



EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Policy Type:	Education Infrastructure	Initially Approved:	11/12/2014
Policy Sponsor:	Education Department	Last Revised:	08/11/2025
Primary Contact:	Nathan St-Germain	Review Scheduled:	08/2026
Approver:	Chief and Council BCM WFN 25/26-08-135		

A. REVISION HISTORY

Date: (mm/dd/yyyy)	Motions
11/12/2014	BCM# WFN14/15-33
08/14/2017	BCM# WFN17/18-08-61
03/21/2019	BCM# WFN18/19-141
11/14/2019	BCM# WFN19/20-149
08/11/2025	BCM WFN 25/26-08-135

Table of Contents

0 – Terms of Reference	4
1 – Purpose and Scope	5
2 – Eligibility Criteria for Transportation	5
2.1 – Student Eligibility	5
2.2 – Distance and Residency Considerations	5
2.3 – Designated Schools.....	6
2.4 – Registration and Updates.....	6
3 – Bus Routes and Scheduling	7
3.1 – Route Planning and Efficiency	7
3.2 – Bus Stops and Central Pickup Points	7
3.3 – Scheduling and Ride Times	7
3.4 – Communication of Routes and Changes	7
4 – Student Conduct and Discipline Procedures	8
4.1 – Code of Conduct	8
4.2 – Misconduct Response and Warnings	8
4.3 – Progressive Discipline Process	9
4.4 – Vandalism and Restitution.....	9
5 – Parental Responsibilities and Communication	10
5.1 – Supervision and Readiness	10
5.2 – Conduct Agreement and Notifications	10
5.3 – Absences and Emergency Contacts.....	11
5.4 – Receiving Students and Communication Channels.....	11
6 – Driver Qualifications and Responsibilities	12
6.1 – Licensing, Certification, and Training.....	12
6.2 – Operational Duties and Student Safety	13
6.3 – Reporting and Communication.....	13
6.4 – Professional Conduct.....	14

7 – Vehicle Safety and Maintenance Protocols	15
7.1 – Safety Standards and Inspections	15
7.2 – Preventative Maintenance and Repairs	15
7.3 – Safety Equipment and Cleanliness	15
7.4 – Fueling and Contracted Services	16
8 – Procedures for Inclement Weather and Emergency Situations.....	17
8.1 – Weather-Related Cancellations	17
8.2 – Emergency Protocols (Breakdowns, Accidents, Medical)	18
8.3 – School Closure and Highway Closure Response	18
8.4 – Driver Authority and Drills.....	19
9 – Transportation to Extracurricular Events or Specialized Programs	20
9.1 – After-School and Cultural Programs	20
9.3 – Supervision and Insurance.....	21
10 – Policy for Students with Special Needs	22
10.1 – Inclusive Transportation Services.....	22
10.3 – Individual Transportation Plans and Aides.....	23
10 – Record Keeping and Reporting Requirements.....	24
11.1 – Driver Logs and Attendance.....	24
11.2 – Incident, Accident, and Emergency Reports	24
11.3 – Maintenance and Certification Tracking.....	24
11.4 – Privacy and Retention Policies	25
11.5 – Information Gathering Purpose and Limitations.....	25
12 – Insurance and Liability	26
12.1 – Vehicle and Public Liability Insurance.....	26
12.4 – Third-Party and Extracurricular Liability	26
13 – Administrative Oversight and Appeals Process	27
13.1 – Policy Governance and Leadership	27
13.2 – Coordination with Schools and Boards.....	27
13.3 – Budgeting and Policy Review	27

13.4 – Complaint Resolution and Appeals	28
13.5 – Community Engagement and Transparency.....	29
14 – Appendix	30
WFN’s Transportation Code of Conduct	30
Code of Conduct Acknowledgement	31
Acknowledgement of Discipline	32
Child Abandonment Report	33
Child Abandonment Report	34

0 – Terms of Reference

Gate Service	Gate Service is the Point of Intersection of a private road or driveway and a public road.
Funded Student List	A list determining which students are funded by WFN.
Gate-Side Pickup	Referring to the right-side doorway that traditionally opens for students to board into a bus.
WFN	Wahnapitae First Nation
Education Department	Generally referring to the designated staff overseeing Transportation.
Band Member	Referring to persons who are on the Band’s Registry List.
Community Member	Referring to persons who are married to, or children of Band Members, who themselves are not on the Band’s Registry List currently living on reserve. Refers also to people who have been accepted to live on-reserve by the Residency Code.

1 – Purpose and Scope

This Policy establishes guidelines for the safe, reliable, and equitable transportation of Wahnapiatae First Nation Students in JK-12, especially those traveling to off-reserve schools. It reflects common practices among Northern Ontario First Nations and adheres to current safety standards and community needs.

