

761—911.10(321) Operating policies. School transportation services provided by regional transit systems must be designed to maximize the safety of student riders and must, at a minimum, meet the following standards:

911.10(1) Passenger loading/unloading. Unless prohibited by law, students transported in vehicles other than school buses must be loaded and unloaded on the same side of the street as their residence or other origin or destination. Students may be released only to the custody of a designated school official, parent or guardian, employee of the department of human services, or law enforcement official, unless other arrangements are made in advance.

911.10(2) Student passenger behavior and discipline policy. Each contract for school transportation service must include a policy relating to the behavior of students while they ride in vehicles. The regional transit system or school must provide instruction to all drivers assigned to school transportation service relative to the content and application of the policy. If a student is removed from a vehicle for one or more policy violations, the student may be released only to the custody of a school official, parent or guardian, employee of the department of human services or a law enforcement officer. In all cases, the school must be notified immediately of any such disciplinary action, and a written report must be filed with the school describing the circumstances resulting in the removal.

911.10(3) Standing prohibited. Under no circumstances shall a student be permitted or required to stand while a vehicle is in motion. Every student must be provided an appropriate seat at all times.

911.10(4) Stops at rail crossings. Every driver must make a complete stop before crossing the tracks of any railroad crossing, in accordance with Iowa Code section 321.343. In the case of a bus or school bus, the driver must open the service entrance door, look and listen for approaching trains and proceed to cross the tracks only when the driver can do so safely. No stop is needed where the crossing is posted with an exempt sign.

911.10(5) Accident reporting. If a driver is involved in a collision or other incident causing or having a potential to cause injuries to students, the regional transit system must immediately notify the school of the incident. The regional transit system must file all accident reports required by law. In addition, the regional transit system must complete a school bus accident report on a form prescribed by the department of education and submit it to the school or the department of education.

911.10(6) Passenger instruction/evacuation drills. Each school must provide students assigned to school transportation service with school bus passenger safety instruction and emergency evacuation drills at least twice each school year. These evacuation drills must involve a vehicle of the same type used to provide the school transportation service.

911.10(7) Special training for drivers carrying students with disabilities. Each school contracting for school transportation services for a student with one or more disabilities must provide the regional transit system with information on any special needs of the student and, if necessary, provide the assigned driver with appropriate information and training on how to appropriately respond to the needs of the student during transit and in the event of an emergency.

911.10(8) Posttrip inspection. After each trip that had students on board, the driver must perform a posttrip inspection of the interior of the vehicle used to transport the students.