

Fruitport Community Schools



Transportation Employee Handbook Policies and Procedures

Dear Transportation Employee,

We are pleased to have you as part of the Fruitport Community School Transportation Department. As employees, we all represent the professionalism of the Transportation Department we make a direct and important contribution to the education of our children.

This handbook has been developed to help you understand your job responsibilities as a member of our team. It is based on the District Handbook for Fruitport Community Schools, Board of Trustees policies and State and Federal Regulations.

This book is a work in progress, with revisions to follow as laws and or policies change. It will serve as a basis for our continued development and improvement.

Kathy Randall

Director of Transportation

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Introduction

This Handbook will outline requirements, guidelines, personnel regulations and operations of employees assigned to the Fruitport Community Transportation Department. As a transportation employee, you are part of a very special team. You are a professional and have to work hard to achieve that status.

The responsibilities of transportation professionals are many. Most importantly, we are responsible for the safety of impressionable young children. We are expected to be a model of safe driving. Remember our passengers are the drivers of tomorrow. They observe our driving habits as well as our behavior.

Our busses are rolling billboards advertising the Fruitport Community School District. Whatever you do or say when at work is a direct reflection on all transportation employees and the district. Demonstrate to the public by your safety and courteous driving why we are who we are, what we do and whom we work for.

It would be impossible to anticipate every possible emergency or situation and how you should react. To attempt to do so would produce an extreme voluminous and ultimately incomplete handbook. You are trained, professional drivers and aides. You will have to make some decisions based on your training and good judgment. When this becomes necessary remember the safety of your passengers is always your first consideration. Consider your options, the possible consequences, then choose what you feel is the best and safest solution under the circumstances.

Fruitport Community School District Transportation Employees are responsible for becoming thoroughly familiar with the contents of the handbook. This handbook will be amended as needed, and the amendments distributed to all employees.

Welcome Statement

On behalf of Fruitport Community Schools and the Board of Education, we would like to WELCOME you to the Transportation TEAM!! We know that your position here will be challenging but also rewarding!

“Empowering individuals to positively impact their world!”

Mission Statement

The mission of the Fruitport Transportation Department is to provide the safest, most efficient and punctual transportation to the students of the district in a nurturing, supportive environment that enhances the education of our students. The transportation department is full partners in the education of children because we support learning through service.

“You are Special”

You are Important!

It is evident that you, the school bus driver/aide, are a very important person. You have an important part to play in our education system. In many instances you will be the first representative of the school system to meet the children in the morning and last to see them at night. A bad experience on the bus in the morning can interfere with their learning at school. However, a good experience on the morning trip can enhance the child’s potential of success at school. We can help children succeed. While the children are on the bus, their safety is in your hands.

You are Responsible

Like the captain of a ship, the school bus driver/aide is responsible for creating a safe and welcoming environment for each child. (The safety of passengers and the vehicle are for the good order and discipline, in short, of operating a “happy ship”.) The good school bus driver/aide successfully accomplishes this assignment and is respected and appreciated as a person who is performing a difficult and necessary service. You are in a position to have a large influence.

Director’s Authority

All employees are subject to the authority of the Director of Transportation, including assignments or reassignments. The Director’s authority can be delegated to appropriate personnel if need be.

Facility Supplemental Rules

In addition to departmental procedures, employees must abide by supplemental rules and instructions published or posted at each facility. These rules may be department-wide, but more often will be specific guidance for drivers of a particular facility, such as parking situations, fueling procedures, etc. Drivers must check for these regulations in their mailbox, on the route sheet, and/or on the bulletin board before leaving on any route or trip.

Driver Role and Responsibility

The role and responsibility of the school bus or pupil transportation vehicle driver is many and varied. In the role of a professional driver, we all wear many hats to effectively deal with other members of the pupil transportation team.

Physically driving a vehicle around a designed route is certainly a vitally important part of the driver's role, but it is just a part of the total area of influence for the truly professional driver.