Please be reminded that School Transportation services do not fall under the Education Law, due to this, Transportation Services are a privilege and can be withdrawn from individuals who are discordant with this policy.

2 – Eligibility Criteria for Transportation

2.1 – Student Eligibility

Daily bus service is provided for all WFN member students at compulsory school age who reside on-reserve and attend an approved school. Students must be on the funded student list to qualify for band-provided transportation. Non-resident or non-member students may be considered on a case-by-case basis if space or scheduling permits and with prior approval.

2.2 – Distance and Residency Considerations

Generally, any eligible student living on the reserve is entitled to transportation due to the distance of off-reserve schools. There is no minimum distance cutoff, however, stops may be centralized where homes are very close to each other for efficiency. Conversely, students living off-reserve are typically not covered by WFN buses unless specified by an education agreement or special arrangement.

2.3 – Designated Schools

Transportation is provided to designated off-reserve schools by the Education Department. If a student elects to attend a non-designated school, transportation eligibility may be subject to approval by the Education Department.

Elementary	Secondary
St-Annes Catholic	Confederation
Foyer Jeunesse	Bishop Alexander
C.R. Judd	L'Horizon
Notre Place	E.S. Hanmer

2.4 – Registration and Updates

Parents and Guardians must register children for bus service each school year, providing current home address, contact information and current school attended, failure to do so will automatically disqualify the student in question from Transportation services until a time where the required information is provided on the related form. Any change in school or residence that affects transportation must be reported promptly so eligibility can be re-confirmed and route adjustments made. Registration must be completed through a provided form.

3 – Bus Routes and Scheduling

3.1 – Route Planning and Efficiency

Bus routes are planned annually by the WFN Education Department in coordination with school schedules and student residence. Routes are designed to maximize efficiency and minimize student travel time, recognizing that off-reserve routes can be significantly longer than traditional lines. WFN operates sufficient buses to accommodate all eligible students, using multiple band-owned buses and vehicles.

3.2 – Bus Stops and Central Pickup Points

Gate-Side Pickup is provided where feasible, buses will stop at or near the student's designated pickup location to promote safety. The Education Department may designate centralized pickup points for efficiency or safety. Parents will be informed of their child's designated stop and times before the school year as per decided the registration form. All stops and route changes must be authorized by the Education Department, not including the bus driver.

3.3 – Scheduling and Ride Times

Pick-up and Drop-off schedules align with school start and end times. Buses typically depart the reserve in time for students to arrive at school a few minutes before classes start and depart the school 5 minutes after dismissal. Schedules account for the travel distance to off-reserve schools and are adjusted for known factors such as road conditions and construction. Estimated pickup times for each stop are communicated to families at the start of the year, and students are expected to be ready and outside at their designated pick-up locations 5 minutes before their scheduled time. Bus Drivers will not wait for students at their pick-up location for students.

WFN strives to keep one-way ride times reasonable; however, routes are reviewed to ensure no student spends an excessive time on the bus if it can be avoided.

3.4 – Communication of Routes and Changes

Parents and Guardians receive route information, bus driver or relevant staff contact information, and a copy of this policy prior to the first day of school. The Education Department will also provide updates as needed.

4 – Student Conduct and Discipline Procedures

4.1 – Code of Conduct

Students are expected to follow all bus safety rules and WFN's Transportation Code of Conduct, found in the appendix at the end of this document, whenever utilizing transportation services. Utilizing Transportation Services is a privilege, not at right. Students must always obey the instructions of the Driver, as the Driver is responsible for their safety.

4.2 – Misconduct Response and Warnings

Minor misbehavior will initially be addressed by the Driver with verbal warnings or assigned seating. The Driver may also discuss the issue with the student and their parent as an early intervention, if they feel comfortable to do so. All incidents and remedies will be documented by the Driver. Repeated minor infractions or any serious misconduct will also be reported to the Education Department and forwarded to the School Principal for further action.

4.3 – Progressive Discipline Process

WFN employs a progressive discipline approach for Transportation conduct all steps are reported and documented for future use:

1. First Incident: Verbal warning by the Driver. Driver may remind the student of the rules and notify the parent or guardian after route completion.
2. Second Incident: Written Warning Issued. The Education Department will send a written notice to parents describing the misconduct and warning that Transportation services can be suspended if issues continue.
3. Third Incident: Temporary Transportation suspension of bus riding privileges, up to 3 days. Parents are informed in writing by school principals and are responsible for the student's transportation during the suspension. A meeting may be arranged with the student, parent, guardian, driver, and Education Staff to discuss expectations for the future.
4. Severe Incident or Repeated Misconduct: Long Transportation Suspension or in extreme cases removal from the Transportation Services for the rest of the school year. Severe incidents result in immediate suspension pending investigation. Reinstatement may require a parent meeting and an action plan for improved behaviours.

