

# Transportation Staff Handbook

23-24 — Last update: Apr 03, 2024

Morris Hills Regional District

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a compilation of procedures and guidelines. It is developed for your reference and should only be used as a guide. Your immediate supervisor or administrator is your best resource for specific duties and guidance related to your position. This handbook is not a contract, expressed or implied, guaranteeing employment for any length of time and is not intended to induce an employee to accept employment with the district.

The district reserves the right to unilaterally revise, suspend, revoke, terminate or change any of its policies, in whole or in part, whether described within this handbook or elsewhere, in its sole discretion.

*Last modified: Feb 17, 2021*

## 2. GENERAL INFORMATION

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It is incumbent upon all employees of the district to advocate for the children we teach, the parents we encounter, and the professionals and colleagues with whom we work on a daily basis. We are all equally important to the children who enter our buildings each and every day. The custodian, paraprofessional, bus driver, librarian, nurse, child study team member, teacher, counselor, substance awareness coordinator, vice principal, principal, and central office staff all serve as valuable members of the team we refer to as "Personnel."

The Morris Hills Regional District provides education and therefore transportation services to pupils grade nine through twelve living in the towns Rockaway Borough, Rockaway Township, Wharton, and Denville.

In addition to the qualifications and responsibilities of school bus drivers, established by the State Department of Education and the Division of Motor Vehicles of the State of New Jersey, it is necessary to identify local requirements, which pertain to the Morris Hills Regional District. This manual will include these regulations for the guidance of all bus drivers.

*Last modified: Aug 26, 2019*

## 2.1. Role of the Employee

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Drivers/Aides are expected to safely transport pupils and to maintain an orderly environment on the bus. Employees are to maintain a professional demeanor which is exemplified by courteous communication with children, parents, and other district employees; being sensitive to the needs of all students; and maintaining self-control around difficult individuals. Employees are expected to observe all pupil behavior to ensure no inappropriate behavior occurs. If they note any inappropriate behavior, they are to verbally intervene and report this behavior to the building principal. Safety extends to the proper driving of the bus by obeying all rules of the road and the district.

### YEARLY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS AND SCHOOL BUS AIDES

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

Training should include all subjects itemized in the administrative code governing student transportation, as well as any specialized information a driver or aide might need based upon the students they transport on their school bus routes and the characteristics and conditions of the roadways on which they travel. Employers must make sure that their drivers and aides receive this instruction prior to beginning work on a new school bus route. In addition, they should regularly provide their drivers and aides with training updates, reminders when a refresher is needed, and new information when a new student is added to an existing bus route.

State Training Regulations:

#### **N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.3 Training**

(a) Employers shall ensure that all school bus drivers and school bus aides are properly trained for the functions of their positions.

(b) Employers shall administer a safety education program for all permanent and substitute drivers and aides. At a minimum, the training shall include:

1. Student management and discipline;
2. School bus accident and emergency procedures;
3. Conducting school bus emergency exit drills;
4. Loading and unloading procedures;
5. School bus stop loading zone safety;
6. Inspecting the school vehicle for students left on board at the end of a route; and
7. The use of a student's education records, including the employee's responsibility to ensure the privacy of the student and his or her records, if applicable.

c) In addition to the training requirements in (b) above, employers shall administer to school bus drivers a safety education program that includes defensive driving techniques and railroad crossing procedures.

*Last modified: Aug 17, 2021*



## 2.2. Driver Expectations

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School buses are seen by hundreds of people each day. The way you drive, the way you dress, and the way you interact with others may be all some people know about the school district—to them, you are the school district.

1. Drivers are responsible to keep their Commercial Driver's License up to date.
2. Check with the transportation office when you have questions.
3. Be neat, clean and reflect an appearance of modesty. Your appearance should reflect the fact that you are an employee of the school district.
4. All support staff members may wear dresses, skirts/shorts of an appropriate length with blouses, sweaters or shirts. Blouses/shirts **must** have sleeves and outfits should be \*neither \* low cut nor too tight.
5. Shoes should reflect your job task. Only closed heel and closed-toe shoes are appropriate. No sandals or flip flops.
6. The driver shall wear the seatbelt at all times while the bus is in motion.
7. The driver is to ensure that all students are properly seated and have their seatbelts fastened.
8. Unless conducting school transportation business drivers are not to be in the maintenance garage. Ask permission from the mechanics before entering.
9. All drivers are expected to check their mailboxes both in the morning and the afternoon.
10. Drivers should arrive for their routes before their leave time to provide time for their pre-trip inspections and warm-up of the vehicle
11. Drivers must wear District issued ID cards at all times.
12. Driver's hours of service: If you work for another employer remember it is advised that you have 8 consecutive hours of off duty before you can drive the next day.
13. Portable electronic devices (i.e., cell phones, smartwatches, radios, etc.) even those with hands-free (Bluetooth/wireless) devices shall not be used while loading and unloading students or while driving. These devices cannot emit any sound or other signals to indicate the device is active. Drivers cannot wear any type of headphones or earbuds.
14. No district vehicle is to be used for personal errands.
15. Drivers must remain on school grounds throughout the duration of their contracted time.
16. Drivers are responsible to fill out a Vehicle Condition Report on a daily basis as part of your Pre Trip which is now to be done through the tablet (In the event that the table is malfunctioning a hard copy of the Vehicle Condition Report must be filled out.
17. Drivers must check for sleeping students or items left behind as part of Post Trip and/or Completion of a route segment.
18. Drivers must complete mandatory scheduled SafeSchool Training annually (see schedule attached).
19. Enforce the use of our student tracking system also known as Tablets **at all times** including but not limited to any to/from school or any additional student transportation.
20. Manage to sit for extended periods of time.
21. Parking in the following areas are off-limits permanently: No one is to park from the corner of the academy building by the entrance to the bucket back to the driveway in between the academy building and the transportation office leading up to Gifford Field, around the fuel pumps and alongside the guardrail in front of the bus garage bays at any time when school is **not** in session (after school hours,

weekends, holidays, etc.) Please click on this link [MHHS Restricted Parking Diagram](#) to see the diagram.

22. Drivers, make certain to request your aide(s) to accompany you out to your vehicle so upon completion of your pre-trip you can depart without creating any additional traffic congestion on and around Bay 1, Bay 2, driveway leading up to Gifford Field and the fuel pumps particularly prior to the morning shift.

Additionally, it is expected from an MHRD employee to provide us with two-week advance notice prior to resignation. It is at the Human Resources / Transportation Department's discretion to release the employee before the completion of the aforementioned stated time period.

Please see links below for "Annual Driver Evaluation Form", "Dress and Grooming Policy" and "2019-2020 Driver Aide Safeschool Training Form" for your review.

[Annual Driver Evaluation Form](#)

[Dress and Groom Policy](#)

[Safeschool Training](#)

*Last modified: Mar 30, 2021*

## 2.3. Bus Aide Expectations

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If a bus aide is scheduled to be on a bus route they assume these responsibilities for that trip. If there is no aide on the trip the driver assumes these responsibilities also:

1. Aides are to maintain a professional and confidential relationship with students, parents, caregivers and the driver.
2. Aides shall continually monitor all students on the bus.
3. Aides shall assist with the loading and unloading of students; however, only the driver shall operate the wheelchair lift.
4. Aides shall ensure that all students/riders are properly seated and secure with seat belts fastened before the bus starts.
5. Aides shall ensure all tie-downs are safely locked into place when a **safety vest** is utilized.
6. Aides shall ensure that all loose items brought on board by the students are secured.
7. Aides are responsible for the supervision of all students on the bus and shall not leave the bus when students are on board.
8. Aides should monitor and ensure all students are seated safely in their seats and that the aisle is clear of obstructions and/or students.
9. Aides shall report all student-related problems to the Transportation Coordinator on the forms provided.
10. Aides shall **not** use any electronic devices including cell phones or musical devices with or without headphones or Bluetooth / wireless devices for any non-district business.
11. If the driver becomes incapacitated the aide takes over control of the situation.
12. Aides should be seated at an advantageous location to monitor everyone on the bus and, seat belts shall be worn by everyone. The only exception to this statement is when an aide is designated as a 1 on 1 to a student (This constitutes his/her sole responsibility is directed to the well being of that one student).
13. Aides should be familiar with the bus route they are assigned so that in the event of their assigned driver's absence, they can help navigate the substitute driver.
14. Aides should accompany the driver of the vehicle you are assigned to out to execute his/her pre-trip so when concluded they are ready to depart without creating any additional traffic congestion on and around Bay 1, Bay2, driveway leading up to Gifford Field and the fuel pumps particularly prior to the morning shift.
15. Aides shall be able to assist students if they become incapacitated.
16. Aides shall, in case of an emergency (i.e., bus evacuation), be able to coordinate efforts with the driver in order to safely evacuate all students from the school vehicle and then place them in a safe location. Finally, ensuring all students/riders are present and accounted for.
17. Aides shall participate in all training activities (bus evacuation drills and safety meetings) to ensure all employees possess the same level of knowledge/training to ensure the safety of all being transported.
18. Aides should have a working knowledge of the district vehicle equipment and communications system and all other safety-related items.
19. Aides should be capable of moving the dead weight of 125 lbs.
20. Aides shall perform other duties as assigned by the District Transportation Coordinator.

Additionally, it is expected from an MHRD employee to provide us with two-week advance notice prior to resignation. It is at the Human Resources / Transportation Department's discretion to release the employee before the completion of the aforementioned stated time period.

Please see the link below for the Bus Aide Evaluation Form.

[Bus Aide Evaluation Form](#)

*Last modified: Mar 30, 2021*

## 2.4. Vehicle Rules

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1. Front windshields should be clear of any obstructions. Please remove any papers, tissue boxes, and clothing from this area.
2. Buses will be considered “Out of service” if crossing arm and/or stop arm are not working.
3. All district vehicles should be parked in their assigned parking spot at all times.
4. IMPORTANT: “Glow Plugs” need to be used in diesel buses every time you start the vehicle. Please ensure that they are used properly to prevent damage to the engine. When you turn the key, before starting the vehicle, leave the key in the “on” position until the “wait to start” light or other glow plug indicator light has gone out. Then start the vehicle. This rule shall apply no matter the season or temperature outside nor whether the vehicle was recently running. Failure to follow these directions can result in damage.
5. Never idle for more than three minutes. NJAC 7:27-14.15
6. Each driver is to sweep their assigned vehicle, empty the trash daily and, **by code**, must put seat belts up so that they are accessible to all riders. If you are **assigned a spare bus**, you **MUST** also sweep, empty the trash and put up seatbelts.
7. Lights and windows shall receive extra cleaning when road conditions so dictate.
8. Layover time must be in the transportation yard unless another spot has been approved by the transportation office. If another location is approved, the driver shall remind dispatch to add this to the notes section of their route cover page.
9. Use of any school vehicle for personal use is prohibited.
10. Drivers need to return the key and gas fob to the key panel in the transportation office upon return to the bus garage/transportation office.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 2.5. Road Rules

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1. Speed limits are to be observed at all times. On school property, the speed limit is 10 MPH.
2. While loading and unloading students at school the engine should be turned off.
3. No backing of the bus without a spotter. If help is needed, please notify Dispatch.
4. Drivers shall not travel in the left lane of any highway—with or without students unless a safety concern dictates otherwise. The left lane should be used only for the avoidance of the obstruction in the normal travel lane. (Driver is to maintain right at all costs).
5. Drivers shall not pass other vehicles on school grounds.
6. If a driver finds him/herself in a position where safety becomes ambivalent, they must pull over in a safe location and contact the Transportation Office for guidance.
7. **District practice dictates you are not permitted to turn right on red.**
8. Intersection Management – All MHRD bus drivers must remain motionless for a period of no less than two (2) seconds at any and all intersections governed by a traffic sign.
9. Please see the link below for Idling Rules.

