for performing cognitive tasks, functions, or problem solving is significantly limited or impaired and is exhibited by more than one of the following: a slower rate of learning; disorganized patterns of learning; difficulty with adaptive behavior; and/or difficulty understanding abstract concepts." In addition, they struggle with age appropriate adaptive behavior skills. Adaptive behavior refers to the daily living skills that students need to function and includes communication, personal care, motor skills, and social skills. Some students will have mild intellectual disability while others will be significantly impaired, and so the levels of driver assistance and/or specialized equipment may vary.

As the bus driver or monitor, you may find it useful to assign specific seats with appropriate seat belts or child safety restraint systems (i.e., car seat, safety vest, etc.). One person per seat is best. Consistency in the bus routes, personnel and service will help the trip go smoothly. Be patient as students with intellectual disabilities will require more repetition than typical peers to learn procedures.

MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

A student with multiple disabilities has a combination of disabilities (such as intellectual disability and blindness or intellectual disability and orthopedic impairment). The combination of disabilities causes such severe educational needs that such students cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.

Students with multiple disabilities often require specialized transportation, especially if one of the impairments is an orthopedic impairment. These students are typically severely impaired and may need significant assistance in all areas of functioning. Specific guidance for such severely impaired students from knowledgeable individuals may be provided to you.

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS

Students with orthopedic impairments may have difficulty with the physical capacity to move, coordinate actions, or perform physical activities is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: physical and motor tasks; independent movement; performing basic life functions. The term includes severe orthopedic impairments caused by congenital anomaly, cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures if such impairment adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Some students may require wheelchairs or other holding devices for mobility, while others can walk with crutches or a walker. Therefore, they may need help in loading and unloading the bus.

Whenever possible, students with minor physical disabilities are integrated into the regular transportation system, but may need some slight assistance. Other students may have physical disabilities that might not affect mobility in terms of boarding a bus, but may impair speech or other forms of communication, writing, or arm, hand, eye, and head movement. This may affect their seating requirements on your bus.

Some common physical disorders and their effects include:

- **Cerebral Palsy (CP)** — Causes abnormal changes in physical movement, such as slow or spastic limb movement or seizures. A person with CP may be unable to coordinate body movement and may have possible speech problems. Intellectual functioning is often not affected. In the transportation setting, a student with CP may need a special harness.
- **Muscular Dystrophy (MD)** — A progressive general weakening of various muscle groups in the body. Students with MD may fatigue easily and may require the use of braces, harnesses or a wheelchair.
- **Spina Bifida** — A birth defect involving the spinal cord. Depending upon the severity of the defect, the student may be partially paralyzed (lower half of the body) or have a physical deformation. Some students with spina bifida are very verbal. On the bus, be careful with lower body positioning because these students may not have feeling in the lower half of their body. If they are positioned too close to a baseboard heater, they can get serious burns on their legs and not realize it.

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS

Students with other health impairments have limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli resulting in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment. This is due to chronic or acute health problems, such as asthma, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, or Tourette's Syndrome. These conditions can adversely affect a child's educational performance.

When transporting students on the severe end of the spectrum, such as those requiring special transportation, you may be provided with information about the special needs of these students on your route. Some students may wear medical identification tags specifying care and medical limitations. Some of the more common impairments are discussed below.

EPILEPSY

Epilepsy is a chronic nervous disorder, characterized by seizures of varying degrees. Students with epilepsy are commonly included in general education transportation. Epileptic seizures may be triggered by stress, hitting bumps in the road while driving, hot weather or a hot passenger compartment, strobes or flashing lights. You should know what to do, if a student has a seizure during the bus ride. Most students will have an "emergency preparedness plan" or "seizure plan". This plan will provide you with some basic information on how to respond appropriately for that student.

Follow these steps to minimize any injuries to the student:

- Listen to the student – Sometimes a student with epilepsy experiences a peculiar sensation known as an aura before a seizure. If the student warns you, pull the bus over to a safe location.
- Keep calm – The student is usually not suffering or in danger.
- Help the child to a safe place, but do not restrain his or her movements. Move anything the student may strike against with his or her head, arms, or legs. Most injuries occur from bumping hard objects.
- Do not force a hard object between the student's teeth.
- Do not give the student anything to drink.
- Saliva may flow from the student's mouth. Wipe it away with a tissue.
- Stand by until the student has fully recovered consciousness and seems clearheaded. The student may seem dazed and incoherent for awhile after a seizure.
- Encourage deep breathing after the student regains consciousness.
- Assure the student all is well and encourage him or her to go about regular activities.
- If the student is unconscious after the seizure, call for assistance and place him/her on his/her side in the recovery position.
- Occasionally, after a seizure, the student may want to sleep. Help him or her to a safe place to rest.