Parents and Guardians are kept informed at each step of the discipline process. They must sign acknowledgement, found in the appendix below, of receiving any official incident reports or suspension notices send home. This ensures parents are aware that Transportation Services may be suspended for any misconduct, consistent with this policy

A Student whose bus privileges were suspended can regain them after the suspension period provided any conditions set are met. The student and parent or guardian must reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Conduct before the student is allowed back on the bus.

4.4 – Vandalism and Restitution

Acts of vandalism will result in discipline and require restitution. Parents or guardians will be held financially responsible for willful damage caused by their child. Transportation privileges will remain suspended until arrangements for payments are made, as such behaviour threatens the safe environment of other students.

5 – Parental Responsibilities and Communication

5.1 – Supervision and Readiness

Parents or Guardians are responsible for getting their children to the assigned bus stop each morning. JK and SK students must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or designated caregiver at the stop for pick-up and drop-off. If no authorized adult or designated caregiver is present for a young child, the Driver will keep the child onboard and contact the Education Department to ensure that child's safety.

Parents and Guardians must ensure their child is dressed appropriately for current weather conditions and that items brought on the bus are properly contained. It is recommended that parents or guardians of students wait with their children on very cold days.

5.2 – Conduct Agreement and Notifications

At the start of each school year, parents, guardians, and students are required to review and sign the Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form, found at the end of this document, acknowledging the rules and consequences. Parents must share responsibility for student safety and student conduct and should familiarize their child with proper bus behavior and procedures. By signing, parents agree to uphold the policy.

Parents and Guardians must promptly inform the Education Department of any changes that could affect Transportation. This includes address or contact changes, a decision to temporarily or permanently stop using the bus, or any custody arrangements affecting drop-off. Drivers will only accept changes to drop-off locations or routines that are approved by the Education Department, parents or guardians should not request ad-hoc route changes directly from Drivers. For example, if a child is to be dropped at a different location for one day, the parent or guardian must notify the Education Department in advance; The Education Department would then inform the driver.

5.3 – Absences and Emergency Contacts

If a child will not be riding on the bus in the afternoon, but was picked up in the morning, the parent or guardian must inform the school and Education Department by midday, so the message reaches the driver. The Education Department follows this process to ensure child safety,

Parents or Guardians must provide the Education Department with up-to-date emergency contact information. In the event of an urgent situation, this allows Drivers and Education Staff to reach the family quickly.

5.4 – Receiving Students and Communication Channels

Parents, Guardians, or a Designated Individual should be at the stop to receive children in grades JK and SK. If a Parent or Guardian is unavoidably delayed, they should contact another Designated Individual to meet the child. A Designated Individual may be someone in Grade 7 or above who can reasonably ensure the child's immediate safety.

The Education Department will issue notices to parents for any major Transportation Issues, for instance, route changes, consistent late arrivals, or disciplinary concerns. Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns or feedback about Transportation Services to the Education Department. A respectful dialogue between parents, guardians, drivers, education staff, and school staff is essential to providing a safe service.

6 – Driver Qualifications and Responsibilities

6.1 – Licensing, Certification, and Training

All WFN Drivers must hold the appropriate class of driver's license with a school bus endorsement (Driver's License "B") and maintain a clean driving record. Drivers are required to obtain a clear Vulnerable Sector Check before hiring and every 2 years following. They must also be certified in first aid and CPR and participate in any required training or refresher courses as mandated by WFN or provincial standards.

WFN ensures Drivers meet all regulatory requirements. For example, drivers must have the proper license as proof of their qualifications. They are expected to always uphold all Highway Traffic Act rules and safety regulations. Additionally, Drivers are required to complete Medical Physicals as per the MTO's standard.

6.2 – Operational Duties and Student Safety

Drivers are responsible for the safe operation of the bus and the supervision of students during transit. Key responsibilities include:

- Performing a thorough pre-trip inspection before routes, to check brakes, lights, tires, signals, and emergency equipment. Any major defects or safety concerns must be reported immediately and addressed before transporting students. Minor Defects must also be reported to the Education Department for confirmation. Drivers ensure the bus has valid registration and that the insurance documents and safety inspection sticker are current and on-board.
- Adhering to assigned routes and schedules. Drivers must not deviate from the route or make unauthorized stops. They should arrive at the first pick-up point on time and not depart earlier than the scheduled time. If running significantly late due to unforeseen events, the Driver will inform the Education Department so parents can be notified.
- Maintaining student discipline on the bus in a fair and consistent manner. Drivers will enforce the Bus Code of Conduct by giving clear instructions and warnings to students as needed. They will report any serious or persistent misconduct through the proper channels rather than handling major discipline on their own.
- Drivers use the bus's flashing lights and stop arm as required by law when children cross the road. They will only resume motion once all children are safely on board or, after school, have crossed the road and are clear of the bus. If a JK or SK child appears to have no adult meeting them at a stop, the driver will follow protocol rather than leave the child unattended.
- Only registered student riders and staff may ride the bus. The Driver shall not allow any unauthorized persons to board without clearance from the Education Department.