### Idling Rules

*Last modified: Feb 12, 2021*

## 2.6. Parent Interactions

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As with any business client satisfaction is important. We primarily serve students, but their parents are also part of our client community. You are expected to maintain a polite and professional demeanor with parents when you speak with them. They are not to come onto the bus. If they have any concerns you are directed to ask them to contact the transportation office. Smile and listen to them but remind them that you have a schedule to maintain and direct them to talk with the office

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 2.7. Hours of Operation

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Office Hours:		6:00 am	–	5:00 pm				
Garage Hours:		5:30 am	–	5:00 pm				
Office Staff:	Dispatchers	6:00 am	–	5:00 pm				
	Secretary	8:00 am	–	4:00 pm				
Mechanics Staff:		5:30 am	–	5:00 pm				
Conference Room:	Closed until further notice							
Overflow Break Room:		6:00 am	–	5:00 pm				

*Last modified: Aug 30, 2022*



## 3. ROLE OF THE BUS DRIVER

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 3.1. Responsibilities of the Bus Driver

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### Responsibilities of School Bus Drivers

1. The driver shall wear the seatbelt at all times while the bus is in motion.
2. The driver is to ensure that all students are properly seated and advised to fasten their seatbelts.
3. The driver shall not leave the bus without first stopping the motor, placing the bus in park or neutral, setting the parking brake, and removing the key from the ignition. If the bus is on an incline, turn the front wheels into the curb.
4. The driver shall be in charge of his/her vehicle at all times and shall be responsible for good order.
5. The bus driver shall be the sole operator of the entrance door and the two-way radio.
6. The driver shall never discharge an unmanageable student from the bus during any trip to or from school. If unable to handle a student, the driver shall report the unmanageable student to the Principal of the school the student attends through the transportation office by way of a "Student Conduct Report".
7. The driver shall clean the interior of the bus each day.
8. The driver must sweep their assigned vehicle, empty the trash daily and, **by code**, must put seat belts up so that they are accessible to all riders. This is applicable if you are assigned to a spare vehicle.
9. All drivers are protected by liability insurance as designated by the Board of Education.
10. District vehicles must not be used for personal errands.
11. Drivers **must** remain on school grounds throughout the duration of their contracted time.
12. Drivers are responsible for a Pre/Post Trip to check for sleeping students and items left behind.

In Addition: Per Section 18A:39-28 – Inspection of School Bus for Pupils by Driver at End of Transportation Route is "the point where all of the children in that group leave the bus to enter their school and the bus is empty of riders, and before the driver moves on to their next route. At that point, the driver shall inspect the bus for any remaining students."

If in the judgment of the Board of Education, any driver of a school vehicle used to transport pupils, shall be deemed to be an unsuitable person to drive a school vehicle due to lack of driving skills, inability to control pupils, being under the influence of, or partaking of alcoholic or habit-forming drugs during the school day; failure to comply with rules, incapacity, unbecoming conduct, or other good cause, the Board of Education

may remove the driver.

Attend Annual Driver & Bus Aide Meeting, Freshman Orientation, and all Mandatory Professional Development sessions, which usually take place the last week of August and one day in October. If you have not been notified of these dates, contact the Transportation Office before making any personal plans during these dates/times.

#### End of Year Responsibilities

See Link below for your End of Year Responsibilities

#### Last Day of School Driver Responsibilities

*Last modified: Mar 21, 2023*

## 3.2. Essential Job Functions and Qualifications

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As part of the job description to be a bus driver in the district the driver needs to be able to successfully complete the essential job functions as listed below:

1. Be at least 21 years old.
2. Have a high school diploma or GED
3. Possess a valid Commercial Driver's License with an Air Brake, Passenger (P) and School Bus (S) endorsement
4. Have at least 20/40 corrected or uncorrected visual acuity in each eye.
5. Demonstrate sufficient strength, agility, hearing and visual acuity to exercise safe control over the school bus and passengers at all times. This agility is demonstrated as follows:
  - a. Climb and descend the front steps of a passenger bus without pausing.
  - b. Open and close a manually operated large bus front door without difficulty while seated in the driver's seat.
  - c. Activate the brake pedal with the right foot within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a second after removing it from the throttle pedal.
  - d. Starting seated in the driver's seat, move to the back of the bus and open the emergency back door within 20 seconds.
  - e. Operate the driving controls using both arms simultaneously and quickly. For example, activate the master control switches or shift gears while keeping the other hand on the steering wheel of a large bus while traveling 25 MPH.
  - f. Turn the bus a 90 degree left turn and a 90 degree right turn.
  - g. Drive the bus in a straight line over an irregular surface.
  - h. Back large bus out of a garage bay using the mirrors of the bus.
  - i. Perform a pre-trip bus inspection.
  - j. Sweep the bus with a broom daily
  - k. Manage to sit for extended periods of time.
6. Having hearing that is not impaired to the extent that it would interfere with the safe operation of the bus.
7. Have no medical history or clinical diagnosis of any condition that could be detrimental to the safe operation of the bus.
8. Have an acceptable driving record with no convictions that would disqualify the driver from having a CDL.
9. Must be acceptable to the current district insurance carrier.
10. And other additional qualifications that the district may consider essential in the future.
11. Enforce the use of our student transportation management software/hardware system also known as the Tablet system **at all times** including but not limited to express transports, 4:00/4:15 pm activity runs, 6:00/6:15 athletic runs, and field/athletic trips.
12. Parking in the following areas is off-limits **permanently**: No employee (driver/aide) is to park from the corner of the academy building by the entrance to the bucket back to the driveway in between the academy building and the transportation office leading up to Gifford Field, around the fuel pumps and

alongside the guardrail in front of the bus garage bays at any time, again, whether school is in session or **not** in session (after school hours, weekends, holidays, etc.) There is one spot by the Transportation office for office staff/administration. Please see the link below for the restricted parking areas.

[MHHS Restricted Parking Diagram](#)

*Last modified: Apr 03, 2024*

## 3.3. Employee Conduct

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- Absolutely no beverages or food will be brought to areas used by pupils.
- Employees are expected to dress according to conventional business standards. It is expected that both male and female employees will exercise good judgment, good taste, and wear appropriate dress generally associated with the educational profession.
- It is assumed that all employees realize the importance of the use of proper language to pupils. The use of profanity or name-calling is not a part of the professional language of any employee and cannot be allowed in any educational institution.
- **NO SMOKING ANYWHERE ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS OR BUSES**
- The distribution of printed matter in school or on school property, regarding candidates for public office or any public question, is prohibited. Urging pupils to promote or oppose public questions is prohibited.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 3.4. License Renewal and Physicals

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All drivers must have a physical examination prior to the expiration date of the physical and indicated on the medical exam certificate that is carried in your wallet. Drivers are permitted either to utilize their own physician {if CDL FMCSA Registered Physician} at their own expense or the current District approved examination center (see link below) which will be paid by the district. The driver is to obtain all medical forms from the transportation office, prior to going to the facility.

### Current Medical Facility

Upon completion of the physical and receiving a clean bill of health, the driver will be issued the completed physical examination certificate and the Medical Examiners Certificate (card) for the driver to hand carry back to the transportation office immediately.

Motor Vehicle Services Agency

OR

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission  
225 East State Street  
CDL Unit  
PO Box 685  
Trenton, NJ 08666-0217

IMPORTANT: Failure to mail Self Holder Certification may result in Motor Vehicle Services Agency revoking your passenger endorsement.

It is the driver's' responsibility to mail the original copy of the medical examination certificate and Self Holder Certification to Motor Vehicle Services at the time of renewing physical.

*Last modified: Feb 12, 2021*

## 3.5. Criminal History (Fingerprinting)

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Prior to renewing your CDL you MUST archive your fingerprints online. All information and procedures are available through the Criminal History Review Unit website –

[Criminal History Review Unit Website](#). Your CDL can NOT be renewed without this document. Please be sure to leave enough time between submitting the application online and the expiration of your CDL (usually takes a couple of weeks to be processed)

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 3.6. Drug and Alcohol Testing for Commercial Driver's Licenses

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Federal regulations mandate random drug and alcohol testing of employees who are required to have a commercial driver's license ("CDL") for their job. The tests will be unannounced and administered in accordance with Federal regulations and established procedures. Given the district's Zero Tolerance policy positive alcohol and/or drug test will result in the termination of employment.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 3.7. Prescription Drug Use

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Many over the counter drugs and prescription drugs have potential side effects that may impair a driver and place them and the students they transport at risk. It is important that you review any medications you take with your physician to ensure you are able to safely drive your bus.

To minimize the dangers of using medications, employees should:

- Ask their doctor or pharmacist how the medication might affect their ability to drive safely.
- Read the labels of any medication and follow instructions exactly.
- Never mix medications without first checking with your health professional.
- Never mix alcohol with any medications.
- Never take medications that have been prescribed to other people.
- Ask your health professional for non-impairing alternatives.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 3.8. Proper Amount of Sleep

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Safety sleep is an important concept for all drivers to keep in mind. It is no secret that driver fatigue is a dangerous condition that leads to many accidents. Recent studies indicate that even missing one or two hours of sleep can double your chances of being in an accident.

Lack of proper sleep is the same risk as driving over the legal limit for alcohol. As such, drivers are reminded that it is important for their safety and that of their passengers they get adequate sleep the night before they drive; for most people, this is seven hours of sleep per night.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 3.9. Preservation of Buses and Vans

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The purchase of a school bus is a major capital investment for the district. Drivers are expected to assist in maximizing their useful life by:

- Avoiding potholes
- Only turning the wheel when the bus is moving
- Not driving over speed bumps too fast
- Avoid last minute braking
- Avoid backing up the bus whenever possible
- Report any malfunction as soon as it is recognized

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 3.10. New Buses

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### 54 Passenger Bus Garage Parking Procedures

#### Suspension Lowering Procedure

Before entering the garage:

- Line up your bus with the bay that you are attempting to enter;
- Secure bus (set transmission in neutral/park, apply parking brake);
- Lower the airbag suspension by depressing the suspension dump button located on the right side of the driver's panel below the parking brake knob;
- Ascertain that the lowering of the airbag suspension was successful;
- Proceed with caution entering the garage;
- Secure vehicle, deactivate child reminder, lock the emergency door, and then service door upon exiting the vehicle.

