

## Administrative Procedure 563 - Cargo on School Buses

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### Background

The Division's school busing services recognizes the need to support school programming needs and to ensure school bus operations are consistent with Alberta Transportation requirements. The Division has developed the following procedures for transportation of cargo, including large items or bags (such as hockey bags) on a school bus.

### Procedures

1. As a first preference, students and parents are to consider the size, weight and shape of an item before it is loaded on a school bus. The safety of the students and driver are the first priority.
2. Where possible, students are to transport items in two (2) or more smaller bags instead of attempting to use larger bags on school buses. The use of smaller bags, which store under the seats, provides the best and safest solution for both the students and the driver on the bus.
3. Where room is available on our buses, large items and cargo may be transported under the following conditions:
  - 3.1. The item(s) must be able to be carried on and off the bus by the student. The student must be able to lift the bag up and over the seats to carry the item to a safe location away from direct student contact and towards the back of the bus. Another student may assist if possible.
  - 3.2. Items must not be stored in a row with an emergency window and must not block the aisle way or rear emergency door. Wherever possible, there is to be an empty row between the large items and students. Empty rows are not needed between rows of items, only between students and items.
  - 3.3. No child may sit in the seat with the large item or across the aisle from the large item. Items may be situated across from each other.
  - 3.4. Items are to be stored toward the back of the bus, and students are to sit toward the front of the bus.
  - 3.5. Items such as skates are to have guards, wherever possible and must be stored safely inside of a bag. Any hard items, wherever possible, are to be stored securely within a sealed bag so they cannot become dislodged and become a projectile.
4. Large cargo and items which do not fit safely under the seat:

- 4.1. Must be stored securely and tightly in the knee space between the bottom of the seat and the seat front. The item must be lodged and packed in such a way that it will not become dislodged when the bus is in motion and does not cause damage to the seat.
  - 4.2. Must be stored in an empty seat (maximum two bags/items per seat, provided they do not obstruct the aisle way).
  - 4.3. Must not be higher than the seat back (at eye level to the seat back).
  - 4.4. If the above provisions are not possible, only items small enough to fit on the floor space under a child's seat may be transported.
5. Hockey Sticks
- 5.1. Wherever possible, hockey sticks are to be secured in the area with the rest of the bags, away from students.
  - 5.2. They are to be secured in such a way that the blade of the stick is angled behind the back seat of the bus or in between the front guard and the driver's seat so that it cannot come into contact with students.
  - 5.3. The handle of the stick is to be secured between the side of the student seat and the windows.
  - 5.4. If the stick cannot be secured in this way, it cannot be carried on the bus.
6. If items shift and block the aisle way, the driver must stop the bus in a safe location and re-secure the item (or request the responsible student to re-secure the item). Cleaning seats and any damage to the seats are the responsibility of the students, and parents will be responsible for damages.
7. Students who meet a feeder bus need to ensure there is sufficient room for the same item(s) on the feeder bus as well.
8. If bus drivers are unsure whether an item is stored securely, they are to contact the Director of Transportation Services for clarification. Items outside these procedures may be considered on an exception basis and must be pre-approved by the Director of Transportation Services for transport.

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Reference: Section 4, 11, 33, 36, 37, 59, 59.1, 68, 197, 222, 225 Education Act  
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act  
Traffic Safety Act  
Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation 121/2009  
School Transportation Regulation (A.R. 96/2019)  
Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation 304/2002  
Vehicle Equipment Regulation 122/2009

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