

III. School buses

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TEACHERS GUIDE
FOR
SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER SAFETY

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION - 1972

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SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER SAFETY

Recently approved Federal Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17, relating to Pupil Transportation Safety, requires each pupil who is transported in a school vehicle to be instructed in safe riding practices and to participate in emergency evacuation drills at least twice each year.

The purpose of this guide is to present information which should be included in the school bus safety curriculum that is developed by the local school system. The method of presenting the material to the students will depend on the ingenuity of the teacher.

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of equal educational opportunities for all school children has been one of the contributing factors in the reorganization of school districts. Larger districts could not have been formed, however, had it not been for the improvement in equipment and other facets of the transportation system. The school bus has become an integral part of the public school education just as the automobile has become an integral part of American life. It represents a service which has become very necessary under our present program of education.

OBJECTIVES

The instructional staff of each school district has a responsibility to incorporate a continuing, effective and well-planned unit of school bus safety into the educational program at each grade level. The program must be designed so that it will develop within each pupil the habits, attitudes, skills, and knowledge that are so vital to the safe and efficient use of the school bus at all times.

The purpose of this publication is to establish guidelines for local school districts to develop a school bus safety curriculum. Too many times we are concerned with just the driver when traffic and safety education are discussed. In this presentation we are concerned mainly about the **passengers**. It is just as important for the children to be safe passengers as for the bus operators to be safe drivers. Elementary school children should be made acquainted with the pupil transportation system and special emphasis should be placed on the importance of obeying rules of conduct to help insure a safe ride to and from school.

It will be noted that emphasis is placed on the utilization of a school bus safety patrol. The main function of the patrol members is to assist the driver in the safe loading and unloading

of the passengers at all times and to perform other tasks in case an emergency arises. These students are an integral part of the total school safety patrol program.

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR

The safety of the pupils transported to school is a responsibility shared alike by pupil passengers of all buses, classroom teachers of these pupils, school bus drivers, school administrators in charge of pupil transportation, parents, and the motoring public using the same roads traversed by school buses. Therefore, a program of safety must be a cooperative effort.

This publication will be more effective if the supervisor of transportation, the supervisor of safety education and the classroom teacher preview this guide prior to developing the techniques to be used in teaching the course. It might also be helpful to have one of your more experienced school bus drivers participate in the initial planning.

TO THE TEACHER

The primary task for the teacher is to develop desirable safety attitudes and to modify or eliminate the undesirable ones with the end result of producing safer behavior by the bus rider. It is recommended that the teacher become familiar with local rules and regulations for the students riding the school buses since this subject is included as a topic for discussion in the guide.

It is suggested that each teacher review the contents of the Handbook for School Bus Drivers, Iowa Department of Public Instruction, to become familiar with all facets of the pupil transportation program including the School Bus Stop Law and the procedures to be followed in conducting emergency evacuation drills. This handbook is available at your administration office.

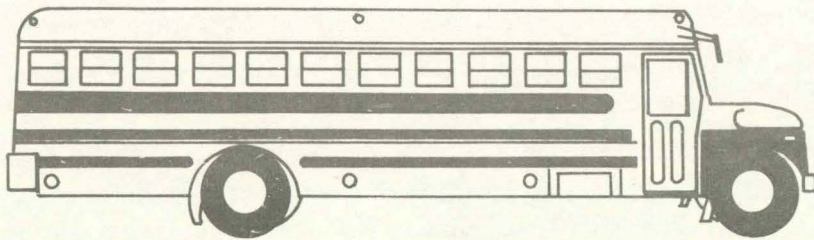
In introducing this course, the teacher should make it clear that an individual rider is responsible for his or her personal safety, but the individual can also be responsible for the safety of the group. On the other hand, the group has a responsibility for the safety of the individual as well as the group.

Nine units are included in this guide. These represent the minimum areas that should be covered in the course, but unique situations in local districts may justify additional units. While certain objectives and suggested activities are listed, each teacher must fit the material to the learning level of the pupils.

UNIT

1

THE SCHOOL BUS



Objectives:

1. To establish the school bus as a classroom and to develop an attitude of pride in its use.
2. To establish the school bus as a valuable item of equipment and to develop proper attitudes toward its use and care.

Points of Emphasis:

The school bus is different from many vehicles because it has a specific purpose which is to transport a very valuable cargo. This cargo is in the form of school children like you. Last year in Iowa, 282,137 children were transported to and from school each day in 6,644 vehicles. The buses traveled 314,021 miles each day which would be a distance of more than twelve times around the earth. (These figures can be updated each year from data furnished by the State Department of Public Instruction.)

These buses were paid for by your parents and other taxpayers. All of these people work very hard to pay for this equipment so it must receive proper treatment.

