

# **Bedford Public Schools**

## **School Bus Video Camera Policy**

### **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard student privacy while providing for their safety and security. The School Committee recognizes the use of bus cameras on school buses as an important tool in the management of the security and safety of students. Student data privacy must be maintained in accordance with all federal and state statutes.

### **SCHOOL BUSES**

Bedford Public Schools utilize digital video recording equipment in school buses for the security and safety of students and staff. Students or staff identified on video recording who are in violation of BPS policies will be subject to disciplinary action. Violations of the law will be referred to law enforcement agencies and the recorded video evidence will be provided to law enforcement agencies.

Publication in the Bedford Public Schools student handbook listed under Bus Transportation & Safety shall serve as notification to students, parents/guardians and staff that digital video surveillance exists on all school busses and that those video recordings may be used in student disciplinary proceedings. This notification includes a copy of the district's policy on bus conduct. In addition, a prominent notice is placed in each bus stating, "This bus is equipped with a video monitoring system. Your actions may be recorded."

Access to video recordings from any security camera shall be limited to school administrators and the transportation coordinator with designation by the Superintendent. However, law enforcement officials may be granted access to video recordings after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee. Additionally, in the event of an ongoing emergency in order to protect the health, welfare, and safety of all students, staff and visitors, Law Enforcement shall have immediate access to live video feed of security cameras. Law Enforcement shall notify the (Superintendent/designee) as soon as practical of the scope of such access.

Whenever conflicting accounts of a safety or disciplinary incident occurs, or if a parent or guardian disputes or challenges a bus discipline report, and the parent's child was video recorded, the school principal (and/or designee) may decide to review the recording.

Neither the parent nor guardian of the student that has been video recorded, nor the student will be allowed to view the video recording in accordance with student privacy laws, unless the student is the only subject of the recording or the building principal has obtained written permission from the parents / guardians of all other students on the video recording for them to be viewed, or if the identity of other students in the recording is otherwise protected (e.g., the image is blurred). Upon written request the school district will provide a written summary of the recorded incident(s) of a student pictured on a video to the student's parents/guardians.

The contracted bus operator will be responsible for the security of all bus digital video equipment and for the inserting and removing of video data files. When a building principal requests to view a recording, the contracted bus operator will safeguard the digital hard drive until a meeting can be arranged. Digital files retained as part of an individual student's disciplinary record shall be maintained in accordance with law and School Committee policy governing the access, review, and release of student records. All digital hard drive files will be erased/destroyed after a period of approximately two to three weeks unless they are part of an ongoing investigation or of educational significance to the District.