



Training for Drivers of Students with Special Needs

Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation

8VAC20-70-20. Transportation of children.

The greatest care shall be exercised at all times in the transportation of school children.



Code of Virginia

§ 22.1-181. Training program for school bus operators.

The Board of Education shall develop a training program for persons applying for employment, and employed, to operate school buses and shall promote its implementation.

DOE trains “trainers” who then train bus drivers. School divisions make the decision on who should be trainers.

Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation

8VAC20-70-290. First aid course.

Any school board may require successful completion of the American Red Cross first aid course or its equivalent as a condition to employment to operate a school bus transporting pupils as required by § 22.1-178 of the Code of Virginia.

Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation

8VAC20-70-350. Training.

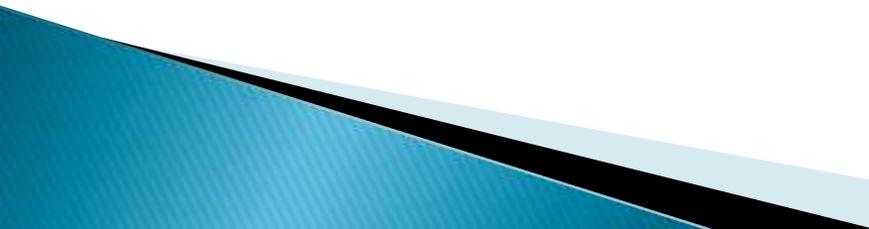
No person shall operate a school or activity bus transporting pupils unless the person has:

1. Received classroom, demonstration, and behind-the-wheel instruction in accordance with a program developed by the Department of Education pursuant to § [22.1-181](#) of the Code of Virginia.



Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation (Continued)

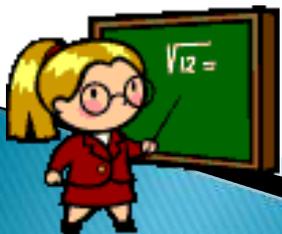
2. Completed a minimum of 24 classroom hours and 24 hours of behind-the-wheel training. A minimum of 10 of the 24 hours of behind-the-wheel time shall involve the operation of a bus with pupils on board while under the direct supervision of a designated bus driver trainer. All drivers shall receive training in the operation of a Type D bus and transportation of students with special needs.



Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation

8VAC20-70-420. Instructor course certificate.

Local school bus driver training instructors shall hold a certificate for completion of an instructor course conducted or approved by the Department of Education and shall attend a recertification course every five years.



Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation

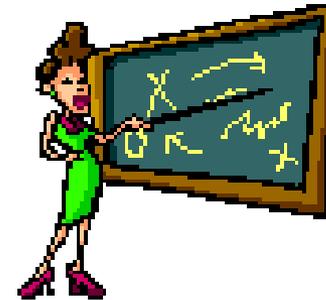
8VAC20-70-360. In-service training.

In-service training (at least two hours before opening of schools and at least two hours during the second half of the school year) devoted to improving the skills, attitudes, and knowledge including orientation to maximize benefits of using safety programs and safety components shall be provided to all school or activity bus drivers.



“Train the Trainer”

- ▶ Training class is 3 days
 - Usually no more than 20 in a class
 - Hold approximately 8 classes a year
 - Training includes:
 - Lecture
 - Powerpoint presentations
 - Videos
 - Hands-on
 - Students teaching a section of curriculum



Training on Special Needs

- ▶ Separate special needs curriculum
 - ▶ Each trainer receives a copy of the curriculum and a CD with training curriculum and other materials
 - ▶ Trainer should adjust the curriculum to include any local policies
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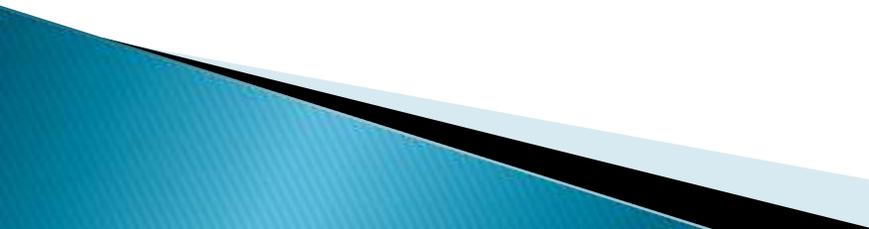
Special Needs Curriculum

▶ Topics covered in curriculum

1. Challenges of transporting special needs children

- Growing number of special needs children
- New technology
- Inclusion

2. Characteristics of special needs children

- Attention deficit disorder (ADD)
 - Autism
 - Deafness/Hearing Impaired
 - Emotionally disturbed
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Special Needs Curriculum

3. Legal Aspects

Key Laws

Section 504

IDEA

ADA

Key Concepts

FAPE

IEPs

LRE

Inclusion

Special Needs Curriculum

4. Communication

Important between drivers, children, school staff, parents



5. Behavior Management

Remind drivers that children are children and behavior management can be challenging

- Be consistent
- Fair
- Positive

Special Needs Curriculum

6. Safe loading of Children

- Safety procedures for lift use
- Wheelchair securement



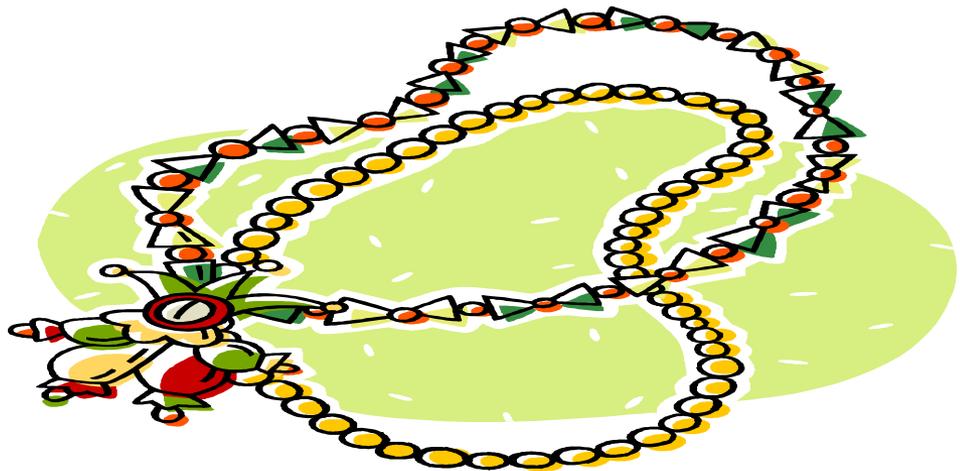
7. Preparation for Emergencies

- How to handle various situations, such as collisions, fire, severe weather
- Driver responsibility after a crash
- Evacuations
- Know the bus

Special Needs Curriculum

8. Responsibilities of drivers

- Characteristics of drivers
- Physical demands
- Appropriate dress



Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation (VAPT)

- ▶ Conference held in June each year
- ▶ Program includes sessions on special needs
- ▶ Includes Professional Development classes developed by NAPT geared to special needs
- ▶ School Bus Road-e-o
 - Special Needs Section



Conclusion

- ▶ Transporting special needs children is challenging
- ▶ There is always more to learn
- ▶ Open to suggestions on improving our training, etc.

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