Suggested Activities:

1. Inspect a school bus and have the transportation supervisor explain where to enter, where to exit, the purpose of the emergency door, location of handrail, etc.
2. Bring in a model of a bus. Have a class discussion about the interior including how one should sit and where books and other objects are to be placed.
3. Have pupils draw a picture of a school bus.

UNIT

2

THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER



Objectives:

1. To develop an attitude of respect toward the driver.
2. To establish the driver as the authority on the bus.
3. To establish that the driver is a friend to the passengers.
4. To emphasize the time and effort of the school bus driver in checking his bus prior to starting on the route to insure a safe trip.
5. To establish an understanding of when students should not distract the driver.

Points of Emphasis:

1. The driver of the school bus is responsible for the safety of all students riding on the bus.
2. The driver is like a teacher.
3. The first duty of the passengers is to obey the driver's directions promptly and cheerfully.
4. The driver must concentrate on driving the bus and any distraction may cause him to have an accident.
5. Where school bus patrols are used, each passenger must also observe the directions of the patrol member with the same promptness.

Suggested Activities:

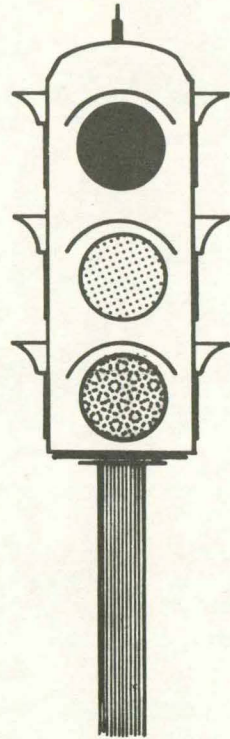
1. Invite a school bus driver to speak to the class about behavior on the school bus.

2. Have class discuss how they can help the driver.
3. Have class discuss the similarity between conduct on the school bus and conduct in the classroom.
4. Have class make posters and write a description of their driver.

UNIT

3

WALKING TO THE BUS STOP



Objectives:

1. To impress on the students the correct procedures for pedestrians to follow to insure personal safety.
2. To establish how unsafe acts can lead to accidents.
3. To develop proper attitudes in understanding the rights of the motorists.
4. To establish the importance of time.

Points of Emphasis:

1. Leave home on time. Hurrying to the bus can cause accidents.
2. Wear bright clothes if there is snow, rain, or fog.
3. Walk on the sidewalks whenever one is available. Otherwise, walk on the left edge of the road facing traffic.
4. Watch for turning cars and cars backing out of driveways.
5. Never cross the road at curves. Motorists cannot see you.
6. Cross at corners but only after carefully checking for vehicles.
7. Obey all traffic lights and signs.
8. Walk in a single file or not more than two abreast.

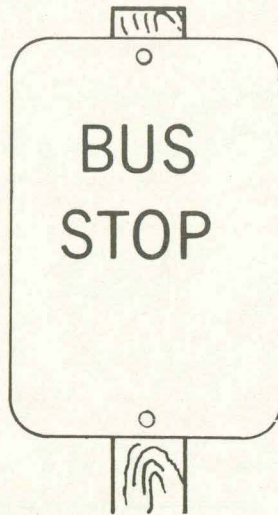
Suggested Activities:

1. Discuss how habits are formed.
2. Draw a diagram on the chalk board illustrating various types of roads, streets, (with and without sidewalks) intersections, curves, traffic signals, stop signs, etc. illustrating where and how to cross the street, where to walk, and dangers to avoid.
3. Have students demonstrate correct rules for walking and for crossing the road.
4. Have children chart the route they take to their bus stop.

UNIT

4

AT THE BUS STOP



Objectives:

To teach the correct location when waiting for the bus and to stimulate thought leading to an understanding of the dangers involved in unsafe acts such as standing in the roadway or playing in the street.

Points of Emphasis:

1. Wait quietly - do not play in the roadway.
2. Treat with care the flowers, shrubbery, trees, lawn, and other property.
3. Stand back from the road - give the bus driver room to stop.