6.3 – Reporting and Communication

School bus drivers must promptly report any accidents, incidents, or safety concerns. They complete and submit incident report forms for student behavior issues or other problems, filing these with the Education Department in a timely manner. In the event of a collision or near-miss, drivers prioritize student safety, then notify emergency services, if required, and the Education Department immediately, following up with written incident reports. They also log any mechanical problems or maintenance needs observed during operation.

6.4 – Professional Conduct

Drivers serve as representatives of WFN and are expected to conduct themselves professionally. They should foster a courteous environment, greeting students, communicating politely with parents, and refraining from inappropriate language or behavior. Complaints about a driver will be investigated by the Education Director; drivers must cooperate with any inquiries. Drivers are also expected to maintain confidentiality regarding student issues and follow all WFN employment policies.

7 – Vehicle Safety and Maintenance Protocols

7.1 – Safety Standards and Inspections

All school buses operated by WFN must meet or exceed Ontario's safety standards for school vehicles. Buses are inspected and certified every 6 months by a licensed mechanic as required by law. WFN maintains a Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration in good standing, in compliance with safety ratings and reporting.

Drivers perform daily circle-check inspections before each route, following a checklist. They document these inspections in a logbook. If a bus concern is deemed major, it will be taken out of service until repaired and another vehicle or arrangement will be used.

7.2 – Preventative Maintenance and Repairs

WFN has a preventative maintenance schedule for its Transportation Vehicles. Regular maintenance is done at recommended intervals or mileage. Buses also undergo seasonal servicing.

The Education Department budgets for and ensures timely repair of buses. In the event of mechanical issues, certified mechanics will perform needed repairs. WFN may have maintenance done by staff or contract with local garages for service. All major repairs and parts replacements are recorded. If a bus breaks down or is in an accident, it is inspected and repaired before returning to service.

7.3 – Safety Equipment and Cleanliness

Every bus is equipped with required safety equipment: first aid kit, fire extinguisher, roadside reflectors or flares, seat belt cutter, a two-way radio for emergency communication. Drivers must ensure these items are present and functional during daily checks. For winter, buses carry items traction aids and spare warm blankets in case of breakdown.

Buses are to be kept clean and in good condition. Drivers or assigned staff will maintain cleanliness of the bus. Any vandalism or graffiti is cleaned up promptly. Windows are kept clear of obstructions.

7.4 – Fueling and Contracted Services

Fuel tanks are kept sufficiently filled to avoid issues during runs, especially in winter. Drivers typically fuel up at the end of runs or during midday breaks at designated fueling stations. Safety protocols are followed.

8 – Procedures for Inclement Weather and Emergency Situations

8.1 – Weather-Related Cancellations

WFN has clear procedures for bus operation during severe weather. Student safety is the priority, and buses will be cancelled in hazardous conditions such as extreme cold or heavy storms. As a guideline, if local temperatures drop to around -40°C , buses may be automatically cancelled to protect children from exposure and to prevent potential mechanical failures. Similarly, buses do not run if road conditions make travel dangerous.

The Designated Staff monitors weather reports and utilizes tools early each morning. WFN often aligns with the local district's bus cancellations – for example, if the Sudbury area school buses are cancelled due to weather, WFN will also cancel its off-reserve route. A decision is typically made by 6:00–6:30 AM and no later than 7:00 AM on whether to cancel morning bus service.

If buses are cancelled, the Education Department will notify families via direct calls/texts to parents. The notice will specify the cancellation is for the entire day. Parents who still drive their children to school are then responsible for pick-up in the afternoon. Schools that WFN students attend are also notified of the cancellation.

If weather or road conditions deteriorate while school is in session, the Education Department will decide, in coordination with the schools, whether to run buses early or delay afternoon departures. For instance, if a sudden winter storm hits midday, WFN may issue an early bus pick-up to return students home before conditions worsen. Parents are alerted of any early departures or if buses might be significantly delayed. If conditions are deemed too unsafe to run at all, students will be kept at school under supervision and parents must arrange pick-up when safe to do so.

8.2 – Emergency Protocols (Breakdowns, Accidents, Medical)

WFN has protocols to handle on-road emergencies:

If a bus breaks down or cannot continue due to mechanical issues, the Driver will immediately contact the Education Department and, if needed, emergency services. The Driver will keep students on the bus or evacuate to a safe location if there is an immediate hazard. WFN will dispatch a spare bus or vehicle to the site as soon as possible to pick up the students and continue the route. Parents will be notified if a significant delay or change in drop-off arrangements will occur due to the breakdown.