Exiting the garage:

- Enter the bus;
- Proceed to unlock the emergency door;
- Start vehicle;
- Ascertain the bus airbag suspension remains lowered before exiting;
- Proceed with caution exiting the garage;
- Once outside, secure bus (set transmission in neutral/park, apply parking brake);
- Raise airbag suspension by depressing the suspension dump button;
- Ascertain that the previous step was successful.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 4. ACCIDENT AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 4.1. Accident Procedures

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An accident is defined as a collision between the school bus/van and a moving or stationary object. An accident can result in vehicle damage and/or passenger injury. The driver shall report EVERY ACCIDENT IMMEDIATELY whether students are on board at the time or not to the transportation office.

These procedures should be carried out as quickly as possible.

1. Stop the vehicle at the scene of the accident, no matter how minor. Set the parking brake, activate the hazard warning flashers to alert other motorists, turn off all other lights and electrical switches, and turn off the ignition switch and remove the key.
2. After the incident do not move your bus. Documentation of the final positions of the vehicles involved in the incident is extremely important to the accident investigation. Move the vehicle only when directed by the police. Do not move the bus simply to let traffic pass.
3. Remain calm and in control. Your attitude and actions will have an enormous impact on how the students react during the aftermath of the incident, especially with special needs students. Reassure the students.
4. Assess the situation after the incident. If a fire is present or the potential for a fire exists, evacuate the students. Also, look for any possible hazardous materials that may present a danger to you or the students. Evacuate students if a danger exists from chemicals, vapors, or other toxic substances.
5. Check students for injuries, if necessary, administer first aid to injured students. Do not exceed your limits providing first aid. Do not move any injured student unless absolutely necessary.
6. Contact the transportation office via radio or phone (973 664-2354). Give the office the following information: your exact location, report on injuries, any danger of fire, is the bus being evacuated. If base does not respond, please repeat your basic message again, giving your bus number each time. Base may hear you but you are unable to hear base. If evacuating the bus, ensure the radio is on by pressing the power button on it and place the microphone out the driver's side window for possible use outside the bus. All other drivers should clear the airwaves whenever there is an emergency unless a "Relay" of communications is necessary. The transportation office will contact the local police department during normal working hours. When the transportation office is closed, the driver will contact the Transportation Dispatcher or if it is an emergency, dial 911 then contact the Dispatcher.
7. If a driver is experiencing a mechanical breakdown on a major highway, the driver is to assess as to how perilous the situation is (possibility of fire, being struck by any other moving vehicles, etc.). Once this is determined driver should gather the following information before contacting 911 requesting police assistance:
  - a. Who you are (Driver Name, the entity you work for, vehicle number);
  - b. Exact location;
  - c. Number of passengers on board (students, coaches and/or chaperones);
  - d. Depiction of the incident (flat tire, overheating, etc.);
  - e. Protect the scene until police arrival;
  - f. If an evacuation is needed, let the 911 dispatcher know and if possible, wait for the police arrival. If not, identify a safe location away from any possible danger, to evacuate all passengers;
  - g. Then contact MHRD dispatcher on duty and relay all pertinent information and steps taken, then

await for instructions.

8. Protect the accident scene by placing reflective triangle warning devices in their appropriate locations warning oncoming traffic of a disabled vehicle. Make sure to activate your 4-way flashers. If you have evacuated students be sure they are in a safe area and remain together.
9. Account for all passengers. Provide first responders with the exact number of students on board and if any have special needs.
10. Request anyone who had observed the accident to remain until the police arrive. Jot down license plate numbers of vehicles at the scene, especially of potential witnesses who are leaving before the police arrive. If no witnesses are available, identify the first people who arrived at the scene.
11. Do not release students from the accident scene investigation unless instructed by law enforcement, school officials, or unless emergency medical treatment is required. Cooperate with the authorities. As the police and emergency personnel arrive they will take over.
12. When talking with other motorists, be professional and polite, but admit nothing, and don't argue. What you say at the accident scene may be admissible in court. Do not discuss the accident with anyone other than law enforcement or school administration.
13. If approached by the media, politely inform them that the district policy does not allow drivers to comment at the scene. Instruct the media to talk with the School Business Administrator (973-664-2281).
14. In each bus/van there is a Motor Vehicle Accident Report Kit. The kit, vehicle registration, and insurance card are to be kept in the document holder located in the driver's compartment. Upon returning to the transportation office after the accident the completed "Preliminary School Bus Accident Report" is to be turned in to the Transportation Coordinator. The Coordinator will then submit the report to the State Department of Education as required. Any documents received from the investigating police officer are to be turned in to the Coordinator (Accident Report #, Case #, etc.).

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 4.2. Accident Responsibilities

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Every crash is unique, but drivers and attendants should remember the following:

1. **Stop.** Even in a minor crash, the bus should not be moved, unless absolutely necessary, until authorities arrive. This includes non-collision incidents, such as an onboard injury to a student due to a fall.
2. **Assess the Situation.** Before reporting the crash by radio, drivers must assess the situation calmly. Are there injuries? What is the exact location? Must students be evacuated?
3. **Reassure Students.** In any emergency, reassure students calmly that all will be well, even if the adults are not sure it will be. To feel safe, students need to know the adults responsible for them are in control of the situation.
4. **Contact Dispatch.** A calm radio voice in an emergency is one sign of professionalism. If dispatch does not answer an initial radio call, repeat the basic message, giving the bus number each time. (Base may hear the driver, but the driver may not be able to hear base.) Other drivers should clear the air. Do not give out unnecessary information over the radio. For instance, do not mention student names unless absolutely necessary. If possible, periodically update dispatch by radio until help arrives
5. **Protect the Scene.** Activate four-way hazard flashers at once. Ask bystanders for assistance in placing reflectors or alerting traffic. Place reflectors according to prescribed methods, far enough to the rear to protect the bus from another collision.
6. **Make the Evacuation Decision.** In most cases, students will be safer inside the bus following an incident or crash. Evacuation is hazardous and should not be considered if the students would be safer on board. If there is a danger of a fire, rollover, or second collision, begin evacuation at once.
7. **Initiate First Aid.** Until help arrives, undertake life-saving first-aid measures. Do not move injured students unless necessary. Drivers or attendants should not exceed the limits of their training.
8. **Account for Students.** Double check the student roster to confirm the whereabouts of every student on the bus. Do not release uninjured students until authorities arrive.
9. **Cooperate with Authorities.** Emergency personnel need to know exactly how many students were on board and if any have special health conditions. In severe incidents, a command post will be established to coordinate rescue efforts. As rescuers arrive, they will take over. Drivers and attendants must let them do their job.

*Last modified: Aug 20, 2021*

## 4.3. Mechanical Failure or Breakdown

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In the event of a mechanical breakdown, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Stop the bus as far to the right of the road as possible or on the shoulder of the road. If it is safe to do so, pull into an empty parking area or place with enough room so that when it is time you can safely transfer students to another bus. Also, picking the right spot is appreciated in the event the vehicle has to be towed.
2. Keep the students in the bus. If the bus location is unsafe, remove the students to a safer location.
3. Promptly activate the hazard warning lights and place the reflective triangle warning devices on the highway at locations as instructed.
4. Contact the transportation office via radio or phone (973-664-2354) during school hours or the Dispatchers after hours and provide the location of bus, description of breakdown and as to whether a replacement bus is needed to transport students to their destination. The Dispatchers will inform the Transportation Coordinator. Upon returning to the transportation office complete the Vehicle Service Request Form.
5. If a driver is experiencing a mechanical breakdown on a major highway, the driver is to assess as to how perilous the situation is (possibility of fire, being struck by any other moving vehicles, etc.). Once this is determined driver should gather the following information before contacting 911 requesting police assistance:
  - a. Who you are (Driver Name, the entity you work for, vehicle number);
  - b. Exact location;
  - c. Number of passengers on board (students, coaches and/or chaperones);
  - d. Depiction of the incident (flat tire, overheating, etc.);
  - e. Protect the scene until police arrival;
  - f. If an evacuation is needed, let the 911 dispatcher know and if possible, wait for the police arrival.  
If not, identify a safe location away from any possible danger, to evacuate all passengers;
  - g. Then contact MHRD dispatcher on duty and relay all pertinent information and steps taken, then await for instructions.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 4.4. Bus Evacuation Procedures

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Reasons for bus evacuations shall include but not be limited to:

1. Fire or danger of fire:
  - a. A bus shall be stopped and evacuated if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire or smoking. Passengers shall be moved at least 100 feet from the bus and remain there until the Bus Driver has been informed by the police or fire authorities that no danger remains or until other provisions are made.
  - b. A bus shall be evacuated immediately if the bus is near an existing fire and unable to be moved away from the fire, or if the bus is near the presence of any combustible materials and is unable to be relocated. The Bus Driver shall move the passengers at least 100 feet from the area of the combustible material until the Bus Driver has been informed by the police or fire authorities that no danger remains or until provisions are made.
2. Unsafe situation: In the event a bus is stopped due to an accident, mechanical failure, road conditions, or human failure, the Bus Driver shall determine immediately whether it is safer for the students to remain on the bus or be evacuated.
3. If a breakdown or evacuation must occur on a major highway contact the **State Police for assistance**. Refer to Section 4.1 Article 7.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 4.5. Bus Evacuation Drills

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Drills shall be conducted in accordance with the state and federal laws. NJAC 6

A:27-11.2 states that there shall be at least two drills for all students who are transported to and from school. All other students shall receive instruction at least once a year.

Bus evacuation drills shall:

1. Demonstrate and practice various methods and components of evacuation.
2. Include the participation of educational staff, bus driver and students in appropriate portions of the drill, and
3. Be conducted when the weather is conducive to safety and preferably when the bus arrives at the school with students onboard.

See Link below for Bus Evacuation Procedures.

[Bus Evacuation Procedures](#)

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 4.6. Lockdowns

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Throughout the year the district schools will practice lockdown drills. All employees are to follow the direction of the transportation office staff until the drill is completed. If there is an actual lockdown, students are to be kept on your bus and are to following the direction of the office staff if in the buildings or the police if out of the building. If a schoolyard is closed by the police you will be directed to drive to the other campus, unless told otherwise by the police.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 4.7. Employee Liability in Pupil Accidents

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General agreement among authorities on school law is that employees are likely to be considered negligent under the following conditions should an accident to a pupil occur:

- Lengthy absence of employee while pupils are on the bus.
- Employee leaving the pupils with an unqualified person being left in charge.
- Permitting pupils to operate the bus.
- Failure to keep written reports of every accident occurring under the employee's supervision, regardless of the kind of injury.
- Failure of the employee to keep in mind the fact that pupils are children, and their actions may be guided by childish impulses.
- An employee is not responsible for injuries if it is proven that the employee gave the pupil the proper instructions and directions. The accident may be due to the contributory negligence of the pupil or may be considered as an unavoidable accident.