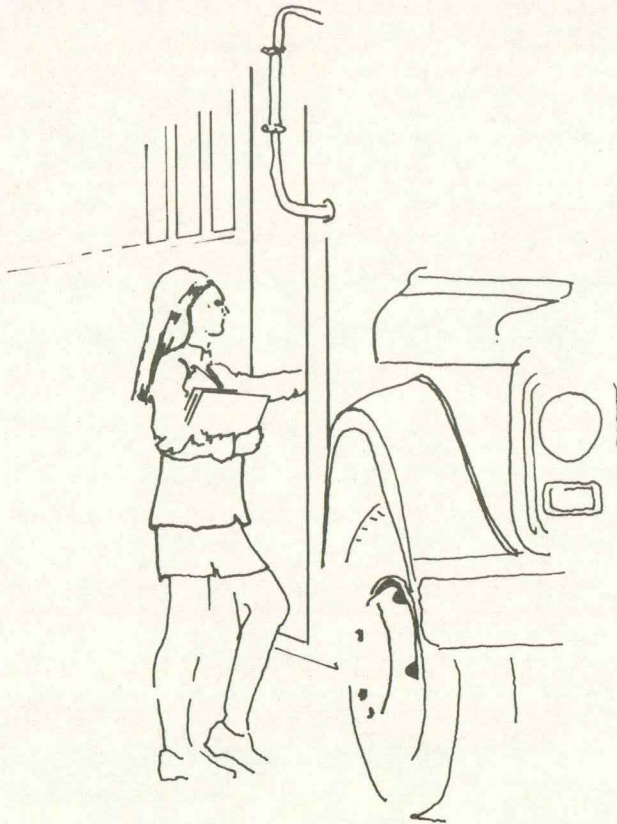
Suggested activities:

1. Use chalk board and illustrate the relationship between the bus, the street, the curb, and the sidewalk.
2. Let the students discuss these unsafe acts and decide what could happen as well as what they can do to avoid these unsafe acts.
3. Use chairs to make the roadway and have students demonstrate how and where to wait in relationship to the road.

UNIT

5

BOARDING THE BUS



Objectives:

1. To develop an attitude of respect for the rights of others.
2. To establish that courtesy contributes to safety.
3. To illustrate the type of signal to be given by the bus driver and to familiarize the students with it.
4. To demonstrate correct method to board the bus.

Points of Emphasis:

1. If student must cross the road:
 - a. Check the traffic in both directions.
 - b. Wait until the bus driver signals student to cross.
 - c. Walk in front of the bus.
2. Form a single line and don't crowd or push - let the girls go first.
3. Use the handrail and take the steps one at a time.
4. Say "Good Morning" or "Good Afternoon" to the driver.
5. Go directly to your seat.

Suggested Activities:

1. Discuss how courtesy helps to promote safety on the school bus and in other places.
2. Ask the students to name other places where they should be polite.

3. Have a bus available in the parking lot where the teacher can demonstrate correct method of boarding the bus and students can practice the procedure. A lane can be marked off to represent the roadway and the teacher can demonstrate how to cross the road. Each student should then be given an opportunity to do the same.
4. Have students write poems, stories, songs, etc. about the rules for boarding the bus.

UNIT

6

ON THE SCHOOL BUS



Objectives:

To establish that good conduct is necessary:

1. To the safe operation of the bus - the driver can pay more attention to his driving duties and thus avoid accidents.
2. To the safety of the passengers - there is less chance of injury in case of an accident or sudden stop.
3. To the efficiency and economy of the transportation system - helps the driver stay on time and reduces costly repairs.

Points of Emphasis:

Safety rules for bus passengers:

1. Watch your sitting posture as you would in the classroom.
2. Remain seated until the bus reaches its destination and comes to a complete stop.
3. Be very quiet at railroad grade crossings so the bus driver can hear railroad warning signals.
4. Keep the aisle clear.
5. Keep the bus clean - don't be a litterbug.
6. Keep your head, arms, and hands inside the bus at all times.
7. Keep your feet off the seats.

8. Keep books, coats, and all other objects **under** the seat, not in the aisle.
9. Remain quiet enough that you do not distract the bus driver.
10. Obey the bus driver's directions promptly and cheerfully.
11. Never push or rough-house.
12. Never throw objects around in the bus or out of the windows.
13. Never open the windows without the driver's permission.

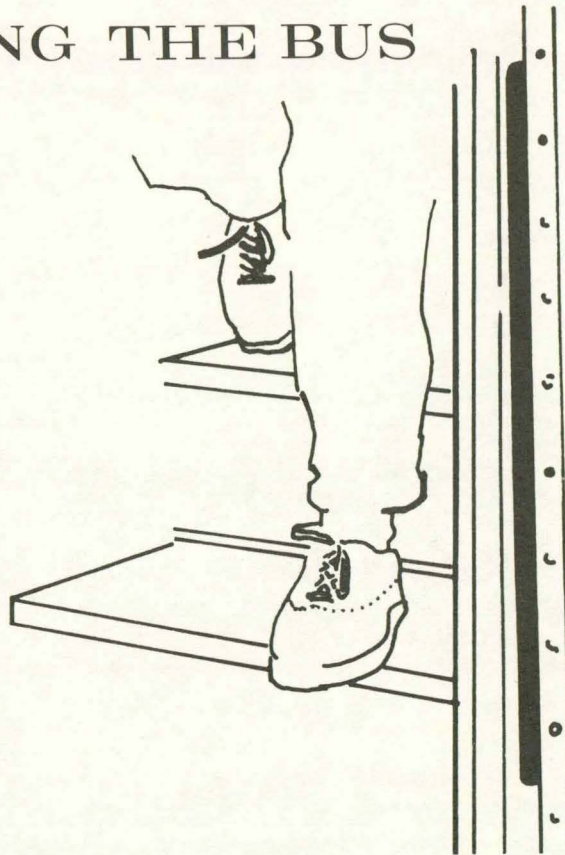
Suggested activities:

1. Take pupils on a school bus ride - demonstrate correct posture, how to keep the aisle clear, and where to place books and other objects.
2. Have each student recite one of the rules - discuss what it means and then illustrate.
3. Arrange chairs to resemble the inside of a bus. Divide class into two groups. Have the first group demonstrate how not to behave and have the second group watch and criticize. Have the second group demonstrate correct behavior.

UNIT

7

LEAVING THE BUS



Objectives:

1. To demonstrate correct method of disembarking from the bus.
2. To establish that courtesy contributes to safety.

Points of Emphasis:

1. Don't leave your seat until the bus stops.
2. Don't push or shove but move quickly.
3. Say "Good Night" to your driver.
4. Use the handrail and take one step at a time.

Suggested Activities:

1. This unit can be combined with Unit V so the same activities can be used.
2. Discuss what can happen if a student trips and falls coming down the steps.

UNIT

8

AFTER LEAVING THE SCHOOL BUS



Objectives:

1. To demonstrate where to go after student has disembarked.
2. To illustrate the types of signal to be given by the driver and to familiarize the students with it.
3. To conclude the course by establishing that riding on a school bus can be a safe and rewarding experience if everyone follows the safe practices that were discussed in the lessons.

Points of Emphasis:

1. If you must cross the road:
 - a. Walk in front and at least ten feet ahead of the bus.
 - b. Stop when you are even with the traffic side of the bus and look carefully in both directions.
 - c. Wait until the bus driver signals you to cross.
 - d. Cross quickly but do not run.
 - e. Help smaller children to cross the road safely.
2. If your house is on the right side of the road, go directly to the driveway so the driver can always see you.
3. Do not stop at the mailbox for the mail.

Suggested Activities:

1. Draw a diagram of a bus and the roadway on the

chalk board. Have students discuss rules for crossing the road or going to their driveways.

2. Have a bus available in the parking lot where teacher or driver can demonstrate how to cross the road or where to go if they don't have to cross the road.
3. Have the children draw a sketch of the path they take after getting off the bus.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS

Due to the increased number of pupils being transported in present-day traffic with a potential increase in accident hazards, there is a need to instruct pupils to vacate a school bus in case of an emergency. Since the bus driver is responsible for the safety of the pupils, he must direct the emergency drills.

Important factors pertaining to school bus evacuation drills are:

1. Safety of children is most important and must be considered first. There is possible danger when a child jumps from the rear emergency door exit.
 2. All drills should be supervised by the principal or by persons assigned by him to act in a supervisory capacity.
 3. Drills should be held on school property and not on bus routes.
 4. "Emergency drills" should be organized in a manner similar to fire drills held regularly in schools.
 5. Emergency drills should be held regularly, at least twice a year or perhaps more often during fall and spring months, and preferably when the bus arrives at the school building.
 6. There are several different drills:
 - a. Everyone exits through the rear emergency door.
 - b. Everyone exits through the front entrance door.
 - c. The front half exits through the front door and rear half exits through the emergency door.
 7. The driver should stay in the bus during evacuation drills. He should be sure that the emergency brake is set, ignition off, and transmission in gear.
 8. Do not permit children to take lunch boxes, books, etc. with them when they leave the bus.
 9. The pupils should go to a distance of at least 100 feet from the bus in an emergency drill and remain there in a group until given further directions by the leader.
 10. All children should be given an opportunity to participate, including those children who only ride a bus on special trips.
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SELECTED REFERENCES

EDUCATING PUPIL PASSENGERS - The National Safety Council, 425 Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

HOW DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL - Kilby Associates, P. O. Box 1113, Pendleton, Oregon.

JOIN THE SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TEAM - Channing L. Bete Co., Inc., Greenfield, Massachusetts.

SAFETY ON THE SCHOOL BUS - Raymond C. Mullin, Director of Safety Education, State College, Millersville, Pennsylvania.

STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL BUS OPERATION - National Conference on School Transportation, 1970 Revised Edition.

STANLEY, THE FRIENDLY SCHOOL BUS - New Jersey Department of Education, Trenton, New Jersey.

TRANSPORTATION DATA - Iowa Department of Public Instruction, Des Moines, Iowa.

WE RIDE THE SCHOOL BUS - Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Madison, Wisconsin.

YOUR SCHOOL BUS - Cottrell Safety Services, Inc., 2306 Walden Avenue, Buffalo, New York.

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