In the event of a collision or accident, the driver's first responsibility is student safety. The driver will assess injuries and call 911 for any needed medical or police assistance. The Education Department is contacted as soon as possible. Minor incidents will still be reported, and the bus will not continue until authorities give clearance. WFN staff will notify all parents of students on the bus about the incident and the well-being of their children as soon as accurate information is available. An incident report will be completed by the driver detailing the accident for WFN records.

If a student has a medical emergency on the bus, the driver will pull over safely and administer first aid as trained, while contacting emergency responders and the Education Office. Protocols for known conditions will be followed. The bus will not proceed until the situation is stabilized or emergency personnel allow.

Occasionally, buses might have to turn back or seek shelter due to sudden weather changes or road closures. The driver will inform the Education Department and either return students to the starting point or wait in a safe area. Parents and schools will be alerted to the delay or change in plan. Highway closures in the region are monitored; if a known road closure will prevent bus travel, WFN will cancel or reroute the bus as needed.

8.3 – School Closure and Highway Closure Response

If off-reserve schools close for the day (e.g. due to weather, power outage, etc.), WFN will also cancel its transportation for those schools. Parents should have contingency plans for such events.

8.4 – Driver Authority and Drills

During any emergency or inclement weather situation on the route, the driver has full authority to make immediate decisions to protect student safety. Students are expected to cooperate fully with any emergency instructions.

At least once per winter season, WFN drivers review cold weather safety with students; for example, reminding them to dress warmly and what to do if the bus is late. Bus evacuation drills are conducted at least annually so that students know how to safely exit the bus in an emergency.

9 – Transportation to Extracurricular Events or Specialized Programs

9.1 – After-School and Cultural Programs

The primary focus of WFN's transportation resources is daily to-and-from school service. Transportation for extracurricular activities, field trips, sports, or cultural events is supported when possible but must be arranged in advance. WFN's policy prioritizes daily instructional transportation; use of school buses for other purposes requires approval from the Education Department

Charter for School Events: If students are participating in off-reserve school sports games, academic competitions, or field trips that occur during or immediately after school hours, WFN may provide bus service if a band vehicle and driver are available. Typically, the organizing body should coordinate with WFN well ahead of time. Drivers will be paid a flat rate or overtime for charters beyond normal routes as per WFN's employment policies. The Education Department will determine if costs will be covered by WFN or if the organizing body is to reimburse.

In some cases, WFN may run a late vehicle to bring students home from after-school tutoring, sports practice, or cultural programs. Such services depend on demand and funding. For example, if a significant number of WFN students stay late at school for extracurriculars, a late route could be arranged on specific. A minimum number of riders might be required to justify a late run. If no late bus is available, parents are responsible for picking up their children from after-school activities.

WFN encourages student participation in on-the-land learning and cultural camps. Transportation to community-run cultural education sites can be provided by the band's vehicles if scheduled. WFN will allocate buses for such programs provided it does not conflict with regular school transportation; often these activities are planned on non-school hours or weekends. All usual safety rules apply during these trips.

9.3 – Supervision and Insurance

Generally, the band-owned buses are for student educational use only . They are not available for private charters or unrelated community events without explicit permission. However, for community-oriented youth events, the Education Department may approve use of the bus. In such cases, all standard bus policies remain in effect. The bus will not be used for any activity that could interfere with its primary role of daily student transportation.

For any trips outside of normal daily routes, appropriate supervision must be present. Staff or parent volunteers should ride the bus to help the driver maintain order during extracurricular trips. This is especially required if the trip occurs outside normal school hours or off the regular route.

When buses are used for school-sanctioned extracurricular outings, they are covered under WFN's insurance. External groups using the bus may be required to obtain additional liability coverage or indemnify the First Nation, to protect WFN from claims arising during those events. This ensures that any use of the bus beyond regular routes is still conducted safely and responsibly.

10 – Policy for Students with Special Needs

The suitability of transportation arrangements for special needs students is reviewed regularly. If a student's condition changes or if issues arise, adjustments will be made. WFN may seek additional funding if significant extra costs are required to meet a child's transportation needs.

10.1 – Inclusive Transportation Services

WFN is committed to providing transportation for students with disabilities or special needs in a manner that is safe and accommodating. All students, regardless of physical or developmental needs, are eligible for transport, and the service will be adapted as necessary to meet those needs.

Drivers and any bus monitors will receive guidance or training on how to assist students with special needs. This may include learning safe techniques for securing wheelchairs, understanding how to respond to a medical emergency, or behavior management strategies for students on the autism spectrum. The confidentiality and dignity of students with special needs are respected at all times.

10.2 – Accessibility and Equipment

If a student uses a wheelchair or other mobility aid and cannot board the standard bus, WFN will arrange appropriate transportation. Options may include a wheelchair-accessible van or bus or contracting a specialized transportation service. In cases where a para-bus service or modified vehicle is needed, the Education Department will work with the family to put this in place. The aim is to ensure the student gets to and from school with minimal discomfort or disruption.