\*Employee neglecting to check for students left on the bus at the conclusion of each tiered assignment.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## **5. VEHICLE & EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE**

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 5.1. Inspections

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State law requires that before starting on a school bus run, to pick up or discharge students, the driver shall perform the required inspections as listed on the “Driver’s Vehicle Inspection Report”. This is a DAILY report, which is to be completed each day and submitted to the transportation office at the end of the day. A separate Vehicle Inspection Report must be filled out for each vehicle you drive. Please note if you do find something wrong, make note on the Driver’s Vehicle Inspection Report and then fill out a “Vehicle Service Request” for the mechanics to make the repairs. When performing your inspections remember to check for any suspicious items on the inside and outside of the vehicle including the wheel wells. During your inspection should you discover any remaining students onboard or belongings left by students (clothing, phones, etc). Immediately notify the transportation office.

Buses are inspected by the State of New Jersey two times a year. It is extremely important that the buses pass these inspections. They look for a number of issues on each bus. Some are designated as driver related issues (i.e., back alarm not working, light out, insurance card missing, loose seat, pry bar loose, seat belt not available for use, cracked lights, etc.) Drivers should be noting these problems during their normal pre/post trip inspections each day. The inspectors have the right to issue fines against the bus driver for not recording a defect on the Vehicle Inspection Report and completing a Vehicle Service Request. It is your responsibility as a bus driver to perform the pre and post trip inspections. Continued failure to note these items will be noted in your summative evaluation that may result in disciplinary action which could affect your salary and/or continued employment with the district.

- Pre-Trip Inspection – (NJAC 13:20-30.7 through 30.8) All drivers are required to perform PRE TRIP inspection. Drivers are to immediately advise the transportation office of all safety defects (lights out, brake not working properly, etc.) discovered during the pre-trip inspection. The mechanics will then be contacted and a decision will be made as to whether the bus will go on the road at that time. Drivers are subject to fines for items found to be in violation and not reported (NJAC 13:20-.17 (2,3,4,5)). (see Appendix B)
- En-Route Inspection –
  - Sight – check gauges, smoke and children activity.
  - Smell – odors, exhaust, smoke, gas, diesel oil, burning rubber
  - Sound – unusual noises such as engine knocking or clashing gears
  - Touch – loss of steering, brakes, power, transmission.Inspections (cont.)
- Post Trip Inspection – **In addition to looking for students remaining on the bus** this inspection includes checking your bus for items left behind (backpacks, phones, etc.) Upon discovering items left behind notify the transportation office who will advise you what to do with the item(s). Check the bus for vandalism, close all windows, and sweep the bus. Rearrange the seat belts and other child restraint systems so they are ready to use on the next trip.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 5.2. Driver's Vehicle Inspections Report

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Problems are occurring with buses not having a completed Driver's Vehicle Inspection Report (on the tablet) for each shift daily. However, please have a couple of pink vehicle inspection sheets in case there is an issue with the tablet.

*Last modified: Aug 30, 2022*

## 5.3. Warning Lights

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When the Warning Lamps (Yellow or Red) fail to operate the driver must immediately pull over and notify the transportation office via radio with the vehicle location and number of stops remaining. The transportation office will notify the Mechanics of the details and then inform the driver of the appropriate action to be taken. Upon completion of the school bus route, warning lamps shall be switched off.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 5.4. Tire Chains and Winter Bus Covers

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If your vehicle is equipped with chains they are to be engaged before reaching slippery conditions. Vehicles using chains must not exceed 35 MPH. If you have any difficulty using these chains please contact the transportation office.

Automatic Snow Chains Operational Instructions:

1. Check that your Onspots are working properly before your trip (to be done with your pretrip inspection from the months of November through April).
2. Chains **MUST BE** engaged and disengaged while the vehicle is moving.
  - a. chains **MUST BE** engaged when traveling between 2mph and 25 mph.
  - b. chains **MUST BE** disengaged when traveling between 2 mph and 35 mph.
3. Vehicle\* **MUST NOT**\* exceed 35 mph with the chains engaged.
4. Vehicle can stop on the chains and then start moving again, as long as the switch is still in the engaged position.
5. Engage chains before reaching slippery conditions. Onspot will assist traction in forward, reverse, and in braking conditions.
  - a. avoid locking the wheels.
6. If you have not engaged your onspots before stopping on a slippery road:
  - a. spin tires up to 5mph
  - b. engage onspots,
  - c. when you feel chains bite, stop spinning the wheels and drive on slowly.

Bus Grill covers are available for each bus. When the weather turns cold the mechanics can assist you with their installation. As the weather begins to warm up please remove it to prevent overheating.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 6. ROUTES AND TRIPS

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 6.1. Routes

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Open routes are selected annually by seniority. Routes are distributed to the drivers and selections are made prior to the Bus Drivers annual Meeting. All extra contracted assignments are also selected by seniority annually.

The driver shall follow the established route and make only stops designated by the Board of Education. If any bus stop designated by the Board of Education appears to be unsafe, because of insufficient visibility or other reasons, the driver shall inform the Transportation Dispatcher, but continue to make the stop until official change is made. The driver shall follow the established route times. DO NOT pick up students prior to the established first pick up time. If the driver finds that the pickup time(s) of the designated bus stop(s) needs to be revised, the driver shall inform the Transportation Dispatcher who will determine if the route time change is warranted. Drivers are not permitted to make time changes themselves.

If parents are requesting changes to the route and or stop they are to be referred to the District Transportation Center.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 6.2. Dismissal Bus Changes and Trip Assignment

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Drivers are to check posted bus changes on the monitors prior to departing for dismissal. Make sure that you CAREFULLY read and check for bus changes for **all school and trip drop off assignments**. If you have any questions regarding the changes, check with dispatchers.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 6.3. Keys

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Daily keys can be obtained from the key panel in the transportation office. They are to be returned at the end of the route. Do not leave your keys in a place where they can be obtained by any unauthorized individual. Do not give your keys to pupils, and above all, do not lose your keys. If keys are lost, you will be responsible for payment of replacement for the lost keys and associated fobs. **Drivers are NOT PERMITTED** to make or possess a duplicate key for any bus/van.

*Last modified: Oct 12, 2020*

## 6.4. Radio Check

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Radio checks must be performed daily after morning pre inspection and in the afternoon before you begin your route.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## **6.5. Bus and Van Lineup for Dismissal at Morris Knolls & Morris Hills**

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Please click the link below for Bus and Van Lineup for Dismissal at Morris Knolls and Morris Hills.

[Bus Dismissal Line Up](#)

*Last modified: Mar 28, 2024*

## 6.5.1. Loading Restriction at Morris Knolls High School – Parking Lot Side

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### Dismissal Line-up at Morris Knolls High School

As of today, January 18, 2021, **only the lead school vehicle (one bus) approaching the Morris Knolls High School nurse's crosswalk on the parking lot side** will be allowed to load students at dismissal time. Any other vehicle behind the first bus past **this crosswalk** on the parking lot side, **MUST** wait for the lineup to disperse before pulling up to the general office doors to pick up their students.

It is an imminent safety issue with the MHRD school vehicles allowing students to board at the aforementioned location compromising the students' safety by placing them on the outside lane of traffic at this point while vehicles are attempting to access the Board Office sector of the school campus, athletic fields, etc.

For a visual reference please see the link below.

[Loading Restriction at Morris Knolls High School – Parking Lot Side](#)

*Last modified: Jan 20, 2021*

## 6.6. Bus Stop Procedures

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Bus stops are **approved** by the Board of Education. Drivers **cannot** move or add stops without prior approval from the transportation office. If a driver believes a stop may be unsafe it should be brought to the attention of the Transportation Dispatcher. Drivers are **not** to wait excessively at a stop for students; they are told to be at the stop ten minutes early. If you get to a stop and no one is there radio it into the office with the time.

### Loading and Unloading

More students are killed while getting on or off a school bus each year than are killed as passengers inside of a school bus. As a result, knowing what to do before, during, and after loading or unloading students is critical.

#### Approaching the Stop

- Approach cautiously at a slow rate of speed.
- Look for pedestrians, traffic, or other objects before, during, and after coming to a stop.
- Continuously check all mirrors.
- If the school bus is so equipped, activate alternating flashing amber warning lights at least 200 feet or approximately 5-10 seconds before the school bus stop.
- Turn on right turn signal and about 100-300 feet or approximately 3-5 seconds before stopping.
- Continuously check mirrors to monitor **danger zones** for students, traffic and other objects.
- Move as far as possible to the right on the traveled portion of the roadway.

#### At Stop

- Bring school bus to a full stop with the front bumper at least 10 feet away from students at the designated stop (this forces the students to walk towards you and you have a better view of their movements).
- **Place transmission in Park/Neutral and set the parking brake at each stop**
- Activate alternating red lights when traffic is a safe distance from the school bus and ensure stop arm is extended.
- Once last traffic check, to ensure all vehicles are stopped, before opening the door.

#### Loading Procedure

- Students should wait in a designated location for the school bus, facing the bus as it approaches.
- Students should board the bus only when signaled by the driver.
- Monitor all mirrors continuously.
- Count students at the stop and make sure the number matches as they board the bus and remind them to sit facing forward and fasten their seat belts.
- Confirm everyone is seated before moving the bus.
- One last mirror check to verify no student is running towards the bus.

- If you cannot account for a student outside, secure the vehicle, remove the key, check around and underneath the bus.

### Preparing to Depart Stop

- Close the service door.
- Engage the transmission.
- Release the parking brake.
- Turn on left turn signal.
- Check mirrors.
- If a considerable amount of traffic is present allow them to disperse.

\*When it is safe, move the bus to enter traffic flow and continue the route.

### Unloading

A driver is to assure everyone is seated until the vehicle is motionless.

Basically, follow the first steps of the loading procedures, but reverse the action starting with:

- Count the number of students as they disembark and make sure everyone is accounted for as they walk away.
- If a student needs to stand at the stop instruct them to move away at least 10 feet from the front bumper so the driver can have eye contact.

### Addition

If a student or students must cross the roadway they should follow these instructions:

- Walk approximately 10 feet away from the side of the school bus to a position where you can see them.
  - Walk to a location at least 10 feet in front of the right corner of the bumper, and remain away from the front of the school bus.
  - Instruct them to stop and look in all directions to make sure the roadway is clear and safe.
  - Instruct them to check if the red flashing lights are still flashing.
  - Instruct them to wait for your signal before crossing the roadway.
  - Upon your signal instruct the student to cross far enough in front of the school bus to be in your view.
  - Instruct student(s) to stop at the edge of the bus, check for traffic and wait for your signal to continue to cross the roadway.
1. All loading and unloading shall be done on school grounds at designated areas.
  2. All warning lamps shall be turned off while loading or unloading on the school grounds in order that traffic may proceed at the legal rate. The ONLY exception to this would be buses that unload by the Morris Hills Science Wing.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 6.7. Assignment of Athletics/Field Trips

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Trips are assigned to MHRD contracted Bus Drivers unless the departure time is between 2:00 PM and 3:45 PM. In those cases, an approved contractor bus will be used. Trips are assigned to MHRD contracted drivers on an equitable basis.

