

# MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ALASKA SCHOOL BUSES 2017 REVISED EDITION

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to specify school bus minimum standards which modify or supplement the *National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition*. When using this document, you must have in hand the national specifications referred to above.

The *Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses, 2017 Revised Edition*, contains the production and equipment standards required for school buses that transport students to and from school. In addition to national specifications, the *Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses* must comply with applicable *Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)* and other state and federal standards applicable to school buses on the date of manufacture.

The *Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses, 2017 Revised Edition*, is applicable to school buses manufactured on or after January 1, 2018. Within one year after date of publication of each revised edition of the *National School Transportation Specifications for School Buses*, it is the intent of the Department of Education & Early Development to review the Alaska Standards and revise as appropriate to conform to public input, national standards, and statutory/regulatory requirements of Alaska.

The *Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses, 2017 Revised Edition*, is organized into three distinct sections. The definitions of types of school buses are found on pages 342-343 of the *National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition*.

The **Bus Body and Chassis Specifications** section sets the standards applicable to school bus bodies and chassis manufactured for, or used in, Alaska.

The **Specially Equipped School Bus Specifications** section establishes standards for buses used for transporting students with special needs.

The **Alaska Bus Equipment Specifications** section establishes auxiliary equipment requirements for buses transporting students in Alaska.

Copies of the *National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition*, are available from:

NASDPTS  
5307 Indigo Way  
Middleton, WI 53562  
Fax: (608) 827-6355

Or download from internet site:

<http://www.ncstonline.org/>

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## BUS BODY AND CHASSIS SPECIFICATIONS

*The following Alaska Standards modify or supplement the **Bus Body and Chassis Specifications**, found on pages 29 through 70 of the National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition.*

### Certification

*Replace **Certification**, page 34 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**The supplying vendor or dealer shall supply original to the District and copy to the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Pupil Transportation, certification in writing that its product meets Alaska Minimum Standards on items not covered by the FMVSS certification requirements of 49 CFR Part 567.**

**A. A permanent label or metal plate shall be secured and readily visible in the driver's compartment upon which states the bus meets minimum standards for Alaska, un-laden weight, GVWR, and the manufacturer's maximum possible rated seating capacity of the bus.**

### Emergency Exits

*Add **Emergency Exits C.5.**, page 43 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**C.5. Each bus shall have a red or black arrow in the inside and a black arrow on the outside of the emergency door showing direction of throw of handle.**

### Exhaust

*Add **Exhaust C.1.**, page 44 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**C.1. The exhaust tail pipe may be extended beyond the rear bumper and vertically, to exhaust above the roof line of the bus, and must be shielded or insulated.**

### Floors

*Add to **Floors D.**, page 46 of the National Specifications, the following:*

**D. The fuel tank access plate shall be insulated.**

*Add **Floors E.**, page 46 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**E. The floor shall have an overlay of 5-ply plywood 5/8 inch minimum (1/2" minimum in Type A buses,) marine-grade, or pressure-treated plywood. Edges of wood shall be located no less than 1/4" from sides of bus to allow for expansion and contraction. The wood and the steel**

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shall be bonded to prevent accumulation of moisture on the top surface of the steel floor and under the surface of the wood floor.

## Fuel System

*Add to Fuel System A., page 46 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**A. Fuel tank(s).** Each tank shall be filled from and vented to the outside of the passenger compartment. A fuel filler “bucket” shall be present on all types of buses. The filler bucket shall be designed similarly to the illustrations in Appendix A of the Minimum Standards for Alaska School Buses 2017 Revised Edition.

## Heating and Air Conditioning Systems

*Replace Heating System A.4, page 47 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**A.4.** The heating system shall be capable of maintaining the ambient temperature throughout the bus of not less than 45 degrees Fahrenheit during average minimum January temperature as established by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Weather Service (NOAA), for the area in which the vehicle is to be operated. The inside temperature is to be measured midway back in the bus at shoulder height of seated school children.

**A.4.A.** It is the sole responsibility of the vendor to meet all requirements in line item 4 under Heating and Air Conditioning Systems of this document.

**A.4.B.** It is the sole responsibility of the contractor/district to supply the vendor with all pertinent information pertaining to the average weather conditions in the service areas in which the bus will be operated.

**A.4.C.** New heating technology must be approved in advance by the department.

## Identification

*Replace Identification B.1, page 52 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**B.1.** Ownership identification with minimum five inch high lettering on the beltline or directly below the windows on each side of the bus.

*Replace Identification C.6, page 52 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**C.6.** There shall be a sign located below the rear window of the bus in area(s) visible to the approaching motorist, which reads STOP ON FLASHING RED. "STOP" shall be printed on the rear of the bus in letters at least 8 inches high. "ON FLASHING RED" shall be printed below "STOP," in letters at least 4 inches high. The sign shall be red

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letters on white reflective background.

