

Guidelines for Transporting Students of Richey Public Schools 2026-2027



**Effective July 1, 2018
Updated July 20, 2026**

Guidelines for Bus Drivers/Contractors

Richey Public Schools

This document is provided to the contractors and bus drivers as a tool to help ensure the drivers, contractors and school district follow all provisions as provided for by law.

Montana State Law

20-10-103. School bus driver qualifications. A driver of a school bus is qualified to drive a school bus if the driver:

- (1) is not less than 18 years of age;
- (2) is of good moral character;
- (3) is the holder of a commercial driver's license;
- (4) has filed with the district a satisfactory medical examination report, on a form approved by the United States department of transportation, signed by any physician licensed in the United States or, if acceptable to an insurance carrier, any licensed physician;
- (5) has completed a basic first aid course and holds a valid basic first aid certificate from an authorized instructor. The issuance of the certificate is governed by rules established by the superintendent of public instruction, provided that the rules may suspend this requirement for a reasonable period of time if there has been an inadequate opportunity for securing the basic first aid course and certificate.
- (6) has complied with any other qualifications established by the board of public education; and
- (7) has filed with the county superintendent a certificate from the trustees of the district for which the school bus is to be driven, certifying compliance with the driver qualifications enumerated in this section.

20-10-104. Penalty for violating law or rules. (1) Every district, its trustees and employees, and every person under a transportation contract with a district is subject to the policies prescribed by the board of public education and the rules prescribed by the superintendent of public instruction. When a district knowingly violates a transportation law or board of public education transportation policy, the district shall forfeit any reimbursement otherwise payable under [20-10-145](#) and [20-10-146](#) for any bus miles actually traveled during that fiscal year in violation of the law or policies.

(2) A district knowingly violates a transportation law or board of public education policy when it operates a bus route in a manner that does not comply with state law or board policy related to student safety. As provided in [20-10-141](#)(1), a district that operates a bus route not approved by its county transportation committee may not receive transportation reimbursement on that route, but if the route is operated in compliance with transportation law, the operation of the routes is not a violation that will result in the forfeiture of all transportation aid to the district.

(3) The county superintendent shall suspend all reimbursements payable to the district under [20-10-145](#) and [20-10-146](#) for all miles being traveled, including both miles being traveled in compliance with the transportation laws or policies and miles being traveled in violation of the transportation laws or policies, until the district corrects the violation. When the district corrects the violation, the county superintendent shall pay all

reimbursements otherwise payable under [20-10-145](#) and [20-10-146](#), including amounts suspended during the violation, but the amount forfeited under subsection (1) may not be paid to the district.

(4) When a person operating a bus under contract with a district knowingly fails to comply with the transportation law or the board of public education transportation policies, the district may not pay the person for any bus miles traveled during the contract year in violation of law or policies. Upon discovering a violation, the trustees of the district shall give written notice to the person that unless the violation is corrected within 10 days of the giving of notice, the contract will be canceled. The trustees of a district shall order the operation of a bus operated under contract suspended when the bus is being operated in violation of transportation law or policies and the trustees find that the violation jeopardizes the safety of pupils.

20-10-106. Determination of mileage distances. When the mileage distance that transportation services are to be provided is a matter of controversy and is an issue before a board of trustees, a county transportation committee, or the superintendent of public instruction, the mileage shall be established on the following basis:

(1) The distance in mileage shall be measured by a vehicle equipped with an accurate odometer.

(2) A representative of the applicable district and a parent or guardian of the child to be transported shall be present when the distance is measured.

(3) The measurement shall begin 6 yards from the family home and end 6 yards from the entrance of the school grounds closest to the route.

(4) The route traversed for the measurement shall be the route designated by the trustees, except that the route shall be reasonably passable during the entire school fiscal year by the vehicle that provides the child's transportation. In determining reasonable passage, a route may not be disqualified because it is impassable during temporary, extreme weather conditions such as rains, snow, or floods.

20-10-141. Schedule of maximum reimbursement by mileage rates. (1) The mileage rates in subsection (2) for school transportation constitute the maximum reimbursement to districts for school transportation from state and county sources of transportation revenue under the provisions of [20-10-145](#) and [20-10-146](#). These rates may not limit the amount that a district may budget in its transportation fund budget in order to provide for the estimated and necessary cost of school transportation during the ensuing school fiscal year. All bus miles traveled on bus routes approved by the county transportation committee are reimbursable. Non-bus mileage is reimbursable for a vehicle driven by a bus driver to and from an overnight location of a school bus when the location is more than 10 miles from the school. A district may approve additional bus or non-bus miles within its own district or approved service area but may not claim reimbursement for the mileage. Any vehicle, the operation of which is reimbursed for bus mileage under the rate provisions of this schedule, must be a school bus, as defined by this title, driven by a qualified driver on a bus route approved by the county transportation committee and the superintendent of public instruction.

Requirements of Richey Public Schools District #2 & 78J

1. All drivers must be qualified and properly endorsed.
MCA 2-10-103
2. All buses will have an operational cell phone provided by the contractor and the number will be on file in the District Office and contractor will provide all patrons with the phone number. Use of cell phones while driving is strictly prohibited in accordance to Board Policy 5630.
3. Contractor will provide the District and patrons with a schedule of pick-up and drop-off times. (Required by County Transportation Committee)
4. Each bus must contain a map detailing the route, stops, and am and pm times for pick-up and drop off. List of parents and students with phone numbers must be in the bus at all times. (Required by County Transportation Committee)
5. Contractor/Driver will provide a mileage log to the district off by the cutoff day determined by the District Clerk.
6. Contractors/Drivers must notify where the bus will be stored prior to the beginning of school and when changes occur as reimbursement rates differ in accordance to MCA 20-10-141.
7. Drivers are required to run approved routes unless administration is notified prior. (poor road conditions, no passengers etc.)
MCA 20-10-106
8. Drivers cannot stop at any stops other than those approved by the County Transportation Committee.
9. If families move or there are other changes to the route, the District Office must be notified and approval must be obtained from the County Transportation Board before any changes are implemented.
10. Drivers must complete the state required 10 hours of training each year between July 1 and January 1 of the current fiscal year.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

The bus driver handbook describes important information about Richey School and I understand that I should consult the Superintendent regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with Richey Schools voluntarily and acknowledge that the specified length of my employment is stated in the signed contract.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will be communicated through official notices and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the school board of Richey Schools has the ability to adopt and revisions to the policies in this handbook.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook and understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME: (printed): _____

EMPLOYEES SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____