Three picklists are established twice per year, in September and February. They are:

- New York/Philadelphia,
- Weekend,
- Weekday.

Errors made by the Board of Education whereby requiring a greater number of drivers than are necessary for a trip, the senior driver/driver's who are not needed shall be relieved of their duty but will be paid as though they actually drove the trip with the exception of, a trip requiring multiple drivers and an error is made or trip was modified and fewer drivers are needed the trip history will be contemplated to determine which driver(s) who has been assigned the trip the longest.

If a driver is eligible for a second trip on the same day, the department will follow a minimum of a 90-minute window of separation between the scheduled arrival time and the departure of the second assignment.

If you are assigned

As trips are assigned from the appropriate list and the available driver with the least number of trips is automatically assigned. An email is sent to the driver with the date, time and location of the trip. The driver has 48 hours to reject that trip. If the trip is rejected, it is considered taken and then assigned to the next available driver on the list with the least amount of trips.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 6.8. Athletics/Field Trip Procedures

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Trips that are run by district drivers are reminded of the following:

1. Drivers shall arrive at least five minutes early prior to departure times.
2. Travel time will be excluded on trips scheduled on school days.
3. You must use the bus assigned to you on your field trip ticket unless you contact the Transportation Dispatcher. In case of a breakdown, contact one of the Transportation Dispatchers and provide the location of the bus and details of the breakdown. If they cannot be reached, contact the Transportation Coordinator.
4. If on the day of your athletic/field trip, you find that you cannot fulfill the assignment, you are not permitted to contact another driver of your choice. You must first make an effort to contact the Transportation Dispatchers. Swapping of trips is prohibited.
5. While on an athletic/field trip with other buses, going to the same destination, all vehicles are to stay together and are to use the same route.
6. The care and responsibility for buses and vans while away from the bus garage is that of the driver. While parked at athletic and activity events, the vehicles must be watched. Failure to fulfill this obligation may result in damage to the vehicles and items stolen from it. The suspension of assigning athletic/field trips to the offender may be necessary.
7. Drivers are not to make any **unauthorized** stops including requests to stop for food, while transporting students to and from athletic events or field trips unless stated on the trip request. However, if the need for such a request arises while on the trip an approval by the school principal is **imperative**.
8. Communicate location and pickup time at destination with the lead teacher and exchange cell phone numbers so you may remain in contact.
9. If you are assigned a Spectator or Spirit bus, you may not accept money from anyone to ride the bus. Students are required to sign up.
10. The Morris Hills Regional District will provide commercial-grade Global Position System Devices (GPS) to assist our drivers in reaching those difficult, unknown/unfamiliar destinations. Drivers will be required to sign the devices in and out and will need to be requested in advance.
11. Drivers are prohibited from using parking lots unless they are part of the final destination or have requested and have been described as part of the assignment.

*Last modified: Aug 17, 2021*

## 6.9. Trip Sign Off

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All drivers are to check the monitor in the break and/or overflow room daily for the trip schedule before their am run. If you discover any discrepancies advise one of the dispatchers so that they can investigate.

Additionally, each Wednesday drivers are to check and initial the weekly trip confirmation list located in the overflow room, listing trips for the upcoming week starting on Sunday. Trips should be confirmed (initialed) by Friday at the completion of your morning shift.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 6.10. Pick Up Location for Athletic and Field Trips

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For all trips unless noted on the trip request form or authorized by the building principal – no group is to stop for food i.e. Lunch, ice cream etc.

- Morris Knolls:
  - Athletic trips depart in front of the board office with the exception of 2:30 departures – they will depart from the flagpole in front of the school building. All trips departing at 2:30 pm must be parked at flag pole by 2:15 p.m.
  - Field trips depart from the general office doors in front of the school building.
- Morris Hills: Any Athletic/Field trip departing Morris Hills at any time on any day trying to gain access to Route 46 Eastbound must exit school grounds via West Longview as stated in chapter 8.13 of this manual.
  - Athletic trips depart from the top of the stairs located by the fuel pumps in the back of the school building by the bus garage. The exceptions to this rule are for ice hockey that:
    - Departs at 3:10 p.m. school days – they depart from the crosswalk just prior to the science wing bus line up.
    - Departs after 4:30 p.m. Weekdays and all times on weekends – they depart from the front of the school building by the tennis courts.
  - Field trips depart from near the tennis courts.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## **6.11. Payroll for Athletic and Field Trips**

After each trip, bus drivers must return the trip completion report to the Dispatchers Office with actual arrival and departure times as well as odometer readings. Dispatchers will close trips in the Field Trip assignment system.

Each week prior to Monday morning at 8:00 am. All drivers must submit time worked for trips in the Employee Service Portal. These requests will be approved by the Dispatcher and electronically transmitted to payroll. If the trip completion report was not returned to the Dispatcher, the request will not be approved.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

# 7. TABLETS

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## TABLETS

The Morris Hills Regional District utilizes the Tyler Drive System to provide turn by turn directions to each bus stop and manage student ridership as required by NJ State regulations. Directions and students assigned to your route are displayed on a tablet mounted on your bus dashboard. Students swipe their ID badge as they enter and exit the bus allowing for rosters and accountability.

1. Tablets must be used during any and all times that students are transported. This includes all school runs, athletic/field trips, late runs, and express transports.
2. Tablets are to be kept in vehicles unless it is necessary to be removed for repair.
3. All condition reports (DVIR) must be done on the tablet. In the event, the tablet is not working a hard copy **MUST** be filled out.
4. Any time a student enters or exits your bus, he/she is to swipe their ID Badge.
5. Any student that does not have a card should be directed to their respective general office to inquire about a replacement card.
6. Any student who fails to swipe please report their name via the District Transportation Center (DTC).
7. For any operational questions regarding the tablet, please refer to the PowerPoint tutorial "Tablet PowerPoint Tutorial": [Tablet PowerPoint Tutorial](#)
8. Any issues or malfunctions with the tablets should be reported via the DTC on the MHRD homepage under the Staff Links tab. Information on trouble ticket should include route name, explanation and time of the malfunction,
9. Under no circumstances should the radio be used to report tablet issues.
10. Morning and afternoon runs will appear on your tablet by entering your individual pin number. All other non-contracted routes (athletic/field trips, express transports, and late runs) must be added.

*Last modified: Feb 17, 2021*

## 8. SAFETY TOPICS

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 8.1. Safety

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The driver shall close all doors before the bus is put in motion. Doors shall remain closed until the bus has completely stopped to take on or discharge passengers. The driver shall not ride with the door open at any time, even if the bus is empty. The driver shall at all times, comply with all Motor Vehicle Traffic regulations, speed limits, stop signs, etc. and maintain a safe following distance considering the weather, traffic sun glare, etc. Driver shall not use the left lane of travel on any highway. Aisles on the bus should be kept clear while the bus is in motion.

Refueling of the bus while passengers are on board is NOT permitted. During the refueling process, the bus engine must be turned off. Fire zones are clearly designated at both schools. Parking in these prohibited areas may cause you to receive a summons by the applicable Police Department. Buses parked in front of either school are not permitted to be left unattended. If you must leave the bus unattended, the bus must be locked.

School vehicles must come to a complete stop at all railroad crossings, except for crossings identified as "EXEMPT". School bus drivers shall exercise the utmost care before proceeding as required by NJSA 39: 4-128.

The speed on school property is 10 m.p.h.

When entering or exiting from the transportation office/Bus Garage area use extreme caution when traveling alongside the Academy Building.

STOP SIGNS at Morris Hills – There are STOP SIGNS posted on

- BOTH sides of the fence: 1 as you enter school property from West Longview Rd. and the other as exit school property onto West Longview Rd. All vehicles are to come to a complete stop at these locations. Do not disregard the Stop signs.
- There are 2 posted STOP Signs located on each end of the Academy building due to the high volume of pedestrian traffic.
- Additionally, there is a crosswalk connecting the main entrance door to the Academy Building to the sidewalk on the Morris Hills Main Building side, therefore, all rules and regulations pertaining to crosswalks should be observed.

There are to be NO buses/vans left parked in the driveway alongside the Academy Building, in front of the bus garage bays or fuel pump area. When you need to move a bus/van in order to get your vehicle out of the garage you must park that bus/van back in its assigned garage. If you are moving a vehicle for a trip when school is not in session, you must also return the vehicle to its assigned garage and close the door. Drivers are NOT to leave any vehicles parked in these areas. The only time vehicles are to be left at the fuel pumps is during the fueling process.

At the end of all school runs seat belts must be put up on the seat so that all seatbelts are accessible to all riders and preventing them from becoming a tripping hazard.

## 8.2. Idling

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Buses are not to idle longer than 3 minutes in accordance with the law. All buses are to turn off their engines upon arriving for dismissal lineup and when waiting for pupils to board for field trips or athletic events.

\*Summary of N.J. Idling Requirements for Motor Vehicles  
N.J.A.C. 7:27-14,15\*

All vehicles may idle for up to three minutes with the following exceptions:

- DIESEL only may idle for up to 15 consecutive minutes when the vehicle has been stopped for 3 or more hours and ONLY if the outside temperature is <25 degrees F
- Buses may idle while actively discharging or picking up passengers for 15 consecutive minutes in a 60-minute period
- No idling is allowed in a parking space with available and functioning electrification technology

Three-minute idling limit does NOT apply to:

- Motor vehicles stopped in traffic
- Motor vehicles whose primary power source is utilized in whole or in part for necessary and prescribed mechanical operations such as refrigeration units for perishable loads, hydraulic lifts, “cherry pickers”, or similar equipment
- Motor vehicles waiting to be examined by state or federal motor vehicle inspectors or motor vehicles while being repaired
- Vehicles that are actively performing emergency services, such as fire, police, snow removal, and utility vehicles
- Operation of auxiliary or alternate power systems for cabin comfort
- A motor vehicle with a sleeper berth, equipped with a 2007 or newer engine, or that has been retrofitted with a diesel particulate filter while the driver is resting or sleeping in the sleeper berth. Other idling is still prohibited.

PENALTIES: For commercial vehicle and property owner, \$250 for first violation, \$500 for second violation, \$1000 for third and each subsequent violation.

For further questions, call NJDEP’s Bureau of Mobile Sources at (609) 292-7953

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.3. Passengers

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School buses are not to exceed the maximum seating capacity for the vehicle. No standees shall be allowed. No passengers except school pupils, private school pupils or approved personnel of the Morris Hills Regional District shall be carried on scheduled trips. NO EXCEPTIONS.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.4. Seat Belts

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Seat belts have been required on passenger cars since 1968. New Jersey requires wearing seat belts in cars and light trucks. There is no question that seat belts play an important role in keeping occupants safe in these vehicles. New Jersey law states that all buses are to be equipped with seatbelts and the **driver is to remind the students to wear them**. Each time you pull away from a school or stop please say, "Please buckle up."

