

604 Transportation AP – Cargo on School Buses

Background:

The Prairie Rose Public School Transportation Department recognizes the need to support the Division's vast school programming needs and ensure school bus operations are safe for the students and bus drivers. To uphold these ideals, the Transportation Department has developed the following procedures for transportation of cargo, including large items or bags (such as hockey bags) on a school bus.

Procedures:

1. Students and parents are to consider the size, weight, and shape of item(s) before loading on school bus. The safety of the students and driver are always the priority.
2. The first preference of the Division is to have all cargo stored under seats.
3. When room is available cargo that will not fit under seats in the bus, may be transported using the following conditions:
 - a. Item(s) must be able to be carried on and off the bus by the student. The student must be able to lift the bag up and over the seats to carry the item to the designated area on the bus. Another student may help if possible. The bus driver will not be able to assist in carrying.
 - b. Cargo must be stored in empty seats, starting with the rows closest to the driver (maximum two bags/items per seat, provided they do not obstruct the aisle). Items must not be stored in the row with an emergency window and must not block the aisle or rear emergency door. Whenever possible, there is to be an empty row between the cargo and the students.
 - c. Cargo must be stored securely and tightly in the knee space between the bottom of the seat and seat in front. Items must be lodged and packed in such a way they will not become dislodged when the school bus is in motion without causing damage to the seat(s).
 - d. Cargo must not be higher than the seat back (eye level to the seat back).
 - e. Students may not sit in the seat across the aisle from cargo. Cargo items should be situated across from each other.
 - f. Items such as skates are to have skate guards and must be stored safely inside a bag. Hard items, wherever possible, are to be stored securely in a sealed bag avoiding becoming projectile.
 - g. If the above provisions are not possible, only cargo small enough to fit on the floor space under bus seat may be transported.
4. If there isn't room for cargo on the school bus, it will be parents/guardians' responsibility to transport to school/location.
5. Hockey Sticks:
 - a. Hockey sticks are to be secured in the first row, regardless of rows used for cargo, and must not interfere with access to the front school bus exit.

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- b. Hockey stick handles are to be secured between the school bus seat and window, with blade on the floor. Sticks must be secured against the school bus wall using a hockey bag or other cargo.
- c. If it is not possible for the stick to be secured in this manner, it cannot be carried on the school bus.
6. The bus driver will check that all cargo has been placed correctly and is secure in the designated areas.
7. If cargo shifts and blocks the aisle, the bus driver will stop in a safe location and re-secure (or request the cargo owner re-secure items).
8. The student/parent/guardian is responsible to pay for any damage to the school bus occurring during loading, unloading, and/or storing of cargo.
9. The rear emergency door is intended for emergency use only and should not be used to load or unload cargo.
10. Students transporting hockey sticks, hockey bags, and/or other bulky items should exit the bus after all other students.
11. Students who meet a feeder bus need to ensure there is sufficient room for cargo before attempting to transport item(s).

Effective: December 2, 2024