

Policy for Vandalism of a School Bus

This policy is based on the Dorchester School District Two Board of Trustees Policy Manual, policy **AR JICDA-R Code of Conduct**.

Vandalism appears twice, based on severity, under Level II – Disruptive Conduct and under Level III – Criminal Conduct.

Level II - disruptive conduct

Disruptive conduct includes those activities in which students engage that are directed against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of themselves or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings.

The administration may reclassify disorderly conduct (Level I) as disruptive conduct (Level II) if the student engages in the activity three or more times.

Acts of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- use of an intoxicant
- use or possession of tobacco products to include e-cigarettes
- use or possession of alternative medicine
- fighting
- vandalism (minor)

Level III - criminal conduct

Criminal conduct includes those activities in which students engage that result in violence to themselves or to another's person or property or pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the board.

Acts of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- assault and battery
- extortion
- bomb threat
- possession, use or transfer of dangerous weapons
- sexual offenses
- vandalism (major)

Determining severity (and which level of conduct applies) is subjective by the Transportation Department and school administration. For a school bus, any broken window or seat on which the cover is torn, cut, or punctured changes the school bus serviceability status to "Out of Service." This means the damaged component must be repaired or replaced before the bus may be used to transport students. Any writing or drawing on the seats or bus interior that cannot be removed also requires replacement or repair before further transportation of students. In any case, restitution is appropriate according to board policy, which has identical verbiage for either level of conduct:

- "restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities"

The ***Safety Rules While on the School Bus*** section of the Parent/Student Handbook spells out the consequence for damaging a school bus. It is based on the Board Policy verbiage and is consistent with bus conduct rules across the State of South Carolina. Parents receive and acknowledge receipt during school registration. Here is an excerpt:

- j. Do not damage, mark on, or deface the bus. Seat coverings must not be damaged in any manner. Students should report any bus or seat damage to the bus driver as soon as possible. If a student is found to have damaged a school bus, the student will be charged the assessed repair rate set by the State Department of Education. The student responsible for the damage will be suspended from riding the bus until restitution is made in full. Suspension will remain in place until receipt of restitution regardless of school year; that is, suspension will continue into the following school year and beyond until restitution is paid in full.

Payment installment options can be discussed and applied on a case-by-case basis and do not establish precedent for any other case.