Seat belts are to be worn by the driver at all times the bus is in motion.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.5. Personal Accident

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Any employee injured on the job no matter how minor will report such injury to their immediate supervisor and to the work location's school nurse. If the school nurse is not available, you must report to the Nurse as soon as the nurse is on duty. In case of a true medical emergency, immediately call 911.

An accident report (forms are available in the Nurse's Office) must be completed with the nurse or immediate supervisor at the time of the accident or as soon thereafter as physically possible.

### After Hours Procedure

1. Call your immediate supervisor to report your injury.
2. **Call QualLynx, Inc.** for direction on where to go for treatment. **1-800-425-3222**.
3. Report your injury to the nurse at your work location the very next day who will complete an incident report and follow up with Qual Lynx.
4. Immediate Supervisor is to report the injury to the work location Business Administrator and the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds or the Supervisor of Pupil Services within 48 hours.

For a more step by step directions and contacts, please see the link below.

[Procedure for Work Related Injuries](#)

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 8.6. Cell Phone Usage

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Cellular telephones shall never be used while the user is in the bus driver's seat. Only in the case of an extreme emergency, when the bus driver can not physically remove him or herself from the driver's seat shall cellular telephone usage be permitted. This directive applies to both handheld and hands free cellular telephones.

Employees are not allowed to use any electronic communication to contact any student directly. (Policy 4283.)

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.7. Radios

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The radios provided in each bus are to be used for ALL transportation communication to the transportation office and Mechanics garage. Drivers are to limit their conversations to important matters only. NO idle chatter is allowed. You are reminded that these airwaves are federally controlled and monitored by the public. You are to use the phone only when directed to do so. The office phone is dealing with a heavy volume of calls from staff, parents and other schools; your communication is important—use the radio. Your bus number is your personal identification. The office is identified as “Morris Hills Base.”

Some examples of acceptable radio transmissions are:

- Reporting a mechanical issue or breakdown.
- Reporting a motor vehicle accident
- Reporting road blockages or other unsafe situations.
- Reporting an uncontrollable student situation, for example, a fight.
- Reporting a situation that will make you late to your next stop or school.

Some examples of unacceptable radio transmissions are:

- Personal conversations between drivers
- General weather conditions
- Non-threatening animal sightings
- Comments toward other bus drivers or car drivers.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.8. Restricted Roads

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The following roads **are not to be used** unless specifically directed by the transportation office.

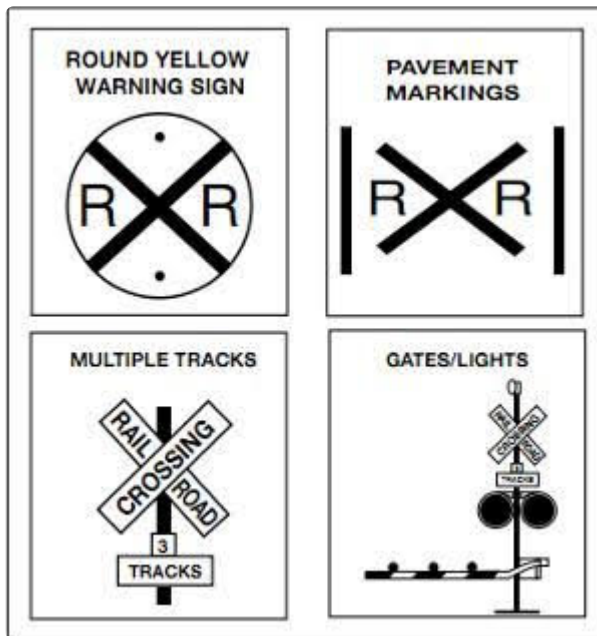
- Elycroft Ave
- Lindbergh Ave.
- McKinley Pl.
- Hyland Ter.
- Lakeside Dr.
- Chestnut Ter.

All MHRD Transportation Department vehicles must travel into Rockaway Borough using Mt. Hope Rd. to Academy St. to Wall St. to W. Main St. Should there be a traffic emergency in the center of Rockaway Borough then buses may take an alternate route to avoid the area.

When approaching Morris Hills High School for the morning unloading of students and/or the afternoon dismissal everyone is to gain access to Morris Hills High School via Overlook Drive. This will be an avoidance procedure trying to complete a hard right turn into the circle if you are accessing school grounds via West Longview Drive.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.9. Railroad Crossing



### Recommended Procedures

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. The specific procedures required in each state vary.

A school bus is one of the safest vehicles on the highway. However, a school bus does not have the slightest edge when involved in a crash with a train. Because of the train's size and weight it cannot stop quickly. 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:

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

### At the Crossing:

1. 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.
2. Place the transmission in Park, or if there is no Park shift point, in Neutral and press down on the service brake or set the parking brakes.

3. Turn off all radios and noisy equipment and silence the passengers
4. Open the service door and driver's window. Look and listen for an approaching train.

#### Crossing the Track:

1. Check the crossing signals again before proceeding.
2. 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.
3. 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.

#### **Containment or Storage Areas**

If it won't fit, don't commit! Know the length of your bus and the size of the containment area at highway-rail crossings on the school bus route, as well as any crossing you encounter in the course of a school activity trip. When approaching a crossing with a signal or stop sign on the opposite side, pay attention to the amount of room there. Be certain the bus has enough containment or storage area to completely clear the railroad tracks on the other side if there is a need to stop. As a general rule, add 15 feet to the length of the school bus to determine an acceptable amount of containment or storage area.

*Last modified: Aug 13, 2020*

## 8.10. Loading and Unloading

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Drivers need to keep in mind the Danger Zone when loading and unloading students. The Danger Zone is 10 feet on all sides of the bus. You need to constantly observe these areas while students are loading or unloading the bus.

Drivers should not break line and pass other buses on school property.

At the bus stop, students are to remain orderly and off the road. Students are not to cross the road until the red lights are activated and the bus has come to a complete stop.

Yellow lights are to be activated 300 feet before the bus stop. Red lights are not to be activated until the bus stops. Do not move the bus until all students are seated.

Do not use school bus warning lights when loading/unloading at the school.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.11. Blood Borne Pathogens

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Buses are equipped with a bodily fluid clean up kit. The kit consists of disposable gloves, absorbent, scraper, disposal bag, alcohol wipes for your use and protection. The key to protecting yourself is to avoid direct contact with the fluid(s), wash well after any contact, and dispose of the waste in the disposable bag provided. Disease can spread through mucus, urine, vomit, blood, feces, and other fluids.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.12. New Jersey Pullover Law

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In 2009 New Jersey enacted a law aimed at reducing death or injuries to roadside emergency workers such as police officers, ambulance drivers and tow truck operators. Upon seeing an emergency vehicle on the side of the road, what are your responsibilities as the operator of a motor vehicle?

### DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

The law requires a driver approaching a stationary emergency vehicle with flashing, blinking or alternating red or blue lights to do so cautiously and, if possible based on the existing safety and traffic conditions, “make a lane change into a lane not adjacent to the . . . emergency vehicle.”

If a lane change is impossible, prohibited by law or unsafe, drivers are required to reduce their speed below the posted speed limit and be prepared to stop.

The law covers an “authorized emergency vehicle” which is any vehicle operated by the fire department, police department and ambulance services responding to an emergency call.

### TOW TRUCKS

New Jersey is one of thirty states that require drivers to also change lanes or reduce speed for parked tow trucks with flashing amber lights and highway maintenance or emergency service vehicles with flashing yellow, amber or red lights. A tow truck is any vehicle equipped with a sling or tilted bed designed to tow or recover vehicles.

### VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW

A driver found guilty of violating New Jersey’s “Move Over” law faces a punishment of \$100 to \$500.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 8.13. Intersection Swede Mine Road & West Main Street

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We are experiencing a higher rate of traffic incidents at the intersection of Swede Mine Rd. and West Main Street in Rockaway Borough due to insufficient distance from this intersection to the traffic light located at West Main Street and Route 46 to safely execute a right-hand turn and accomplish a safe left lane merge to complete a left-hand turn onto Route 46 East. As a result of this traffic dilemma, we are opting to ban the use of Swede Mine Road to access Route 46 East.

We know with certitude how dangerous this particular maneuver is.

Therefore.

“In order to keep our drivers and pupils safer, **all MHRD school vehicles** exiting Morris Hills High School attempting to reach Route 46 Eastbound, must exit school grounds via W. Longview Rd. to Mountain Rd. to Farview Drive to finally gain access to Main Street.

Exceptions to this stipulation –

Unless you are turning right onto Swede Mine Road heading westbound on Route 46 and/or continuing southbound on Rockaway Road period”. >> Any driver disregarding this directive will be disciplined <<.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 8.14. Intersection Mannino Drive and Rt. 46

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Due to the posted speed limit on this stretch of Route 46 (40 mph).

We are banning the use of Mannino Drive to all school vehicles making a left attempting to gain access to Route 46 Eastbound.

We know with certitude how dangerous this particular maneuver is.

Therefore.

“In order to keep our drivers and pupils safer, **all school vehicles** are prohibited from executing the aforementioned maneuver.

Exceptions to this stipulation –

Unless you are turning right onto Route 46 Westbound. >> Any driver disregarding this directive will be disciplined <<.

*Last modified: Oct 06, 2020*

## 8.15. Loading Restriction at Morris Knolls High School – Parking Lot Side

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### Dismissal Line-up at Morris Knolls High School

As of today, January 18, 2021, **only the lead school vehicle (one bus) approaching the Morris Knolls High School nurse's crosswalk on the parking lot side** will be allowed to load students at dismissal time. Any other vehicle behind the first bus past **this crosswalk** on the parking lot side\* **MUST\*** wait for the lineup to disperse before pulling up to the general office doors to pick up their students.

It is an imminent safety issue with the MHRD school vehicles allowing students to board at the aforementioned location compromising the students' safety by placing them on the outside lane of traffic at this point while vehicles are attempting to access the Board Office sector of the school campus, athletic fields, etc.

For a visual reference, please see the link below.

[Morris Knolls High School Nurse's Crosswalk](#)

*Last modified: Jan 20, 2021*

## 8.16. New Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon on Route 27

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A new pedestrian hybrid beacon has been installed at Route 27 and Magnolia Street, near the busy NJ TRANSIT Metropark Station. The signal, consisting of an unusual configuration of three lights, controls motor vehicle traffic and enhances safety for pedestrians crossing Route 27. Please find the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon Diagram link below.

[Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon Diagram](#)

*Last modified: Jan 21, 2021*

## **9. GENERAL DISTRICT PROCEDURES**

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 9.1. Bus Garage

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When you return your bus to the garage in the afternoon, [if you are the last vehicle in], close the garage door. If you are going out on a field trip or another run, buses must be returned to the garage, garage doors must be closed. Doors left open for your convenience invite trouble and the offending driver will be held responsible for any damage. It is the driver's responsibility to CLOSE THE GARAGE DOORS.