10.3 – Individual Transportation Plans and Aides

Some students may require specialized equipment. WFN will provide and install any necessary safety restraints or equipment on the bus, in consultation with occupational therapists or specialists as needed. Parents should inform the Education Department of any such requirements in advance. If a student needs a personal aide or monitors during transit, the Education Department will coordinate to have an Educational Assistant or Bus Monitor ride with the student.

Drivers and any bus monitors will receive guidance or training on how to assist students with special needs. This may include learning safe techniques for securing wheelchairs, understanding how to respond to a medical emergency, or behavior management strategies for students on the autism spectrum. The confidentiality and dignity of students with special needs are respected at all times.

For students whose needs are complex, the Education Department may develop a transportation plan. This plan could detail any accommodations and emergency instructions. Parents, school staff, and WFN transportation staff collaborate to create these plans.

10.4 – Routine, Flexibility, and Funding

Recognizing that many students with special needs thrive on routine, the transportation schedule for such students will be kept as consistent as possible. Drivers will be informed of any techniques that help the student. Changes in driver or vehicle will be communicated to the family in advance whenever possible to prepare the student.

If necessary for a student's condition, WFN will provide door-to-door pickup/drop-off. For example, a child with a physical disability might receive doorstep pick-up service as an accommodation, rather than waiting at a standard stop, to ensure their safety.

The Education Department works closely with schools to address any transportation-related issues for special needs students. If a student has an aide or nurse at school, discussion will occur on whether support is needed on the bus. Additionally, if a student has an Individualized Health Plan, copies of relevant parts may be provided to the driver, so they know warning signs or interventions.

10– Record Keeping and Reporting Requirements

11.1 – Driver Logs and Attendance

Bus drivers must keep daily logbooks of their pre-trip inspections, routes, and any notable events. These logs include departure and arrival times and checklist sign-offs for safety inspections. The Education Department reviews these logs periodically to ensure compliance with inspection routines and on-time performance.

Drivers are encouraged to maintain an informal ridership list to note which students are on the bus each morning and afternoon. In practice, this might be done by visual confirmation, but it ensures that no child is left behind at school or on the bus. In emergency situations, having a roster of bus riders is important. The Education Department may collect ridership data for planning and funding purposes.

11.2 – Incident, Accident, and Emergency Reports

Any time there is a significant discipline issue, safety concern, or injury, the driver must complete an Incident Report Form and submit it to the Education Department. These forms detail what happened, who was involved, and what actions were taken. The Education Department files these reports and also forwards relevant copies to the school principal if the incident overlaps with school discipline.

In the event of a bus accident or any emergency, a formal report must be filed as soon as possible after the situation is stabilized. It will include details of the event, responses taken, and outcomes. The Education Department retains these reports and shares them with Chief and Council and other agencies as required.

11.3 – Maintenance and Certification Tracking

WFN keeps a maintenance file for each vehicle. This includes records of all mechanical work, part replacements, and the mandatory safety inspection certificates. Having these records up to date is not only a safety practice but also required for compliance with transportation regulations. Any time a bus is serviced, the date, mechanic's notes, and next due service date are logged. Drivers also report maintenance issues in writing, and those reports are appended to the vehicle's file with notes on corrective action taken.

The Education Department maintains copies of each driver's credentials and notes on training sessions attended. Renewal dates are tracked so that no driver is allowed to operate with expired qualifications.

11.4 – Privacy and Retention Policies

The official route maps and schedules are kept on file. If any changes are made, the updated route plan is documented. This is useful for year-over-year planning and when evaluating the efficiency of transportation services.

As part of educational funding requirements, WFN may need to report transportation data to funders. This can include number of students transported, total kilometers driven, number of routes, and costs incurred. The Education Department is responsible for compiling these statistics from the daily logs and financial records. Accuracy in daily record-keeping facilitates these reporting duties.

Records that include personal information about students or staff (such as incident reports with student names, or driver personnel files) are kept confidential and secured in the Education Office. Access is limited to authorized personnel. The policy follows relevant privacy laws and Band policies regarding how long records are kept and when they are disposed of.

Transportation logs and incident reports are typically kept for at least the full school year, and often longer in case of any follow-up or review. Serious incident reports may be kept on file indefinitely as part of the student's or program's record. Vehicle maintenance records are maintained for the life of the vehicle.

11.5 – Information Gathering Purpose and Limitations

The WFN Education Department collects essential information from parents and guardians—such as student names, addresses, emergency contacts, health needs, special accommodations, authorized pickup persons, and custody arrangements. This is to ensure safe, effective school bus transportation; this information is used solely for route planning, emergency preparedness, and service delivery, and is accessed only by authorized Education staff or emergency personnel when necessary. All records are securely stored digitally on a PHIPPA-compliant server and physically under lock and key. Families are responsible for keeping their information up to date, as outdated details may compromise student safety. Updates can be made by contacting the Education Department at any time.

