

MEMORANDUM

TO: NWABSD Board of Education
Members

DATE: April 28, 2026

NUMBER: 26-120

FR: Office of the Superintendent

SUBJECT: Approval of Proposed
Revisions to BP 4021
Drug and Alcohol Testing
for School Bus Drivers;
First Reading

STRATEGIC PLAN/BOARD GOAL:

Track 1: Operational Improvements
Initiative: Optimize Business Practices

ABSTRACT:

Board policy revisions require Board approval.

ISSUE:

At issue is to approve the first reading of the proposed revisions to BP 4021 Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers and open for public comments.

BACKGROUND AND/OR PERTINENT INFORMATION:

The Superintendent/designee presents drafts or suggestions for board policy revisions when the law changes or specific needs occur. Policy revisions shall normally be given two readings prior to adoption by the Board.

This is the first reading of the proposed revisions to BP 4021 Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers within the Personnel series.

This update clarifies that school bus driver testing may be accomplished through contracting with the transportation services provider.

The Board Policy Committee reviewed the proposed changes, recommends approval and to open for public comments.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the first reading of the proposed revisions to BP 4021 Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers as presented and open for public comments;
2. Do not approve the first reading of the proposed revisions to BP 4021 as presented;
3. Take no final action.

ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION:

The administration recommends the Board approve the first reading of the proposed revisions to BP 4021 Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers as presented and open for public comments.

BP 4021 ~~ALL PERSONNEL~~ -- DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

Note: All persons subject to commercial driver's license requirements must be tested for alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, methamphetamines, opiates (including heroin) and phencyclidine (PCP). In [AS 14.09.025](#), the Alaska Legislature enacted its own statutory requirement for testing bus drivers, which is in effect for all Alaska districts that employ bus drivers. This area, especially post-employment testing of drivers, involves constitutional issues. School districts should refer to legal counsel in designing and implementing drug testing procedures. Although the passage [AS 17.38](#) authorizes the use of marijuana under certain conditions, it explicitly recognizes the authority of employers to prohibit the use, consumption, possession, transfer, display, transportation, sale, or growing of marijuana in the workplace. [AS 17.38](#) also does not prevent employers from establishing policies that restrict the use of marijuana by employees. [AS 17.38.120\(a\)](#). In addition, as a recipient of federal funds, the district is obligated to maintain a drug-free workplace consistent with federal law, which prohibits the manufacture, sale, distribution, possession and sale of marijuana. For purposes of the district's policy and legal obligation, marijuana is prohibited.

Purpose

The Superintendent or designee shall establish and implement a drug and alcohol testing program for all bus drivers employed by the [sSchool eDistrict](#), in accordance with state and federal law. [This testing program may be accomplished through a contract or agreement with the district's transportation services contractor.](#) The purpose of the testing program shall be to help prevent accidents and injuries resulting from the misuse of drugs and alcohol by bus drivers. This program shall test drivers for the improper use of drugs and alcohol and shall include random testing. Improper use of drugs and alcohol consists of use that constitutes a federal or state criminal offense, or otherwise violates the regulations of the Department of Education and Early Development.

Prohibited conduct

No personnel employed by the [sSchool eDistrict](#) as drivers of motorized vehicles used to transport students shall report for duty requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions, or remain on duty, when the driver uses any controlled substance or has a prohibited concentration of alcohol in the driver's system. The only exception is when a driver has used a controlled substance pursuant to the instructions of a qualified physician who has advised the driver in writing that the substance does not adversely affect the driver's ability to safely operate a motorized vehicle for the transportation of students. Drivers shall provide a copy of the physician's written advice to the driver's supervisor prior to operating any motor vehicle for the [sSchool eDistrict](#).

Required Testing

Drivers shall be subject to pre-employment/pre-duty, reasonable suspicion, random, post-accident, returning to duty and follow-up alcohol and drug testing. Random alcohol testing shall be limited to the time period surrounding the performance of safety-related functions, which include just before or just after the employee performs the safety-related function for the district. Controlled substance testing may be performed at any time the driver is at work. An employee subject to this testing may not refuse to take a test when required.

[Note: Under 49 CFR Part 40, the Department of Transportation has made specimen validity testing \(SVT\) mandatory within the regulated transportation industries. Making SVT mandatory has become necessary because of the increase in products designed to adulterate specimens, which has made tampering with specimens more prevalent.](#)

Consequences for failing or refusing to take a required test

A refusal to take a required test shall be considered in violation of the employee's contractual obligations to the district and may constitute grounds for the employee's termination from employment with the district. If testing confirms prohibited alcohol concentration levels or the unauthorized presence of a controlled substance, the employee shall be removed immediately from safety-related functions in accordance with law. The district may reassign the employee to non-safety-related functions until such time as the driver complies with the requirements for returning to duty.

The Superintendent or designee retains the authority, consistent with state and federal law, to discipline or discharge any driver who is alcohol or chemically dependent and whose current use of alcohol or drugs impairs the employee's job qualifications or performance. Before a driver may be reinstated, if at all, the driver shall undergo an evaluation by a substance abuse professional, comply with any required rehabilitation and undergo a return-to-duty test with verified results.

Except as required by law or collective bargaining agreement, the district is not required to provide rehabilitation, pay for substance abuse treatment or to reinstate a driver who has failed a required drug or alcohol test. All employment decisions involving reassignment, reinstatement, termination or dismissal from employment shall be made in accordance with applicable district policies and procedures.

Records

The district shall keep and maintain testing records, and shall maintain the confidentiality of those records, in accordance with law. Testing records, and any information about false positive test results, shall not be released without the written consent of the employee. The district shall not retain records of false positive test results in the employee's employment records.

Training

The district shall take steps to ensure that supervisors receive appropriate training to administer the district's drug and alcohol testing program, and that employees receive the notifications required by law.

(cf. 4020 — [Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol Free Workplace](#))

(cf. 3514 — [Environmental Safety](#))

(cf. 4158/[4258](#)/4358 - Employee Security)

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/~~Due Process~~)

Legal Reference:

ALASKA STATUTES

[AS 14.09.025](#) Drug Testing for School Bus Drivers

[AS 17.38.120](#) Employers, driving, minors and control of property

FEDERAL LAW

Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1989

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986, as amended

International Brotherhood of Teamsters v. Dept. of Transportation, 932 F.2d 1292 (1991).

Adopted: June 09, 2004

Revised: August 30, 2023

[Revised:](#)

Northwest Arctic Borough School District