When covering any type of late run or returning later to pick up a team, all buses must be returned to the garage and to its designated spot. While out on such runs the garage doors must be closed and locked.

Please click the link below for School Vehicle Parking Location:

[Bus Parking Location](#)

*Last modified: Jan 17, 2023*

## 9.2. Buses and Van Parking Outside

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All buses and vans that are parked outside must park in their assigned spot. All windows are to be closed and locked. This includes the rear emergency door. Remember that the rear emergency door must be UNLOCKED in order to start the bus/van.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 9.3. Car and Bus Parking

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Personal vehicles are to be parked in their assigned spots. Parking on school grounds is not a right and it may be suspended if an employee continually violates the rules with regard to where they park.

Buses are to be parked in the location designated by the transportation office. When parking in the garage, pull in close to the front wall. Prior to closing the garage door make sure that the bus will clear the door when it shuts. Remain standing at the door until the door has closed completely.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 9.4. Gate to the Transportation Yard

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Weekdays the custodians will close the gate along the Academy building at 3:30 pm. The gate is to remain closed until 5:30 am when the mechanics will open the gate for the day. To gain access to the transportation area when the gate is closed you will have to open the gate, drive thru and then immediately close the gate. On weekends the gate is to remain closed at all times. Do not leave the gate open for other buses that may be coming in or out.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 9.5. Video Recording

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In order to maintain a safe and secure environment for all students transported on school vehicles the district has installed recording devices on all of the district vehicles. These devices can record video and audio. There are multiple cameras so that all areas of the bus can be seen. The transportation office can call for these recordings at any time. Students and drivers will not be told when the recordings are called. These videos can be used to resolve student matters and to observe driver actions.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 9.6. Service Animal

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The addition of a service animal may be required by the pupil Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and permitted by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If this occurs on any route the driver will be given special training to be able to deal with this situation.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

# 10. STUDENT INTERACTION

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*Last modified: Mar 22, 2019*

## 10.1. Discipline

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General agreement among authorities on school law is that employees are likely to be considered negligent under the following conditions should an accident to a pupil occur:

- Lengthy absence of employee while pupils are on the bus.
- Employee leaving the pupils with an unqualified person being left in charge.
- Permitting pupils to operate the bus.
- Failure to keep written reports of every accident occurring under the employee's supervision, regardless of the kind of injury.
- Failure of the employee to keep in mind the fact that pupils are children, and their actions may be guided by childish impulses.
- An employee is not responsible for injuries if it is proven that the employee gave the pupil the proper instructions and directions. The accident may be due to the contributory negligence of the pupil or may be considered as an unavoidable accident.

Inappropriate pupil behavior can often be avoided by establishing and consistently enforcing proper rules for pupil conduct. It is also helpful to remember that children often have difficulty maintaining consistent calm demeanor. Some allowances are necessary to cope with rare unusual outbursts of excitement from pupils. It is the consistent inappropriate behavior that should be referred to the Principals for follow-up. Malicious damage to the school bus must be reported to the transportation office using the "Student Conduct Report" which will be forwarded to the building Principal.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

The Principal, alone, has the right to suspend a pupil. The Board of Education is given power to expel pupils from school. Employees will refer pupils to the principal for discipline. No employee is to consider disciplining pupils beyond a verbal reminder of the standards expected of all pupils.

### **Student Bus Conduct (The driver needs to make these points and enforce them.)**

- Observe classroom behavior. The bus is an extension of the school. Discipline will be treated as such.
- Cooperate with the driver
- Be courteous to others. Use "indoor voice". No profanity.
- No food or drink on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean. Pick up after yourself.
- Do not damage the bus.
- Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- All body parts are to remain in the windows at all times.
- Do not fiddle with the emergency devices.
- No fighting, shoving, or horseplay.
- Report any problems to the driver or school administrator.

### **Bus Stop Conduct**

- Student should be ready at the bus stop at least ten minutes before the scheduled pick up time.

- Students should be waiting at the stop—not in a car, house, or elsewhere.
- Students should respect the property of the home owners near the bus stop.
- Students should never chase a moving bus.
- Students should remain at least five feet back from the road until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- If no students are present at the stop the drivers cannot wait.
- Students must use the stop assigned to them by the transportation office.
- If students are to cross the road, they are not to cross before the bus stops and activated the red lights.
- Never go under or near the bus to retrieve anything you may have dropped without the driver's permission.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 10.2. Maintaining Discipline

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You must always maintain good order on your bus. Remember that you are always teaching. The example you set with your attitude, understanding and driving skills becomes part of each student's education. Keep in mind the following simple rules:

1. Some factors to consider when observing the conduct of students are:
  - All students like to be treated with respect and courtesy
  - Students want adults to recognize their good traits and abilities
  - Most students dread being singled out for discipline
  - A few students will make problems for themselves in order to gain attention and recognition.
  - Students who are willing to comply with regulations may become problems if the person in control is too lax and indifferent towards gross violations of a few; or if the person in control appears unreasonable in his/her demands; or if he/she vacillates from extreme permissiveness one moment to extreme control the next.
  - Stop the bus if the behavior problem is a serious one. If it is a minor infraction, a word of warning or a remark directed to the offender may be enough. If the infraction is more serious in nature, stop the bus. The fact that you have taken this action sometimes can bring matters under control.
  - Stand up [after you have secured the vehicle] and speak to the offenders in a courteous manner but in a firm voice. Do not show anger, but all pupils must realize you are serious.
  - If a change in seating is needed, ask the pupil to move to a seat near the driver. You have no legal right to put a pupil off the bus except at his/her regular stop or to deny him/her to be picked up in the morning. You have no legal right to touch a pupil at any time. However, if an emergency develops in which you feel drastic action is needed such as a fistfight, collapse of a student due to illness, fire or such, inform the transportation office via the radio. In order to have support from the school administration, Student Conduct Reports must be filled out and turned in. No help can be forthcoming if the incidents are not reported.
  - A driver may contact the transportation office via radio to request an Administrator meet their vehicle at the school in the morning. When needing assistance in the afternoon the driver should contact the transportation office via radio stating the disturbance and they will be advised on how to handle the situation.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 10.3. Transporting Students with Special Needs

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It is essential for drivers of students with disabilities to be familiar with the characteristics of those students. The decision that a student has a disability is made by a multidisciplinary team, the Child Study Team (CST). Transportation options must only be considered when special provisions are required. The majority of students with disabilities do not require any special transportation provisions. **The student's IEP will determine the exact needs of any child.**

It is important to remember that all children are individuals first and those descriptions of specific categories of disability do not apply to the same extent to all the children within a disability category.

Annually Bus Drivers and Aides are required to view a video on the NJDOE website that deals with students with special needs. Drivers and aides must certify that they viewed the video and the District must provide certifications to the NJDOE that documents this. The video can be found at:

### **School Bus Driver and Aide Training for Interacting with Students with Special Needs**

WEBSITE: [School Bus Driver and Aide Training for Interacting with Students with Special Needs](#)

In addition, the MHRD Special Education Department provides training to drivers annually.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*



## 10.4. The Do's and Don'ts That Help Maintain Discipline

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### Do

1. Always be courteous to your students.
2. Always control your temper.
3. Act the part of a person in a responsible position, conscious of your job.
4. Be firm, but kind.
5. Report any continuing behavior problems to the transportation office by way of a Student Conduct Report.
6. If problems escalate, call into the transportation office to request an Administrator meet your bus upon arrival to the school.
7. Remember to use good judgment when talking to students.
8. Remember that things said are often exaggerated.

### Don't

1. Do not be too familiar with the students.
2. Do not be too lenient at first.
3. Do not make wisecracks.
4. Do not threaten.
5. Do not shout.
6. Do not argue.
7. Do not use physical force.
8. Observe the policy of hands off.
9. Do not discipline students while the bus is in motion.
10. Avoid general statements to the whole busload of students when restoring order.
11. Do not use profane or indecent language or tolerate any from them.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

## 10.5. Loading and Unloading Students in Wheelchairs

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**When loading and unloading, remember: Tell the student what you are going to do before you do it.**

### Loading and Unloading Responsibilities

1. School bus driver
  - a. The school bus driver is the person who loads the student onto the school bus at the site, both pick up and school. At the destination, the school bus driver unloads the student.
  - b. In some school districts, there is an aide who is responsible for loading and unloading. Make sure that you know exactly who should receive the student in both places.
2. Parent or caregiver
  - a. Before school, the parent/caregiver makes sure that the student is at the curb on time with or in proper equipment. The parent/caregiver supervises the student until the school bus arrives.
  - b. After school, the parent or caregiver meets the student at the curb on time.
  - c. A parent or caregiver may want to (or be required to) help with loading (helping the student onto the bus or fastening the seat belt or wheelchair positioning belt). It is still the responsibility of the school bus driver to recheck and make sure the wheelchair and the student are properly secured before moving the school bus.
3. Teacher
  - a. The teacher's responsibilities are usually similar to those of the parent or caregiver: to meet the student upon arrival at school and to have the student at the pick-up site on time and supervise the student until the school bus arrives.
4. Bus aide
  - a. Sometimes another adult assists the school bus driver. These people may be called aides, attendants, or monitors.
  - b. The aides may be assigned to help all students or one particular student.
  - c. While on the bus, the aide is usually under the authority of the school bus driver.
5. General guidelines when the student is on the lift platform
  - a. The student always faces away from the school bus.
  - b. The wheelchair brakes are locked.
  - c. The roll stops must be in the completely "up" position.
6. Loading and unloading process
  - a. Open and secure the lift door.
  - b. Use the hand-held control to activate the unfolding of the platform.
  - c. Lower the platform until it rests entirely on the ground.
  - d. Unfold the outboard roll stop.
  - e. Fasten the wheelchair seat belt around the student.
  - f. Back the student onto the lift. Always face the student away from the school bus.

NOTE: To unload a student with a motorized wheelchair

- The student should NOT drive onto the lift unless cleared to do so by the entire IEP team.
- Disengage the motor and push the chair onto the platform manually.
- Consult with a parent/caregiver or a therapist about how to secure the chair on the lift.
- Lock the wheelchair brakes.
  1. Make sure the roll stops are in the completely “up” position.
  2. Turn off the wheelchair power. In some cases, the motor must be disengaged to secure the wheelchair. Ask the parent/caregiver or therapist for guidance.
  3. Have the student hold onto the handrails if able.
  4. Tell the student to keep arms and legs within the lift area and clear of moving parts.
  5. Operate the lift controls. Stand next to the platform at the front corner. Keep one hand on the wheelchair as it is raised and operate the controls with the other hand.
  6. When the platform reaches floor level, set down or hang up the controls
  7. Release the wheelchair brakes and push the wheelchair into the bus.
  8. Set the wheelchair brakes.
  9. Fold the lift into the travel position.
  10. Position the student according to the IEP. Either transfer the student to a regular forward facing school bus seat using proper lifting techniques or secure the wheelchair and the student.

