CANAJOHARIE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

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Preface

Welcome to the Canajoharie Central School Department of Transportation. This Handbook has been prepared as a guide for district families, parents and students, as well as teachers, bus drivers and administrators to help promote the safety of our children.

The Canajoharie School District covers an area of 100 square miles. It is our mission to transport each of our children safely and efficiently each day. To accomplish this mission it is important that everyone works together.

Entrusted with the safety of every student we expect all students to behave appropriately and safely while riding on a school bus. We will not tolerate a student stopping a bus driver from doing their job or preventing other students from having safe transportation. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Serious or repeated misconduct will result in consequences for the misconduct using the District's Code of Student Conduct and/or suspension of bus riding privileges. These actions are at the discretion of the student's principal or the superintendent.

Eligibility/ Scheduling/Routing

Bus routes **are** established under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools in cooperation with the district transportation supervisor.

Students residing within the Village limits of Canajoharie will be expected to walk to school unless otherwise specified in this policy. Students may travel to East Hill School in the morning by boarding the bus at West Hill School. Likewise, students may be transported from East Hill School to West Hill School at dismissal.

School bus stops shall be arranged by the transportation director taking into consideration the safety of all children on the bus and time factors. Guidelines for determining school bus stops shall include but not be limited to:

- 1) Transportation service will be provided to residents living outside the Village of Canajoharie limits.
- 2) Transportation will be provided on side roads that are maintained by town highway departments unless the lack of maintenance makes it unsafe for drivers and students to be traversing these roads. Examples of unsafe conditions are flooding, road erosion, ice, snow, mud, and lack of adequate turn around space. Turn arounds will be established only when adequate space is available and this space is properly maintained.
- 3) Transportation will not be provided on highways and private property that have not been dedicated and/or maintained by town, county, and/or state highway departments.
- 4) Generally, dead end and loop streets will not be serviced by school buses. Whenever possible, stops will be at the intersections of two streets.
- 5) An effort will be made to minimize crossing of the road by students.
- 6) Walking distances to pick up points may vary according to grade level. Generally, grade levels k-5 will not be required to walk distances in excess of one-half mile and grade levels 6-12 will not be required to walk distances in excess of one mile.

Each year, due to changing demographics, there may be a need for changes and adjustments in bus routes. Also, pick up and drop off times may change within the first few weeks of school, but as drivers establish their routes there should be few changes or delays throughout the year. Please let the office know if there are any changes regarding your child. If they are not riding the bus or are riding only in the afternoon or the morning we need to be notified. As always for student's safety, drivers are not authorized to go by notes handed to them by the student regarding drop off at another address. All such notes should go to the main office of your child's school, and the school will notify the transportation department.

Emergency Delays and Closings

When Canajoharie is forced to close schools or dismiss students early due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, that information is reported on the CCS website. Emergency closing information is also released to local TV and radio stations. Parents and staff should also receive a recorded voice message.

When Canajoharie schools are closed due to weather, all transportation is canceled including buses to schools outside of the district which may still be open.

For two hour delays, buses will be on the road two hours later than normal, e.g. if normal pickup is at 7:00 AM, be prepared for a 9:00 AM pickup. Please avoid calling the garage to ask this.

Board Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education to set policy regarding bus transportation for the District.

Superintendent's Responsibilities

The responsibility for administering the transportation program rests with the Superintendent of Schools. The administration is expected to adhere to all applicable laws, regulations and policies established by federal, state and local authorities. This responsibility is, in part, delegated to the Supervisor of Transportation.

District's/Department's Responsibilities

Ensure the safe travel of all students by

- 1) Responding to parental concerns and questions.
- 2) Maintaining a safe bus fleet by maintaining a more than an acceptable Department of Transportation passing rate.
- 3) Maintaining driver files according to NYS Department of Motor Vehicles and NYS Education Department criteria.
- 4) Administering proper driver and attendant training, reviews, examinations and tests required by NYS Education Department and NYS Department of Motor Vehicles.
- 5) Maintaining a federally approved drug and alcohol testing program for all safety sensitive employees.
- 6) Conducting at least three safety drills per year as required by section 3623 of the Education Law.
- 7) Ensuring that students ride only in their assigned school buses and get off only at assigned bus stops, except when the district has approved alternative buses or arrangements.