12 – Insurance and Liability

12.1 – Vehicle and Public Liability Insurance

The policy clarifies that WFN, as the operator of the bus system, carries liability for authorized transportation activities. In case of an accident or injury on the bus, the First Nation's insurance will respond to cover medical costs or damages. WFN's liability insurance also covers the actions of its employees while performing their duties. However, if an incident is caused by a student's or parent's negligence, the First Nation may seek restitution as noted in the discipline section.

Parents are generally not asked to sign a liability waiver for bus service since it is a provided service, but they are expected to acknowledge the inherent risk of transportation. WFN is not liable for any incidents that occur when students are outside the care of the bus service, for instance, at the bus stop before pickup or after drop-off. Parents or guardians are responsible for their children's safety at those times. The First Nation's duty of care begins when the child steps onto the bus and ends when they are safely dropped off at the designated stop.

12.4 – Third-Party and Extracurricular Liability

This policy aligns with the Ontario Highway Traffic Act, the CSA D250 school bus standards, and any other relevant legislation. WFN acknowledges that failure to maintain insurance or comply with safety laws could result in liability or loss of service, so strict adherence is expected. The Education Department will annually review insurance coverage and update it.

13 – Administrative Oversight and Appeals Process

13.1 – Policy Governance and Leadership

The WFN Education Department is responsible for implementing and enforcing this transportation policy. A designated Fleet Organizer oversees daily operations: route planning, vehicle maintenance scheduling, and addressing concerns. This policy is formally approved and endorsed by WFN's Chief and Council, indicating leadership's support and providing authority for its enforcement. Major changes to the policy or funding allocations for transportation are reviewed by Chief and Council or the Education Committee.

13.2 – Coordination with Schools and Boards

The Education Director serves as liaison with provincial school boards and schools that WFN students attend. They handle agreements such as student transportation components of Education Service Agreements or the Reciprocal Education Approach for off-reserve schooling. They ensure that off-reserve schools share calendars and inclement weather decisions in a timely manner. Regular communication is maintained so that any school-side issues are collaboratively addressed.

13.3 – Budgeting and Policy Review

Administrative oversight includes managing the transportation budget, fuel purchases, vehicle insurance, driver salaries, and maintenance costs. The Education Department applies receives and manages any specific transportation funding through the Anishinabek Education System. Annual budget reports are provided to Council; where shortfalls exist or additional needs arise, the administration will prepare proposals for leadership to consider.

This transportation policy is to be reviewed and updated at regular intervals. Reviews will consider any new safety regulations, community growth, and feedback from parents and drivers. Amendments to the policy are approved by Chief and Council to become effective. The Education Department will circulate any changes in writing to all stakeholders.

13.4 – Complaint Resolution and Appeals

If parents or students have complaints or issues regarding transportation, they should first contact the Education Director to discuss the issue. The policy encourages informal resolution through discussion. The Education Director will investigate the complaint, which may involve speaking with the driver, other students, or school staff, and then respond to the parent with the outcome or resolution plan.

In the event that a parent or guardian is not satisfied with the resolution of a transportation-related complaint or a disciplinary decision, they have the right to appeal. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the Education Director or the Chair of the Education Committee within a specified timeframe. The written appeal should state the issue and desired resolution. The Education Department in conjunction with the Executive Director will review the case. For example, Wahnapiatae First Nation's policy allows a parent to appeal to a higher process if a complaint is not resolved at the staff level. Similarly, WFN convenes a review meeting upon receiving an appeal.

During an appeal review, the parent/guardian may present their concerns, and relevant parties may be consulted. The review body will then make a decision to uphold, overturn, or modify the original decision. For instance, if appealing a bus suspension, the committee could decide to reinstate the student early with conditions, or confirm the suspension was appropriate. The outcome of the appeal is communicated in writing to the parent, typically within a set period. This decision is final and binding.

If a member wishes to levy a complaint directly against a staff member, they can do so through the Formal Administrative Complaint Process Policy.

13.5 – Community Engagement and Transparency

The transportation program operates with transparency to the community. Summaries of ridership, incidents, and successes may be reported in community meetings or newsletters to keep members informed. If there are chronic challenges, the Education Department will inform leadership and work toward solutions, seeking community input if appropriate.

The Education Department works with other WFN departments when needed, for example, with Public Works on road maintenance, or with Finance on procurement of new buses. In emergency situations affecting the whole community, the transportation resources might be called upon, so emergency planning with the Band's Emergency Management is also in place.

This policy is tailored to WFN's context. If unique situations arise, the administration has the flexibility to adapt procedures in keeping with the policy's intent. Any significant adaptation is documented and, if permanent, incorporated into the policy at the next update.