Responsibilities are numerous and vary from seemingly insignificant tasks to critical decisions that may involve the wellbeing of a passenger, or legal status of the school district.

The school bus and the driver are part of the school. The bottom line is "a safe ride for the pupils".

Aide Role and Responsibility

The role and responsibility of the school bus aide is many and varied and important. You will be wearing different hats to effectively deal with other employees and students.

Helping students on and off the bus and to their seats in a safe and timely fashion. Keeping the students safe is important job that has been given to you.

The school bus and aide are part of the school. The bottom line is "a safe ride for the pupils".

Assignment of Keys

All employees assigned to a bus shall have a key available to them to drive that bus. The keys are located on the **Key Board** in the lounge. All employees are to pick up bus keys at the start of each assignment and return them to the **Key Board** after each run and to be hung up in the correct spot, every time. **All employees must return their bus key to the Key board after every run, NOT to be kept anywhere on a bus.**

Department Officials

		Office	Cell
Director of Transportation	Kathy Randall	231-865-4017	616-638-0245
Transportation Coordinator	Amy Hecksel	231-865-3196	616-402-3458
Head Mechanic	Brad Faulkner	231-865-4069	231-750-2053
Mechanic	Glenn Gardner	231-865-4069	616-638-7114
Director of Operations	John Winkas	231-865-4018	231-206-2904

Build and Maintain Good Customer Service

A positive public image or reputation is something that is hard to earn and takes a great deal of hard work to maintain. Public opinion is generally formed on appearance and experiences. Personal experiences or the experiences of trusted friends, relatives and neighbors are the most important factors in building a positive image. People remember how they were treated and how their children were treated in our schools. A strong curriculum, broad scope programs, the best busses and service, high certified staff and best facilities all are secondary in value in the minds of our customer and the public. If we fail in human relations, if we fail to be caring, efficient, concerned, polite, attentive and respectful, then we have failed our community.

*Every employee must be part of the image building effort and view the public (especially children) as our customers.

*Every employee must exercise friendliness, common courtesy, good manners and respect. Say HELLO to people and Smile!

* Any person who receives a customer complaint “owns” the complaint, even if it is not his or her area of responsibility. Listen to concerns and learn why there is a complaint.

* Staff should react quickly to correct problems or address concerns.

* While we are given responsibilities, we cannot be territorial. The “that is not my job” attitude is very damaging. Help each other develop a “serving attitude”

* When receiving a complaint, hear the person out. Don’t take sides or a defensive posture.

* Be a good listener. We can’t always do what the person wants, or change what has happened, but we can listen. Many people just want to be heard and have their concerns considered.

***Pay attention to appearances; personal as well as those of the bus and work area. Keep your bus clean, fueled and free of litter!**

*** Every employee is an ambassador of Fruitport Community Schools-in and out of the work place!** Speak positively about the school district. As the saying goes “If you have nothing nice to say, say nothing at all”.

* While it is ok to be friends on social media with coworkers it is not allowed to be with students. This could create problems that you do not want to get into.

Absenteeism/Call-in Procedure

If you are unable to report to work due to personal illness, family illness, or an emergency situation you must:

From 5:00pm to 5:00am call the bus garage at 231-865-4069. You may leave a voice mail message HOWEVER; you must call back 231-865-4069 after 5:30 am and speak with a staff member in person.

From 5:30-7:00am call the Transportation Office at 231-865-3196 and speak with a staff member in person.

From 7:00 am to 5:00pm, call the Director of Transportation at 231-865-4017 or Dispatcher @ 231-865-3196

In the event of an emergency call

Kathy @ 616-638-0245

Brad @ 231-750-2453

Amy @ 616-402-3458

Glenn @ 616-638-7114

*Request should be made as far in advance as possible but in no event later than one hour prior to the scheduled start time. (See Article 11 of the Master Agreement for specific language).

