

## **Guidelines for Supporting Students with Disabilities While Riding School Buses**

These guidelines clarify procedures involving the roles and responsibilities of Educational Assistants in supporting students riding school buses who are in a wheelchair, who require a Student Safety Seat, and/or those who require adult assistance to board and depart the bus safely.

The procedures detailed below meet safety requirements, and are the most appropriate to ensure the safety of all students riding the bus.

These guidelines shall be shared with all School Administrative Teams, the Transportation Department, System Program teachers, Supports for Students consultants and Human Resources.

### **Students in Wheelchairs**

The bus driver will operate the wheelchair lift.

The bus driver is responsible for loading, unloading, and securing any students in wheelchairs.

Educational Assistants will hold the wheelchair for additional safety as the lift is going up or down.

The parent/guardian is responsible for

1. Escorting the student to the bus, observing and ensuring that the student is safely in his/her seat.
2. Meeting the bus on its return trip.

The Educational Assistants are responsible for

1. Greeting, supervising and assisting the students as they arrive at school.
2. Escorting the students to the bus at dismissal and waiting with the students until the driver is ready to depart.

**At no time should students be unsupervised or left unattended. This includes times when the bus driver is loading/unloading wheelchairs.**

### **Students who require Student Safety Seats (such as BESI, four point safety harness, Q-Straints)**

The parent/guardian is responsible for:

1. Escorting the student onto the bus in the morning and securing the SSS.
2. Meeting the bus on its return trip and removing the student from the SSS at the end of the day.

The Educational Assistant is responsible for

1. Releasing the student from the Student Safety Seat upon arrival at school in the morning.
2. Escorting the student at dismissal onto the bus and securing the student in the Student Safety Seat. The bus driver will ensure that the student is properly secured.

### **Students not requiring Student Safety Seats**

The parent/guardian is responsible for:

1. Escorting the student on to the bus in the morning.
2. Meeting the bus on its return trip at the end of the day.

It is the School's responsibility to ensure one Educational Assistant remains with the students on the bus until the bus operator has indicated he/she is ready to depart the school.