

# **Minnesota School Bus Driver**

## **Model School Bus Driver Training Program**



**Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
Office of Pupil Transportation Safety**

**Minnesota Association for Pupil Transportation**

**Minnesota School Bus Operators Association**

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## **FOREWORD**

The purpose of this manual is to assist the school bus driver trainer in efficiently and effectively training a new school bus driver in the safe operation of a school bus in Minnesota. The following areas will be covered in this manual:

1. Basic driving skills
2. Human relations
3. Crash and emergency preparedness
4. Vehicle care, inspection, and use
5. Laws, Regulations, Policies, and Best Practices
6. Special needs transportation

A new school bus driver must be competent in these six areas before transporting any students.

This curriculum is a joint effort of the Minnesota Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT), and the Minnesota School Bus Operators Association (MSBOA) and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety - Office of Pupil Transportation Safety. This curriculum is not intended to be used as a textbook to be read by the trainee, but rather a guide for the trainer to use in training the trainee.

While every effort has been made to assure the information provided here is complete and accurate, it is not intended to take the place of published rules, statutes or regulations concerning school bus operations in Minnesota. The contents may not be relied upon as a substitute for the most current official text or information.

The Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation, Minnesota School Bus Operators Association, Department of Public Safety – Office of Pupil Transportation Safety and publisher cannot assume any responsibility for omissions, errors, misprinting, or ambiguity contained within this publication and shall not be held liable in any degree for any loss or injury caused by such omissions, errors, misprinting, or ambiguity presented in this publication.

This publication is designed to provide reasonably accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is given with the understanding that the MAPT, MSBOA and Minnesota Department of Public Safety are not engaged in rendering legal or other professional service. If legal advice is required, the services of a legal professional should be sought.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES**

This training manual has been designed to assist you as a school bus driver to comply with the laws, regulations, rules and statutes governing school bus operations in Minnesota. This manual will address both the state and federal requirements for student transportation. This manual will address the following basic competencies:

1. Safely operate the type of school bus the driver will be operating;
2. understand student behavior, including issues related to students with disabilities;
3. encourage orderly conduct of students on the bus and handle incidents of misconduct;
4. know and understand relevant laws, rules of the road and local school bus safety policies;
5. handle emergency situations; and
6. Safely load and unload students.

## **TEACHING RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Model School Bus Driver Training Program is a resource manual to aid in the training of Minnesota school bus drivers/supervisors. It is not meant to be a teaching tool by itself, nor is it designed to be a textbook. This manual provides information for every Minnesota school bus driver/supervisor.

The manual has been divided into seven units with selected appendices following. Each subject area was carefully chosen because of its critical nature.

Each major chapter might well be used for a training session by itself. Various sections within the units might be used as a focus for a short training session or individual group discussions. Care should be taken in selecting areas from the various sections so as to relate the experience of the drivers and previous training sessions.

The following recommendations are offered to trainers of school bus drivers/supervisors:

1. Become thoroughly familiar with the information presented in the manual.
2. Take advantage of the space for notes.
3. Establish priorities for subjects as related to basic and advanced drivers.
4. Determine which units can be adequately covered by local sources and those which need outside resource assistance.
5. It is better to cover a lesser number of topics thoroughly than to try to cover many subjects in a haphazard way.
6. Small group discussions are found to be most effective for School Bus Driver Training.
7. Organization of small groups should be handled with great care. The number should be no more than 20 per group.
8. Small groups must have a common interest in the subject to be covered.
9. Meetings should be kept within a strict time schedule.
10. If the meeting is to last for a period longer than 90 minutes, a break should be planned.
11. Speakers should be used to supplement material in the manual, not to replace it.
12. It is recommended that small groups be utilized to cover specific areas. Key points for discussion purposes should be provided to the discussion leader.
13. Although the time of the session must be closely maintained, the discussion should be free and open within the time schedule.

14. Every attempt should be made to utilize personnel within the local organization. The material in the manual will provide valuable assistance to any such person chosen.
15. Pay particular attention to the various materials in the appendices. This information should answer many questions concerning local operations.
16. Materials from the manual may be duplicated for group discussion and driver information.
17. Such information should be provided before the training session and used for group discussion.
18. A combination main speaker – small group discussion can be very successful with this material.
19. Some information in the manual may be contrary to practices within a local organization. This material may, therefore, be used to stimulate group discussion.
20. The use of a planning committee to choose topics of interest for future training sessions should be considered.
21. Topics chosen by group process are often of greater interest and greater learning generally takes place.
22. Records should be maintained for drivers in attendance and subject areas covered at previous meetings. Duplication should be avoided if at all possible.
23. It is highly recommended that safety training sessions and company business not be combined.