Principals' Responsibilities

- 1) To work with the Transportation Department in developing and maintaining schedules, as well as assisting with other problems related to the transportation of students.
- 2) To provide supervision for loading and unloading of school buses with the assistance of the school staff.
- 3) To support the bus driver in taking whatever disciplinary action is necessary in order to maintain good behavior on the bus. If the Principal suspends a student's privilege of riding a school bus, the suspension shall be communicated, in writing, directly to the parent or guardian of the child, and to the Transportation Department. The suspension shall not become effective until proper notification has been made to the parent or guardian.
- 4) To notify the Transportation Department of new students who are eligible to ride the school bus.
- 5) To report to the Transportation Department all violations related to the safe operation of buses assigned to transport students.
- 6) To conduct bus drills as outlined under Title 8, Section 156.13 of the Education Law.
- 7) Building Principals, in concert with the Bus Drivers will assign seats to all eligible K-12 students as necessary.

Video surveillance cameras may be operating on school buses at any time. Students' pictures and conversations may be recorded. Surveillance tapes are considered confidential student records and, as such, are for use by district staff and will not be released to third parties except as required by law.

Driver's Responsibilities

- 1) Maintain authorized route.
- 2) Only stop at authorized stops.
- Maintain a consistent schedule.
- 4) Be familiar with and practice safe driving practices.
- 5) Maintain order on the bus and report promptly serious violations to the school principal for action.
- 6) Assign seats and generate a seating chart.
- 7) Be responsible for keeping bus clean, inside & outside.

PERSONAL RESPECT CONCEPTS

The following personal conduct is expected of students:

Treat every person with respect and take responsibility for your own actions. Listen to the instructions of adults in charge. No pushing, no hitting, no threats, no name-calling, no profanity, no bullying, no cruel humor and no put-downs.

Student's Responsibilities

- 1) Leave home early enough to arrive at your bus stop 5 minutes early.
- 2) Wait for your bus in a safe place well off (15') the roadway. Refrain from horseplay.
- 3) Enter the bus in an orderly manner (walk) and take your seat. Cross only in front of the bus after the driver signals.
- 4) Follow the instructions of your school bus driver. Do not be a distraction.
- 5) Remain in your seat while your bus is in motion.
- 6) Keep your head, hands and arms in the bus at all times. Do not open windows without your driver's permission.
- 7) Keep aisles clear at all times. Only bring items that can be held in your lap or fit under the seat.
- 8) Remain quiet and orderly.
- 9) Be courteous to your bus driver and fellow passengers.
- 10) Be alert to traffic when leaving the bus. Do not wear anything with dangling strings that could get snagged. Only cross in front of your bus. Do not try to retrieve any dropped objects until your bus leaves.

- 11) Keep the bus clean. No eating or drinking on the bus. Smoking, chewing tobacco, and alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the bus or on school property at any time.
- 12) Report any problems to the Bus Driver and/or the Building Principal.
- 13) Emergency equipment and exits are only to be used when appropriate.
- 14) Students or parents may be asked to pay for any damages/vandalism deliberately inflicted to the bus by students.

The District (driver) is not responsible for the conduct of students before they enter or after they exit the bus.

Parent's Responsibilities

- 1) To assist the school by:
 - a. Insisting that students are at their bus stop 5 minutes prior to scheduled arrival.
 - b. Encouraging student cooperation with school officials and the bus driver.
 - c. Encouragement of compliance with bus safety rules and regulations.
- 2) To accompany young students to the bus in the morning and to meet them in the afternoon for the purpose of supervising their conduct and assisting in the establishment of desirable safety practices.
- 3) To report to the principal of the school any injury or accident that has involved their students on the bus and to also notify the Transportation Office. This report should include the bus number, route number, place of accident or injury, and the bus driver's name.
- 4) To report to the Transportation Office any moving violation of a bus driver giving bus number, route number, time and nature of violation.
- 5) To report to the Transportation Office any defective equipment observed on a bus such as faulty lights, mufflers, brakes, signals, etc., giving the bus number and nature of defect.
- 6) Call the Transportation Office if your child will not be riding especially where your child(ren) are the only one(s) on your road.
- 7) Stay clear of bus blind spots (closer than 15') at bus stops as well as around school buildings.
- 8) Avoid letting you child bring large objects on the bus.
- 9) Please note the following regarding after school drop offs for students in Kindergarten and First grade. An approved parent or adult (18 or older) needs to meet the bus to take your child off the bus. If no adult is present, the driver will keep the student on bus while dispatch attempts to contact a parent. If no contact with a parent is made, the child will be returned to the school at the end of the run where the parent will be required to pick up their child.
- 10) Students or parents may be asked to pay for any damages/vandalism deliberately inflicted to the bus by students.