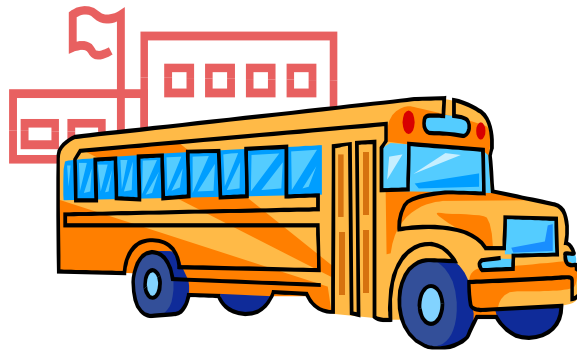




Department of Transportation

Contractor's Manual



Mrs. Lisa Vainieri-Marshall
Director of Student Assignment Services

Ms. Teresa Afonso
Deputy Director of Transportation

Contracts

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

To ensure that all contracts are submitted in the time frame regulated by law, the Paterson School District shall require all contractors to submit executed contracts to the district **within ten (10) working days of receipt**. If the contract is not returned within 10 days, there will be a fine of \$250.

Contract Breach, Failure to provide, and Cancellation of contract

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

School Closings

The school calendar is part of the specifications and of the contract. Contractors are advised to listen to school closing announcements broadcast over local networks, check email for notifications from the PPS transportation department, and check the PPS website. **If the Paterson School District is closed due to inclement weather, no transportation of any Paterson pupil to any destination will be provided. In addition, no payment will be rendered.**

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

Training Programs: Drivers and Aides

New Jersey Administrative Code N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.3 requires that all employers of school bus drivers and school bus aides ensure that they are properly trained in all 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 on the students they transport, 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 about when a refresher is needed, and new information when a new student is added to an existing bus route. The contractor shall administer a driver safety-training program for all drivers, substitutes, and aides. The contractor shall also provide training to all drivers and aides concerning the following:

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

Training Programs: Drivers and Aides for Special Needs Students

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

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

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

Harassment Intimidation and Bullying:

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or by any other distinguishing characteristic; and that
2. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3;
3. Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils; and that

- a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or
- c. Creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

Reporting:

The Board of Education requires the Principal at each school to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this Policy. All Board members, school employees, volunteers, and contracted service providers who have contact with pupils are required to verbally report alleged violations of this policy to the Principal or the Principal's designee on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident.

All Board members, school employees, volunteers, and contracted service providers who have contact with pupils, also shall submit a report in writing to the Principal within two school days of the verbal report.

3 Day No-show

Failure to notify the Transportation Department in writing if a student fails to show up for (3) consecutive days each week in a calendar month on a special education route will result in the following penalty:

- First violation: \$300.00 (three-hundred dollars) per student per trip
- Second violation: \$400.00 (four-hundred dollars) per student per trip
- Third violation: \$500.00 (five-hundred dollars) per student per trip and potential cancellation of the route.

Attendance

The driver/aide must check attendance daily. Any attendance not received with the monthly invoice will result in the deduction of the per diem cost.

Vehicles

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

All vehicles shall be systematically inspected twice within the year to ensure that such vehicles and equipment are in safe and proper operating condition as stated in 6A: 27-7.1. **All yellow school bus vehicles MUST be 2011 or newer. Yellow school bus vehicles with wheelchair lifts and seating must be 2008 and newer.**

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

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

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

The contractor shall supply special education and preschool students with the appropriate child restraint systems.

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

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

The driver should immediately;

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

Arrivals and Departures

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

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

Accidents and Reporting

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

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

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

www.nj.gov/education/finance/transportation/procedures/accident.xls

Failure to immediately inform the Transportation Department of an accident whether or not resulting in physical injury or property damage will result in a \$1,000 fine for the first violation and \$2,000 for the second violation. Failure to complete the preliminary report by the conclusion of the next working day will result in the deduction of the per diem route cost.