## **Securement System**

1. A 7-point system: 4 points to secure the wheelchair; 3 points to secure the student. The shoulder belt MUST be attached to the vehicle. The lap belt can be attached to the wheelchair 4-point system or to the vehicle.
2. Wheelchair must be forward-facing
  - a. The securement system is designed to be used with the wheelchair facing forward and is tested that way. All new school buses manufactured with wheelchair securement systems since January 1994 have forward-facing systems.
  - b. Wheelchair securement positions are inherently safer and wheelchairs and the human body are better capable of surviving a frontal crash when facing forward.
  - c. Sled tests show that side facing wheelchairs are unstable and often collapse.
  - d. Lap and shoulder belt restraint systems are designed to be most effective in the frontal impact position (most common fatal collisions type for school buses) and wheelchairs are believed to be stronger in frontal loading conditions as opposed to side loading positions.

## **Where To Anchor The Wheelchair**

Use the securement system in the school buses in your school district.

**CAUTION:** Do not jerry-rig a securement for a wheelchair. Only use a 4-point tie-down system with a separate restraint for the occupant. At a minimum, the front straps must be the same type and the back straps must be the same type.

Don't interchange systems. Use only one manufacturer's tie-down system for each wheelchair.

Never place a wheelchair in front of an emergency exit door, even if the wheelchair securement position is provided at such a location.

## **Securing the Wheelchair**

1. First, follow the manufacturer's guidelines for the particular wheelchair and for your system. If you don't have the manufacturer's instructions, ask for them.
2. Center the wheelchair with the anchorages on the floor. Leave room for the rear belt to be secured at a 45-degree angle from the floor.
3. Set the wheelchair brakes on both sides.

### **Turn off the wheelchair power**

1. Attach the wheelchair straps to the wheelchair at 4 points. Attach the straps along the wall first. Then attach the straps along the aisle.
2. Attach the straps properly. Do not attach the straps to the wheels or any detachable portion of the wheelchair. Don't let the straps bend around any object, they should have a clear path from the floor to the wheelchair frame.
3. Keep the straps away from sharp edges or corners. Do not crisscross or twist the strap. Make sure that the belts are at a 30 to 60-degree angle; a 45-degree angle is best.
4. Never use the 4-point system without also using the 3-point lap and shoulder belt.
5. Make sure that the wheelchair doesn't have forward or reverse movement. If you can't get the wheelchair attached properly, contact dispatch.

### **Wheelchair Securement Checklist**

1. The wheelchair is forward-facing.
2. The wheelchair is centered on the anchorage.
3. Brakes are set and power is off.
4. The wheelchair is anchored at 4 points using the manufacturer's instructions.
5. The straps are attached properly:
  - a. They are at as close to a 45-degree angle as possible.
  - b. The angle is no less than 30 degrees and no more than 60 degrees.
  - c. They are not attached to the wheels or any detachable portion of the wheelchair.
  - d. They do not bend around any object.
  - e. They are away from sharp edges or corners.
  - f. They don't crisscross.
  - g. They are not twisted.
  - h. There is no forward or reverse movement.

### **Securing the Student**

1. Always use a 3-point system to secure the student. The occupant restraint system is separate from the wheelchair securement. The 3-point system secures the student's pelvis and torso.
2. The occupant restraint system can be attached in several ways:
  - a. To the school bus anchorage points.
  - b. To the wheelchair securement system.
  - c. To the wheelchair itself.
3. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
4. General guidelines:

- a. Position the lap belt:
  - i. Over the pelvic bones, not the abdomen
  - ii. Inside the armrests between the side panels and the cushion.
  - iii. Adjust the lap belt so it is snug.
- b. Position the shoulder belt so it does not cross the student's face or neck.
- c. Never position the shoulder belt under the student's arm where it would cross the rib cage.
- d. Adjust the shoulder belt to achieve firm but comfortable tension.
- e. Never twist the belts.
- f. The belts should always lie flat against the body.

*Last modified: May 07, 2020*

# 11. CALENDARS

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Below are links to all the approved calendars for the current year.

**All calendars herein are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances**

[22-23 MHRD Calendar](#)

[22-23 Morris County School of Technology Calendar](#)

[22-23 Celebrate the Children Calendar](#)

[22-23 New Beginnings Calendar](#)

*Last modified: Aug 05, 2022*

# 11.1. Delayed Openings

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## Delayed Opening

In case of an emergency, and if a delayed opening is set in motion any and all transportation that MHRD is providing service for will follow MHRD schedule rules.

- Any student being transported by our own vehicles to any out of district placement program, they will follow our busing schedule.

>>Bus Driver contracted Hours will be 8:00 am – 11:00 am<<

>>Aides contracted hours will be 8:00 am – 9:30 am<<

*Last modified: Aug 26, 2019*

## 11.2. MHRD Early Dismissal Schedules

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The MHRD, as well as any other school district, will always anticipate two types of early dismissals.

In case of an emergency, and if an early dismissal is set in motion any and all transportation provided by MHRD will follow the MHRD schedule rules.

1. Unscheduled Early Dismissals – constitutes the students are let out early due to unforeseen circumstances (weather, power outages, etc). Dismissal times are determined to be:

Morris Knolls High School will dismiss at 11:42 am

Morris Hills High School will dismiss at 12:12 pm

>>Drivers contract time will be from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm<<

>>Aides contract time will be from 11:15 am to 12:45 pm<<

2. Scheduled Early Dismissals – constitutes pre-set dates preceding holiday breaks and/or teacher in-service. Dismissal times are determined to be:

Morris Knolls High School will dismiss at 12:16 pm

Morris Hills High School will dismiss at 12:51 pm

>>Drivers contract time will be from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm<<

>>Aides contract time will be from 11:45 am to 1:15 pm<<

### CONJUNCTION OF EARLY DISMISSALS

Regardless of which tier scheme your route encompasses, any driver whose schedule may be altered by the differences in school calendars, it may be necessary to split your pm shift to accommodate early dismissals in such occurrences.

**Driver Vo-Tech** 11:30 am – 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm to 3:30pm

**Driver Celebrate the Children (CTC)** 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm

**Aide CTC** – 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm

*Last modified: Aug 26, 2019*



## **11.2.1. All Other Schools Early Dismissal**

WHEN ANY OTHER SCHOOL BESIDES MHRD HAVE AN EARLY DISMISSAL NO MATTER WHAT YOUR TIER WILL REQUIRE A SPLIT SHIFT

*Last modified: Aug 26, 2019*

## 11.3. MHRD Transportation Holiday / Break Protocol

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### MHRD TRANSPORTATION HOLIDAY / BREAK PROTOCOL

Regardless of which tier scheme your route encompasses, **ALL DRIVERS** will follow the MHRD School Calendar.

If, as a result of this protocol, route coverage is needed it will be awarded on a seniority basis and compensated on an hourly basis.

*Last modified: Oct 01, 2019*

## 12. DRIVER / AIDE CONTRACT

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Please see the link below for the contract.

[2021-2023 DRIVER / AIDE CONTRACT](#)

*Last modified: Jul 16, 2021*

# 13. REMINDERS

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1. Remove the ignition key at all times when you leave the bus and lock the door. Never leave the bus with the engine running. Upon parking all school vehicles the keys are to be brought in and hung on the respective hook on the key panel. Keys are not to be taken home. All radios, lights and switches are to be turned off. Close the garage door.
2. PL 2001, c.226 states that there is to be NO SMOKING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS. This also includes garage bays and buses/vans while parked in garages. There is to be NO SMOKING on any school vehicle with or without students present.
3. Keep your bus clean. Pick up debris and sweep floor.
4. DO NOT pick up students prior to the established 1st pick up time.
5. All school vehicles MUST BE checked after each run for students, student belongings and any damage. If you find anything that looks suspicious report it to the transportation office immediately.
6. Report all accidents immediately to the transportation office.
7. Practice courtesy. If a long line of cars are following you, pull off to the side of the road if possible and let them pass. Signal your intentions far in advance, but DO NOT DIRECT TRAFFIC.
8. Never coast in neutral.
9. Use the proper driving signals well in advance when stopping, slowing down or making turns. Remember that signals operating on another vehicle do not necessarily indicate the exact intentions of the other driver.
10. Retain full control of the front door and its operation. Never give this duty to a student.
11. Never ride with your front door open.
12. Permit no one except yourself to occupy the driver's seat.
13. Permit no one except yourself to operate the two-way radio unless it is necessary in the case of an emergency.
14. Permit no loading or unloading through the emergency door. The door is only used for an actual emergency or drill.
15. Permit nothing to obstruct the aisles of your bus. There should always be a clean exit path to the rear door.
16. Never allow students to board the bus if you are not present.
17. Warning lights should only be used to warn motorists that pupils are about to be picked up or discharged. These lights are not permitted to be used for any other purpose.
18. Always drive with your seatbelt on. It is the LAW and you will be written up should you disregard this. If you are not wearing your seatbelt you could be thrown out of your seat and into the stairwell of the vehicle injuring yourself and putting the vehicle and passengers in serious trouble.
19. No backing of the bus without a spotter. If help is needed, please notify Dispatch.
20. Never transport merchandise or other loads when transporting pupils, except the property of the passengers.
21. Never use any district vehicle for your own personal use.
22. DO NOT misuse the radios. The radios are for transportation business only NOT personal conversation between drivers. Remember there are base stations installed in both schools for direct communication with the buses. All personal conversations are prohibited.
23. Remember to turn on your headlights whenever you are using your windshield wipers.
24. All drivers are issued Morris Hills Identification Badges. Drivers must have the badges on their person

at all times. Badges are not to be left in your personal vehicle or in the bus. Do not attach the ID badge to the bus keyring.

25. When returning the bus/van keys to the key panel make sure to put them on the proper hook. Keys are not to be taken home. Drivers are not permitted to make or possess a duplicate key for their bus/van.

*Last modified: Oct 27, 2020*

## 13.1. Acknowledgement of Receipt for Employee Handbook

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### Acknowledgment of the Online Transportation Employee Handbook

I acknowledge that the Transportation Employee Handbook is readily available to me on the MHRD website (MHRD.org). I understand that I am responsible for reading the information contained in the Handbook. I understand that the handbook is intended to provide me with a general overview of the district's policies and procedures. I acknowledge that nothing in this handbook is to be interpreted as a contract, expressed or implied, or an inducement for employment, nor does it guarantee my employment for any period of time.

I understand and accept that my employment with the district is at-will. I have the right to resign at any time with or without cause, just as the district may terminate my employment at any time with or without cause or notice, subject to applicable laws. I understand that nothing in the handbook or in any oral or written statement alters the at-will relationship, except by a written agreement signed by the employee, Board Secretary, and Board President.

I acknowledge that the district may revise, suspend, revoke, terminate, change or remove, prospectively or retroactively, any of the policies or procedures outlined in this handbook or elsewhere, in whole or in part, with or without notice at any time, at the district's sole discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Employee) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print Employee Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (District Representative)

*Last modified: Dec 10, 2021*