- Refer to local guidelines and procedures regarding the administration of medications and any supervisor/parent notification requirements.

TOURETTE'S SYNDROME

Tourette's Syndrome is a neurological disorder characterized by repetitive, stereotyped, involuntary movements, and vocalizations called tics. The early symptoms of Tourette's are almost always noticed between the ages of seven and 10 years. Most people with the condition experience their worst symptoms in their early teens, with improvement occurring in the late teens and continuing into adulthood. Students with Tourette's are commonly included in general education transportation.

Tics are classified as either simple or complex. Simple motor tics are sudden, brief and repetitive movements such as eye blinking and other vision irregularities, facial grimacing, shoulder shrugging, and head or shoulder jerking. Simple vocalizations might include repetitive throat-clearing, sniffing or grunting sounds. Complex motor tics might include facial grimacing combined with a head twist and a shoulder shrug. Other complex motor tics may actually appear purposeful, including sniffing or touching objects, hopping, jumping, bending, or twisting. More complex vocal tics include words or phrases. Do not be offended by the behavior or language exhibited as this may be a manifestation of the syndrome. Note that tics are involuntary and are often worse with excitement or anxiety and better during calm, focused activities.

Here are a few tips for you as a transportation employee:

- Do not point out the behavior to the student;
- Give careful consideration to seat assignment;
- Stick to a routine as much as possible; and
- Keep your rules and directions short.

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) includes primarily inattentive type, primarily hyperactive-impulsive type, and combined type. Students with ADHD have significant difficulty maintaining their attention to effortful tasks, excessive physical activity and impulsivity, or both.

Common symptoms include:

Impulsiveness - A child who acts quickly without thinking first or exhibits uncontrolled, abrupt and sudden changes in behavior. Students often act without considering the consequences and may endanger or harm themselves, or others.

Hyperactivity - A child who can't sit still, walks, runs, or climbs around when others are seated, talks when others are talking. They may also be unable to stick to one task for very long before looking for something else to do.

Inattention - A child who daydreams or seems to be in another world or is sidetracked by what is going on around him or her.

Forgetfulness - The student may forget items or have a tendency to misplace them. Have patience with a student with ADHD. Like other students with impairments, have firm, fair and consistent expectations. You may need to provide verbal clues to let your student know when his/her stop is nearby so he/she can gather his/her belongings. For some students, permission to use electronic devices (i.e., music device, handheld game, etc.) may be considered to keep the child engaged in a preferred activity and minimize problem behaviors.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

Students with learning disabilities are those who have a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. The disorder may show up as trouble with listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or solving math problems. This category does not include students with learning disorders caused by visual, hearing or motor disabilities, or mental, emotional, cultural, economic or environmental disorders. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education transportation is common.

COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENT

Communication impairment may limit, impair, or delay the capacity to use expressive and/or receptive language in one or more of the following areas: speech, such as articulation and/or voice; conveying, understanding, or using spoken, written, or symbolic language. The term may include a student with stuttering, impaired articulation or a speech, language impairment, or voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The inclusion of students with a speech or language impairment in general education transportation is fairly common.

Students with communication impairments may have trouble communicating clearly because they may be difficult to understand. Listen attentively and repeat back what you think was said. Keep your manner of responding "encouraging" rather than "correcting" and be patient! Watch a student's reaction to your response. It will help you know whether the message has been communicated. If you still don't understand the student, ask a peer to help, or ask a series of short questions that require "yes" or "no" answers. It may be helpful to use an alternative means of communication such as a pen and paper.

NEUROLOGICAL IMPAIRMENT

Students with neurological impairments have a nervous system that is limited or impaired with difficulties exhibited in one or more of the following areas: the use of memory, the control and use of cognitive functioning, sensory and motor skills, speech, language, organizational skills, information processing, affect, social skills, or basic life functions. The term includes students who have received a traumatic brain injury.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

Students with injury to the brain may experience total or partial functional disability including impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; or speech. Participation in regular transportation will be dependent on the level of impairment.

Students with TBI may exhibit the following characteristics:

- Reduced physical stamina,
- Possible seizures or headaches,
- Possible hearing or vision problems,
- Easily confused,
- Susceptible to mood swings, and
- Issues with social skills.

Remember to be consistent, and review the rules of the bus often. Be clear with your expectations.

