



## Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3301-83-12 Safety procedures.

Effective: May 13, 2019

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### (A) School bus stops

(1) Alternately flashing amber lamps are to be used to warn motorists that the bus is stopping to take on or to discharge passengers.

(2) Alternately flashing red lights and a stop sign are to be used to inform motorists that the bus is stopped on the roadway to take on or discharge passengers.

(3) Before receiving or discharging pupils, the bus shall be driven to the right side of the paved or traveled portion of the roadway and brought to a full stop.

(4) The bus driver shall be the only operator of the service entrance door. The door shall not be opened to load or unload pupils until traffic has cleared the bus or come to a complete stop in all directions.

(5) The bus driver shall not use the service door control to actuate warning lights. The door shall remain in a securely closed position while the bus is in motion.

### (B) Railroad grade crossings

#### (1) General procedures

(a) The driver of any school bus, with or without passengers, shall come to a complete stop, set the parking brake, shift to neutral, turn off the warning lamp master switch if necessary, fully open the service door, and look and listen in both directions along the track or tracks for approaching engines, trains, or train cars.

(b) For improved vision and hearing, a window at the drivers left shall be opened and radios and



other noisy equipment (e.g. fans) shall be turned off upon approaching the crossing and remain off until the bus has cleared the crossing.

(c) The school bus driver shall shift the bus into gear, look and listen, close the service door, release the parking brake, and drive across the tracks in an appropriate gear without shifting.

(d) After a train has passed the crossing, the bus driver shall not drive the bus onto any tracks until the driver is certain that no train, hidden by the first train, is approaching on an adjacent track.

(e) Crossing when flashing or audible signals malfunction is only permitted when authorized in accordance with section 4511.62 of the Revised Code.

(2) Weather conditions - during wet, stormy or foggy weather, before placing part of the bus on the tracks, the driver shall determine that the crossing can be made safely.

(3) Behavior of passengers at railroad crossings - when any school bus is stopped for any railroad track, the driver shall direct all passengers to be silent until the crossing is completed. A signal for silence shall be given by the school bus driver approximately three hundred feet from the crossing.

(4) The school bus driver shall follow procedures described in the Ohio pre-service driver training manual ([www.education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov)).

(C) School bus turn-around

(1) Whenever possible, the bus shall be clearly visible to the other motorists five hundred feet in both directions.

(2) Whenever possible, turn-arounds shall not be scheduled at intersections where the vehicle must cross a lane of traffic to back.

(3) Four-way hazard lights shall be actuated unless prohibited by local ordinance.

(4) The driver shall sound the horn twice before backing or have an audible signal while backing.



(5) The driver shall not back the school bus at pick-up or discharge locations while pupils are outside the vehicle.

(D) Loading and unloading at school facilities

(1) When it is necessary to load or unload pupils off the school grounds, the bus shall be positioned and parked (with parking brake set) so that pupils do not cross the roadway to get to or from the bus.

(2) Student warning lights shall be deactivated when loading and unloading on school grounds or when loading and unloading from a school bus stopped in a school zone curbside on the roadway adjoining the school grounds.

(3) Parking for loading and unloading on school grounds shall be bumper to bumper or diagonal. Either method used shall exclude any necessity for backing the school bus. The rear and/or side emergency exits shall remain accessible at all times.

(4) Pupils in the loading area shall be properly supervised by the building principal or designee.

(5) Except when loading or unloading pre-school or special needs children, the driver shall remain on the bus while pupils are loading and unloading.

(E) General operations:

(1) Headlights shall be actuated during operation of the school bus.

(2) A white, flashing strobe light, individually switched, may be used, when unfavorable atmospheric conditions or time of day limit visibility (e.g. fog, rain, snow, darkness).

(3) Four-way hazard lights shall be activated at railroad crossings and turn-arounds unless prohibited by local ordinance.

(4) The school bus driver shall not leave a vehicle unattended with pupils on board except when



loading or unloading pre-school and special needs children or in the event of an emergency. Drivers who must leave the bus for these purposes shall not leave the immediate vicinity of the bus, except for an emergency.

(5) The school bus driver shall not leave the vehicle until the brakes are set, the engine stopped and the ignition key removed, with the exception for buses equipped with wheelchair lifts or diesel engines that require the engine to be running.

(6) At the conclusion of each route or trip, the driver shall ensure all passengers have left the bus by visually inspecting each seat position. Additional procedures for drivers post-trip inspections are detailed in the Ohio pre-service driver training manual.