Emergencies

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

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

Emergency Exit/Evacuation Drills

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

Schools shall organize and conduct emergency exit drills at least twice (2 times) within the school year for all students who ride school buses. The school bus driver and transportation aide (if one is assigned) shall participate. Drills shall be conducted on school property and supervised by the principal or staff person assigned. (See emergency exit drill package)

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

Dispatchers

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

Communication System

All transportation vehicles shall be equipped, at all times, with a two-way communications system "Real Time" GPS in proper operation condition. The communication system shall only be used for business reasons during the transportation of Paterson students.

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

Policy 8690 Monitoring Devices on School Vehicles

The Board of Education recognizes that safe and secure conditions for all pupils transported in school-owned or contracted school vehicles are paramount. Pupils transported in a school-owned or contracted school vehicle must maintain proper discipline in the vehicle at all times. To maintain safe and secure conditions for all pupils transported on school-owned or contracted school vehicles, the Board may use devices to monitor and/or observe student behavior, teacher and support staff behavior, school bus driver discipline procedures, and/or school bus driver driving techniques. The device may be a sound video camera, a voice monitoring device, or other appropriate devices. Each school vehicle will have a sign clearly posted in the school vehicle stating that:

"Video And/Or Audio Monitoring Devices Are Used On School Owned And Contracted Vehicles And This Vehicle May Be Monitored At Any Time."

Drivers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Driver's Character: Qualifications

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

If, in the judgment of the Paterson School District, any driver of a vehicle operating under a contract with the District is deemed to be an unsuitable person to drive a school bus because of lack of driving skill, reckless driving including speeding, inability to control students, failure to comply with the rules and regulations, incapacity, unbecoming conduct, or other good cause, the contractor may be required to remove the driver from the route or all district routes. If the contractor fails to comply with this provision, the contractor may be required to show cause why this failure to comply is not deemed to constitute a breach of contract, and the district may set aside and annul the contract.

All drivers are to be totally familiar with the contents of the New Jersey School Bus Driver's Manual and to observe, follow, and obey the contents of the manual.

Annual Certification of School Bus Drivers

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 and 18, all transportation companies shall furnish to the County Superintendent, the name, social security, and certificate of a valid school bus driver's license and criminal background check for each driver in employment with the company.

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

Office of County Superintendent
501 River Street
Paterson, NJ 07524

Bus Aides

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

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

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

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

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

Management of Students

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

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

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

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

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

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

A copy of each incident report must be submitted to the Department of Transportation, via email to transportationdept@paterson.k12.nj.us.

Students may only be released at their home address or at the school destination to an adult unless directed by the district.

For all undeliverable Charter students, contact the Transportation Department and then take the student(s) back to school.

Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco use

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

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

School Bus Equipment

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

- Working two-way communication system “Real Time” GPS
- Seat belt cutter
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Three (3) reflective triangle warning devices
- Other emergency equipment as outlined in the code.

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

Passengers

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

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

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

Loading and Unloading of Students

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

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

A parent/guardian or authorized responsible adult must be present before a child is allowed to leave the vehicle. The Transportation Department will notify you if there is a release to allow the student off the bus without supervision. The driver must always wait until the student is safely inside their home. If an authorized adult is not present to receive the child, the driver shall make every effort to contact the parent such as:

- Ask dispatch to contact parent
- Contacting the Department of Transportation

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

Additional breach of contract/penalties can be found in the bid specifications.

Transportation Department Contacts

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Purchasing Department

Kim Johnson 973-321-2363

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THREE DAY NO SHOW

ROUTE# _____ SCHOOL NAME _____

STUDENT'S NAME _____

NO SHOW DATES:

DAY 1: _____

DAY 2: _____

DAY 3: _____

I hereby certify that the statements made in this document are true to the best of my knowledge.

COMPANY NAME: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

YOUR NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

TITLE: _____

DATE: _____