Whenever possible, speak directly with a Transportation staff member.

Failure to comply with leave procedure and /or absenteeism shall result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

A request for Excused Absence form must be submitted at least 5 working days in advance. In emergency situations you must complete the form upon immediate return. You must get the approval of the Director of Transportation/ Designee for the absence. If the form is not received before the submission of the next payroll, the pay for your excused absence will not be processed until the pay period following the receipt of the excused absence form.

Tardiness

In the event that you will not arrive at work by your scheduled pre-trip time, you must:

*Contact a Transportation staff member at (231)865-4017 or (231)865-4069

*Arrive at work as soon as possible to perform your assigned bus run.

*If you are unable to reach a Transportation staff member, call:

DRESS CODE

The Transportation Department retains the authority to specify the following dress and grooming guidelines for staff, thus preventing such matters from having an adverse impact on the education process of the students.

When reporting to work all staff must:

1. Be physically clean, neat and well groomed.
2. Dress in a manner consistent with your position.
3. Dress in a manner that communicates to students a pride in person appearance.

The following items of clothing **MAY NOT** be worn at any time:

1. High heels no higher than ½", flip flops, crocs, and clog type shoes that do not have a strap around the heel. **All footwear must have a strap or support that comes up around/over the heel.**
2. Short shorts or cutoffs. (length must be at least mid-thigh.)
3. The midriff/stomach area must be covered at all times including when arms are raised above the head.
4. **NO** Clothing with alcohol/tobacco advertisements or obscene language,
5. Obscene, suggestive or offensive language, (profanity, innuendo and substitute wording) are not allowed.
6. Clothing that is skin tight or excessively loose. Undergarments must not be exposed. Garments must meet each other. (Ex: stretch pants, leggings, biker shorts and spandex are not allowed unless you wear a longer shirt that covers to mid - thigh.
7. No see through or mesh, ragged, torn or dirty clothing is allowed.
8. Headwear should be clean and neat. No loose ends or straps that could catch in the bus equipment and cause an injury or block the driver's vision.
9. Wording, lettering, buttons or patches cannot be offensive, suggestive, or state a cause that might be objectionable to others.

RADIO PROCEDURE

CONTROL: FCC (Federal Communication Commission) rules charge the District with proper operation and use of each radio transmitter. Violation of FCC rules may result in action against the individual and the District license to operate. As radio communication is vital to the operation of our service, as employees operating District radio equipment must strictly comply with provisions of the procedure.

GENERAL RULES OF OPERATION: Radio equipment will be operated only for communication directly related to the official business of the District or during an emergency or emergency evacuation.

PROHIBITED TRANSMISSIONS:

- Indecent, obscene or profane words, language or meaning
- Personal messages, except as may relate to a personal emergency, that is life or death threatening.
- Intentional interference with other users or transmissions.
- Any distress signal unless in danger or requesting help.
- Music, whistling, sound effects or material to amuse or entertain.
- Continuous mic checking
- Argumentative or superfluous remarks

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- DO NOT use the radio for communication that could wait until you return to the office or garage
- While you are on your bus, the radio will be left on with the volume adjusted loud enough to hear any transmission.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MAILBOX GUIDELINES

Mailboxes are an important tool for routine communications between the Transportation Office and drivers. Using mailboxes will help reduce radio traffic during runs, which will in turn improve our ability to communicate with drivers to address concerns that arise during bus runs. The following guidelines will help enable us to better communicate to you:

- Mailboxes must be checked before every run.
- Do not store personal items in your mailbox. Please use your locker for personal items

Keep route Information Up to Date:

Bus Drivers shall keep all routes up to date. New updates must be placed in the office. We will use the transportation routing program Transfinder for all of our maps, routes and updates. All changes must be made on the Transfinder maps and routes. All changes must be approved by the Director of Transportation.

All maps must be returned to the Transportation office after each run. **No maps are to be left on the bus.**