APPENDIX A: RESTRAINT PREVENTION & BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

POLICY & PROCEDURES LEGAL AUTHORITY: 603 C.M.R. § 46.00

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I. OVERVIEW

The Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC, "The Collaborative") seeks to ensure that every student is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.00. Physical restraint is an emergency measure of last resort. It may be administered only when necessary to protect a student and/or school community member from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. When, based on this standard, physical restraint is necessary, staff will strive to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. The Collaborative will annually review its Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, provide it to all LPVEC staff, and make it available to parents of enrolled students.

II. DEFINITIONS

Mechanical Restraint: The use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

Medication Restraint: The administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

Physical Escort: A temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

Physical Restraint: Direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Prone Restraint: A physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.

Seclusion: Involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined below.

Time-Out: A behavioral support strategy, developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1), in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of

calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

DESE's Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2016-1, issued on July 31, 2015, provides the following additional definitions pertaining to time-out:

Inclusionary time-out: When the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom.

Exclusionary time-out: The separation of the student from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or from actual physical separation.

III. PROHIBITIONS

Chemical restraint, mechanical restraint and seclusion are prohibited in all public school education programs.

IV. SPECIFIC RIGHTS

Neither 603 C.M.R. 46.00 nor this policy prohibits: (1) any teacher, employee or agent of the Collaborative from using reasonable force to protect students, others or themselves from imminent, serious, physical harm; (2) any individual from reporting to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (3) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (4) an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119 § 51A.

V. USE OF TIME-OUT

"Inclusionary time-out": When the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom.

The use of "inclusionary time-out" functions well as a behavior support strategy while allowing the student to remain fully aware of the learning activities of the classroom. "Inclusionary time-out" includes practices used by teachers as part of their classroom behavior support tools, such as "planned ignoring," asking students to put their heads down, or placing a student in a different location within the classroom. These strategies, used to reduce external stimuli in the student's environment while keeping the student physically present and involved in learning, have proven to be useful tools for classroom management.

If the student is not "separated from the learning activity" or the classroom, the student will be in "inclusionary time-out" and the requirements that accompany the use of "exclusionary time-out," listed below, do not apply. A student is not "separated from the learning activity" if the student is physically present in the classroom and remains fully aware of the learning activities. "Inclusionary time-out" does not include walled off "time-out" rooms located within the classroom; use of those is considered to be "exclusionary time-out."

"Exclusionary time-out": The separation of the student from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or from actual physical separation.

The following requirements apply to the use of "exclusionary time-out":

- "Exclusionary time-out" may be used only for the purpose of calming;
- During "exclusionary time-out," the student must be continuously observed by a staff member;
- The staff member will either be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times;
- The space used for "exclusionary time-out" must be clean, safe, sanitary and appropriate for calming;
- Unless it poses a safety risk, a staff member must be physically present with the student who is in an exclusionary time-out setting;
- If it is not safe for the staff member to be present with the student, the student may be left in the time-out setting with the door closed. However, in order to ensure that the student is receiving appropriate support, a school counselor or other behavioral support professional must be immediately available outside of the time-out setting

where the individual can continuously observe and communicate with the student as appropriate to determine when the student has calmed;

- Students must never be locked in a room alone;
- For students displaying self-injurious behavior, a staff member must be physically present in the same setting with the student;
- An “exclusionary time-out” must be terminated as soon as the student has calmed; and
- An “exclusionary time-out” may not extend beyond thirty (30) minutes without the approval of the Director.

A Director may grant an extension beyond thirty (30) minutes based only on the individual student’s continuing agitation.

VI. REQUIREMENTS FOR USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Legal Standard for Us

Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort. This means that it may be used only when the student’s behavior poses a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others; and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances. Physical restraint may never be used for punishment. Physical restraint may not be used as a response to a student’s property damage, disruption of school order, refusal to comply with rules/directions, or verbal threats, unless the above harm standard is also met.

Physical restraint may not be used as a standard response for any student. No IEP or written behavioral plan may include physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Brief physical contact to promote safety is not considered a restraint.

Safety

To ensure student safety, staff will review and consider a student’s medical and psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavior intervention plans. Physical restraint will not be used when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, communication-related disorders, asthma, seizures, cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, or risk of vomiting.

During a physical restraint, staff will continuously monitor the student’s physical status, including skin temperature, color and respiration, and make certain that the student is able to breathe and to speak. Staff will use the safest physical restraint method available and appropriate for the situation, and will use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm. Whenever possible, another adult who is not a participant in the restraint will witness the administration of the restraint.

Duration

A physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student demonstrates or expresses significant physical distress (e.g., difficulty breathing, sustained or prolonged crying or coughing). If a student demonstrates or expresses significant physical distress, staff will release the restraint and seek medical assistance immediately. For any student to be restrained for more than twenty (20) minutes, approval of the Director is required. The Special Education Director’s or designee approval must be based on the student’s continued agitation justifying the need for continued restraint.

