

POLICY
RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC SAFETY PROCEDURES

Purpose:

The Board of Trustees and the Administration strive to ensure overall safety of students, employees, and community members while on school property. The School encourages walking, bicycling, school bus, car pool, and other means of mass transit to access school property. In addition, the School is aware of and understands that traffic conditions on school property and subsequently residential streets abutting school property affect the neighborhoods' livability.

The goal of the School Traffic Safety Policy is to improve safety by affecting driver behavior and the quality of life for residents, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. In addition, it is to ensure that school traffic plans do not hinder quick response time for emergency service vehicles including fire trucks, police cars, ambulances, and large vehicles such as school buses and trucks used for providing essential municipal and school services.

The Administration's jurisdiction is the management and operations of school grounds and school owned/contracted vehicles.

All faculty and staff are responsible for following this policy and for the safe and proper transfer of students to/from home, including those who visit RI School for the Deaf through the Audiology Center. Visitors, parents, guardians, and designated caregivers are responsible for following all posted policies, regulations and guidelines for traffic safety and mitigation on and around school property.

Implementation

Enhancement of both the safety and quality of life within school zones, nearby residential neighborhoods, and on school property must be achieved through the following means listed. The following shall be enforceable at all times, but with diligence during school hours, commencing 7:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m. on days Rhode Island School for the Deaf is in session, and 7:00 am-1:30 pm for those programs occurring during summer months:

1. There are two entrances and exits to and from the campus (Hawkins Street and Virginia Street). Both require cautious driving as they lead to congested neighborhoods surrounding the School. There are several school zones in the vicinity resulting in slower posted speed limits.
**As of October 2020, the Virginia Street exit is gated and closed except to emergency vehicles.

2. Posted speed limits on campus (5 miles/hour) must be followed. Anything above this is considered speeding and is subject to police action. Our students are all deaf or hard-of-hearing and might not be aware of an approaching vehicle until the vehicle is very close. Some students have low vision. For these safety reasons, we will enforce speed limits aggressively.
3. Drivers must follow instructions given by any school-designated personnel.
4. All cars are expected to park in the lot. Visitor, reserved, and handicap parking will be clearly designated and honored.
5. Staff must park in the allocated parking area.
6. Students may not enter school earlier than 15 minutes before the start of school, when staff is available to provide proper oversight.
7. Personnel will be posted every morning outside at the school entrance crosswalk to greet students and to ensure that no vehicles drive through the crosswalk without a safety check.
8. Cars and buses will be restricted from standing or parking in the drop off/pick-up zone prior to the designated time.
9. Per RI State regulation, no idling is allowed on school property in proximity of entrances and exits, as posted.
10. Buses must park in the designated bus lot, and students are to be escorted to the school door, where staff is available to greet them. For those authorized students who require drop off and pick up close to school door, due to ambulatory needs, those vehicles must park to the right of the entrance well beyond the entrance cross walk. **During COVID in-person arrival and dismissal, buses may drive up to the designated entrance nearest to the students' assigned PODs.
11. To prevent unnecessary traffic back-ups or delays, students should disembark or embark in an expeditious and safe manner on the passenger side of any vehicle, never the driver's side.
12. Drivers in pick up lanes should not exit their vehicles while waiting in the queue.
13. Faculty, staff, parents or passersby should not engage in conversation while in the pick up/drop off lane. Traffic and safety are the primary concerns for faculty and staff outside at arrival and dismissal. If a parent wishes to talk with a teacher, they should be asked to call the school office and leave a message or make an appointment.

14. When a school bus with children is present, vehicles must slow down and proceed with caution, obeying all traffic laws and speed limits.
15. RISD does not expect a child to be dismissed before the posted dismissal time. Student learning continues up to the posted dismissal time. Parents should wait patiently at dismissal. Students can take between 5-10 minutes to leave class and be ready for boarding vehicles after dismissal.
16. Illegally parked vehicles or other obstructions will be removed from traffic flow areas by the police and the owner of the vehicle or obstruction will be invoiced for the removal cost.