## Insulation

*Replace Insulation (Optional), page 54 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**A. All space between the inner and outer panels in the roof, sidewalls, body posts and roof channel cavities, including front and rear body cavities, shall be filled with fiberglass or other insulating material which will meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 302 where applicable. The insulation shall be firmly installed so it will retain its original position.**

## Lamps and Signals

*Add to Lamps and Signals A.1, page 55 of the National Specifications, the following:*

**A.1. A loading light shall be installed, outside and to the rear, or above the service door to illuminate the area in front of the door. The step-well light and loading light shall be illuminated by a service door-operated switch, to illuminate only when the service door is open.**

*Replace Lamps and Signals F., page 57 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**F. Roof Mounted Strobe Light**

**1. A strobe light shall be mounted on the roof of the school bus, and meet all NSTS&P standards J845, with a 4 inch minimum height. The light shall be located on the center line of the roof no less than four (4) feet from the rear of the bus and not to exceed one third (1/3) the body length forward from the rear of the roof edge. The light must be in operation when students are on the bus.**

## Stirrup Steps

*Replace Stirrup Steps, page 65 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**If the windshield and lamps are not easily accessible from the ground, there shall be at least one folding stirrup step or recessed foothold and suitably located handles on each side of the front of the body for easy accessibility for cleaning. Steps are permitted in or on the front bumper in lieu of the stirrup steps, if the windshield and lamps are easily accessible for cleaning from that position.**

## Stop Signal Arm

*Add to Stop Signal Arm, page 65 of the National Specifications, the following:*

**Stop Signal Arm shall be required.**

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## Storage Compartment

*Replace Storage Compartment (Optional), page 65 of the National Specifications, with the following:*

**A storage container for tools, tire chains, and/or tow chains shall be located on the right side of the bus outside the passenger compartment, whenever possible. If inside, it shall be fastened to the floor at rear of bus and have a cover with a positive fastening device.**

## Ventilation

*Add Ventilation B.3, page 68 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**B.3. Auxiliary window fans. Bus Types B, C, and D shall have two fans, each fan shall be operated by its own switch and not to be placed so as to interfere with vision. Bus Type A will only require one fan.**

## Windows

*Add Windows D., page 69 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**D. The following windows shall be thermo pane:**

- 1. Window to left of driver. OEM factory standard is acceptable for Type A, Type B, and Type C cutaway buses.**
- 2. All windows in service door.**

## **SPECIALLY EQUIPPED SCHOOL BUS SPECIFICATIONS**

The following Alaska Standards modify or supplement the Specifications for Specially Equipped School Buses found on pages 71 through 81 of the *National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition*.

## Communications

See Alaska Bus Equipment Specifications.

## Special Light

*Add Special Light A., page 78 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**A. An exterior light shall be installed on exterior of bus, within 12 inches of the wheelchair lift door opening for the illumination of outside the bus.**

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## ALASKA BUS EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

The following Alaska Standards supplement the Specifications for Bus Chassis, Bus Body and Specially Equipped School Buses found on pages 29 through 81 of the *National School Transportation Specifications & Procedures, May 2015 Revised Edition*, and in the preceding sections of this *Alaska Minimum Standards* document.

### General

Equipment listed in this section is required to be on each bus used for transporting school children before the bus is placed into service. However, the nature of this equipment is such that it can be easily moved from a retired bus to a new one, and may not need to be purchased for each replacement bus. School bus manufacturers are not required to provide this equipment unless the items are specified in the purchase order.

### Communications

**All school buses shall be equipped with a two-way electronic voice communication system before the bus is placed into service. Systems may be provided by end-user.**

### Emergency Equipment

*Add Emergency Equipment A.3. page 41 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**A.3. Fire extinguishers shall be ABC 5 (five) pound and affixed with a current certification tag unless within first year of manufacture date code of fire extinguisher.**

*Add Emergency Equipment B.3. page 42 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

**B.3. First Aid Kit shall meet the national standard suggested contents.**

*Add Emergency Equipment C.1-3. page 42 of the National Specifications, to read as follows:*

#### **C. Body Fluid Clean-up Kit**

**1. Each bus shall have a removable moisture proof and dust proof body fluid clean-up kit mounted in an accessible place within the driver's compartment. This place shall be marked to identify its location.**

**2. Minimum contents shall include:**  
1-cardboard scraper and scoop  
1-pair latex disposable gloves  
2-packages germicidal hand wipes  
1-disposable face mask  
2-plastic bags  
2-twist ties  
3-disposable paper towels  
1-4 oz. package stabilized chlorine absorbent deodorant or equivalent.

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**3. Detailed instructions on use of contents shall accompany each kit.**

*Add to **Emergency Equipment D.**, page 42 of the National Specifications, the following:*

**D. Warning Devices**

**When flares are utilized, they must be stored in an exterior compartment and labeled accordingly.**

**Tire Chains and Tire Chocks**

**Tire chains and tire chocks are required and must be stored in a storage compartment. *Ref. Storage Compartment/Bus Body Specifications for storage.***

**Optional items: Dependent on climate, demographic, and District areas. (Including, but not limited to.)**

**Auxiliary driving lights (moose lights), auxiliary heaters, thermo pane windows in passenger area, crossing gates, drop chains, heated step treads, rear air foils, rear stop arms, and heated wiper blades.**

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**Appendix A**

**Fuel “Bucket” Illustrations**