All parents or guardians and students are provided a copy of this policy outline or a handbook version of it at the start of the school year. They are required to acknowledge that they have read and understood the rules and procedures. Drivers and school staff also receive the policy to ensure a common understanding. This collaborative approach, involving families, drivers, schools, and leadership underpins the successful and safe transportation of WFN's students each day.

14 – Appendix

WFN's Transportation Code of Conduct

All students using Wahnapiatae First Nation (WFN) school transportation are expected to follow this Code of Conduct. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right, and unsafe or inappropriate behavior may result in the suspension or loss of this service.

Safety and Behaviour Expectations

- Arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pickup time.
- Remain at a safe distance from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Board and exit the bus in an orderly manner, using the handrail.
- Stay seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
- Seatbelts must be worn if the bus is equipped with them.
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to yourself and out of the aisles.
- Speak quietly and use respectful language; no yelling or swearing.
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the bus.
- Respect the driver and follow their instructions at all times.
- Do not distract the driver or engage in horseplay.
- Vandalism, graffiti, or damage to the bus will result in disciplinary action and families may be billed for repair costs.
- Keep windows closed unless given permission; do not throw anything out the windows.
- No smoking, vaping, lighters, matches, or illegal substances are allowed on the bus.
- No weapons, sharp objects, or hazardous items are permitted.
- Keep noise levels low, especially near railway crossings and intersections.
- No Scents are to be worn by students.

At Drop-Off

- Younger students (JK–SK) must be met by an authorized adult or older sibling at drop-off.
- If no authorized person is present, the student will remain on the bus, and the Education Office will be contacted.

Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

Purpose:

This form confirms that students and parents/guardians have received, read, and understand the WFN Student Transportation Code of Conduct. Signing this form is required for all students accessing WFN-provided school transportation.

Responsibilities:

By signing below, the student and parent/guardian agree to the following:

- I/we have reviewed the Student Transportation Code of Conduct.
 - I/we understand that riding the bus is a privilege and not a right.
 - I/we will support safe and respectful behaviour on the school bus.
 - I/we understand that violations of the Code may result in suspension or loss of bus privileges.
 - I/we agree to keep our transportation-related information (e.g., address, contact info, medical needs) up to date with the WFN Education Department.
-

Signatures:

I acknowledge and agree to the terms of the WFN Student Transportation Code of Conduct:

- Student Signature: _____ Date: _____
- Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Acknowledgement of Discipline

Purpose:

This form documents that a student and their parent/guardian have been notified of a disciplinary incident related to school transportation and understand the reason, consequence, and next steps. This form helps ensure a clear and fair process while supporting safe transportation for all students.

Incident Details:

- Date of Incident: _____
- Location (on route, at stop, etc.): _____
- Description of Behaviour: _____

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment:

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of this transportation-related discipline and the reasons for it. I understand that repeated or severe violations may result in loss of transportation privileges.

- Parent/Guardian Name: _____
 - Signature: _____ Date: _____
-
- _____

Student Acknowledgment:

I understand the reason for this discipline and agree to follow the WFN Transportation Code of Conduct going forward.

- Student Signature: _____ Date: _____
-
- _____

Completed forms are retained by the WFN Education Department for recordkeeping.

Child Abandonment Report

Purpose:

This form documents an incident where a student was not received by an authorized adult at their designated bus stop. Wahnapiatae First Nation considers this a serious safety concern. Multiple occurrences may result in a temporary or permanent suspension of bus privileges.

Student Information:

- Student Name: _____
 - Grade: _____
 - School: _____
 - Bus Route / Driver Name: _____
-

Incident Details:

- Date of Incident: _____
- Drop-Off Location: _____
- Was the student met by an authorized adult? ☐ No ☐ Yes (late)
- Age of Student: _____
- Immediate Actions Taken (select all that apply):
 - ☐ Student remained on the bus
 - ☐ Education Department contacted
 - ☐ Parent/Guardian contacted
 - ☐ Emergency contact contacted
 - ☐ Student returned to school
 - ☐ Emergency services notified (if applicable)
- Driver's or Staff Notes:

Child Abandonment Report

Policy Reminder:

WFN requires that JK–SK students must be met by an authorized adult or designated caregiver at drop-off. If no one is present, the student will not be left unattended. Repeated failure to meet a child may result in disciplinary action, suspension of bus service, or referral to child safety authorities.

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment:

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I was informed that my child was not met at the bus stop on the date noted above.
 - I understand this poses a serious risk to my child's safety.
 - I understand that repeated incidents may lead to suspension of transportation services.
 - Parent/Guardian Name: _____
 - Signature: _____ Date: _____
 - Preferred Contact Number: _____
-

Education Department Use Only:

- Date Logged: _____
 - Action Taken / Notes:
-
-
-
-

Copy retained by WFN Education Department.