Road markings

Where pedestrians share the same access as vehicles, a path to mark the route on the ground is in place. Where the pedestrian route crosses the vehicular traffic, the provision of a safe road crossing is marked on the ground and with raised curb markings. Where buses, minibuses or wheelchair accessible vans are brought onto site the bus parking area is clearly marked out along with the main entrances to the school

Speed bumps

The strategic installation of raised speed humps at appropriate positions within our site is used to control the speed of vehicles.

Delivery vehicles

Deliveries should be arranged so as not to coincide with the start / end of the day nor at lunchtimes wherever possible.

Contractor's vehicles

Contractors should arrange to visit the site by appointment, and they will be informed not to arrange their arrival or departure with the start / end of the day or lunchtime.

Building works vehicles

Where there is proposed major construction, the vehicle access to the site must be discussed and agreed at the pre-contract meeting. Where possible, arrangements will be made to dedicate one particular area for construction traffic only. If this is not possible then the time the construction vehicles enter site will be agreed upon with the Assistant Director for Operations and closely supervised. The amended site access arrangements need to be recorded and communicated to all site users.

Emergency Access

If a vehicle has to be driven through the playground it will be done when the playground is free from pupils. If this is not possible due to exceptional circumstances (emergency services), then vehicles will be driven slowly through the playground whilst sounding the horn and activating their hazard warning lights to alert all in the area. A nominated staff person will clear the vehicles route in advance.

Cycles

Cyclists must dismount before entering the school entrance area and park the cycle in the cycle rack. If they have no bicycle lock, students may bring bicycles into school through the Gym doors and leave bikes in the Gym lobby.

Severe weather problems

Where the weather is poor (snow / ice) at early mornings, late afternoon or during the evening during school events, then the following will be considered: -

- That there is a safe and shoveled or salted route for traffic and cleared footpaths
- Pupils are given priority, and no vehicles will cross the site until students are safely at their destination.
- Pupils will be met by staff at vehicles if assistance is needed and circumstances are safe and appropriate.

School vehicles

Properly licensed drivers will drive school vehicles in a safe manner at all times.

In accordance with RI safety regulations, no drivers may use cell phones while driving.

No bus shall be assumed to be empty of students. Drivers are required to physically walk through the vehicle to check all seats at end of each drive before exiting the vehicle.

Car seats will be used for preschoolers and other designated students as needed, on all school trips. All students must use safety belts when buses are in motion. If a child refuses to use a seat belt, the driver will pull over until all students are safely belted in their seats.

When not in use, school vehicles must be locked both on and off-campus. Windows must be secured.

School vehicles will be serviced regularly to ensure safe and proper operation.

All school vehicles will carry a First Aid kit. Kits are to be checked and restocked on a regular basis by the School Nurse.

Each school vehicle has access to a Handicap Parking Pass to be used as needed for safe parking during field trips.

All vehicles have accident information located in the glovebox; Police must be called in the event of any accident, whether or not there is damage or injury. The Assistant Director of Facilities and Operation or the Assistant Building and Grounds Officer must also be notified.

School vehicles will be parked in rear of school property and locked in that area or in the garage at end of each school day.

The following actions are ALWAYS prohibited:

- IDLING at any entrance or exit
- PARKING IN FIRE LANES
- SPEEDING
- PARKING, STANDING, OR WAITING to drop off or pick up students in designated bus lanes
- DRIVING THROUGH A PEDESTRIAN ROUTE WHEN STUDENTS ARE ARRIVING OR AT DISMISSAL
- JAYWALKING- Use all painted crosswalks for crossing driveways and in parking lots
Avoid illegal or reckless pedestrian crossing of a roadway or driveway
- EXITING A VEHICLE IN A NON-CURBSIDE LANE (driver's side)
- U-TURNS on school property or adjacent public ways
- DOUBLE PARKING
- BLOCKING AN INTERSECTION in a neighborhood or on school property
- DROPPING OFF OR PICKING UP PASSENGERS IN A DRIVEWAY OR ACTIVE TRAFFIC LANE
- DRIVING STUDENTS WITHOUT SEAT BELTS
- HORN HONKING, except as a warning of imminent danger

Reference:

Rhode Island Regulations for School Health Programs, Section 42

Board of Trustees: First Reading: 7/18/18

Second Reading: 8/16/18

Approved: 9/14/18