Follow-up

Follow-up procedures will be implemented after the release of the student from physical restraint. These will include reviewing the incident with the student to address the precipitating behavior, reviewing the incident with staff who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and considering whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Prone and Floor Restraints

Prone restraints are prohibited, except on an individual basis and when all of the following conditions, which require specific documentation, are met: (1) the student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff; (2) all other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or others; (3) there are no medical contraindications, as documented by a licensed physician; (4) there is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional; (5) the program has

obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and the use of prone restraint is approved in writing by the Director; and (6) the program has documented all of the above before using prone restraint and maintains the documentation. The only staff authorized to administer a prone restraint are staff who have received in-depth restraint training in accordance with 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3).

Floor restraints are prohibited unless the staff administering the restraint have received in-depth training in accordance with 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3), and these trained staff members determine that such method of restraint is required to provide safety for the student or others.

VII. REPORTING PHYSICAL RESTRAINT USE

All physical restraints, regardless of duration, will be reported.

Reporting within School and to Parents

The reporting process within the school and to the student's parents is as follows: The staff will immediately verbally inform the Director, and the Director will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parents within 24 hours of the restraint. The staff will file a detailed written report no later than the next school day, and the Director will e-mail or mail the written report to the parents within three (3) school days of the restraint. There are no individual waivers permitted for these reporting requirements.

Report Contents

The report will include: names and job titles of those involved, including observers; date and time the restraint began and ended; the name of the administrator who was verbally informed; the name of the Director or designee who approved extending the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, when such approval was obtained; what was happening before the restraint; the efforts staff used to prevent escalation of the student's behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies that the staff used; the alternatives to restraint that staff attempted; the justification for initiating the restraint; a description of the holds used and why they were necessary; a description of the student's behavior and reaction during the restraint, and any medical care given; information regarding any further actions the school has taken or may take; and information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss the restraint with the school.

Reporting to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The reporting process to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is as follows: The Collaborative will report to DESE all restraints that result in serious injury to either a student or a staff member within three (3) working days of the restraint. Additionally, the District will provide DESE with an annual report of its physical restraint use.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT USE

Two types of administrative reviews will be conducted in regards to the use of physical restraint. The Special Education Director or designee will conduct a Weekly Individual Student Review and a Monthly School-Wide Review.

Weekly Individual Student Review

A Weekly Individual Student Review will be conducted in regards to any student who has been restrained multiple times during the week. The Special Education Director or designee will convene a review team to assess the progress and needs of any such student, with the goal of reducing or eliminating future restraint. This team will review and discuss the written restraint reports, analyze the factors that led to the restraint, consider the factors that may have contributed to the escalation of the student's behavior, and develop a written action plan.

Monthly School-Wide Review

A Monthly School-Wide Review will also be conducted by the Director. In this review, the Special Education Director or designee will consider patterns of restraints, number of restraints, duration of restraints and any injuries caused by restraints. The Director will assess whether the restraint prevention and management policy needs to be modified and/or whether there is a need for additional staff training on restraint reduction and restraint prevention strategies.

IX. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

General Training

The Director will ensure that all staff receive training on the Collaborative's Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures and the requirements for the use of restraint. This training will comply with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.04(2).

The Collaborative has been trained and implemented in specific procedures regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. The Collaborative has adopted CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) methodology and approach as best practice when working with a student is in crisis. (www.crisisprevention.com)

In-Depth Training

The Special Education Director will identify and authorize certain staff to serve as a Collaborative-wide resource to assist in ensuring the proper administration of physical restraint. These identified staff will participate in the in-depth CPI training that complies with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3) and 603 C.M.R. 46.04(4).



2016-2017 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Transportation Guidelines and Understanding of At-Will Employment Status

I have received a copy of Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative's Transportation Guidelines and understand that it is my responsibility to read the Guidelines completely and thoroughly and to become familiar with its requirements.

I understand that I am an at-will employee of the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC) and that both I and LPVEC are free to terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or notice, for any reason or for no reason at all. This Handbook is not a contract of employment, either expressed or implied. I understand that violation or failure to comply with the standards and policies outlined in the Transportation Guidelines will be grounds for corrective action up to and including termination.

I understand that LPVEC reserves the right to modify, suspend, interpret, cancel in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice, any personnel policies, whether contained in this Handbook or otherwise, according to its business judgment and sole discretion.

If I have any questions about the meaning or significance of any of the requirements in this Handbook, I understand that I should speak to my supervisor or to a representative from Human Resources, who will answer my questions for me.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Program Name