

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

I. Pre-Planning

- A. The superintendent of schools and the school principal shall provide, or arrange for, an in-service training program for all transportation personnel which will include bus evacuation and the school district's student transportation accident procedures.
- B. A current list of riders on each bus will be placed in all regular route busses, and duplicate lists with each student's home phone number, will be kept in the office of the school principal.

II. Accident/Incident procedures

In the event of an accident/incident or mechanical failure in which a school bus or other student transportation vehicle is involved, the driver is required to know and observe the following local procedures along with "Accident Procedures and Prevention" as outlined in the Nebraska Department of Education's Title 92 Chapter 91, 005.06. Additionally, drivers should apply good common sense to the situation.

- A. Stop the vehicle immediately, no matter how trivial or unimportant the accident may seem. If needed, stop the bus as far as possible out of the driving lane or on the shoulder of the road to prevent further danger. Do not move the bus/vehicle from the place of the incident unless authorized to do so by law enforcement or the school superintendent or his/her designee.
- B. Set parking brake, turn off ignition switch, remain calm and reassure your passengers. Be alert to the potential for fire (ruptured fuel tanks or lines) or other hazards (downed high-voltage lines). Use warning devices, such as flares and/or reflectors, where applicable.
- C. Assess if there are any injuries and what assistance is needed. Notify the base (office) immediately. Give exact location of accident, along with information about severity, injuries and hazards. This information will be passed on to the responding emergency services (police, fire, ambulance).
- D. Evaluate the scene to determine if the vehicle needs to be evacuated. All passengers should remain in the vehicle unless hazardous conditions exist that

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- E. warrant evacuation, such as fire, danger of fire or the bus is in an unsafe position. In any event, it is extremely important that injured persons are not moved unless a hazard exists that presents an imminent danger of further injury.

- F. If the bus is evacuated, evacuate at least 100 ft. from the bus making certain passengers are together in a safe and secure place. Again, check for injuries. Provide first aid if necessary and supervise the accident scene until help arrives.
- G. Protect the scene: Protect the passengers and vehicle from further accident and injuries. Protect the scene from traffic and people so that evidence is not destroyed. Under normal circumstances, the vehicle(s) involved should not be moved until law enforcement personnel advise the driver to do so. Obtain the names of all passengers on board and their seating location. When another vehicle is involved, obtain driver's name, license information, insurance information and a list of passengers, if any. If there are witnesses, get names, addresses and phone numbers.
- H. Do not release any student to anyone without the proper authorization, i.e. superintendent or designee. In making any statements, be accurate and factual, make no admission of fault, make no accusations. Do not discuss the accident with anyone other than law enforcement or the school superintendent or his/her designee.
- I. Remember: No matter how minor the accident may appear, stop the vehicle, notify proper authorities, assess injuries, assess the damage to the bus or vehicle, and make a list of all passengers on board.
- J. Remember to gather all the necessary information needed to file an accident report before leaving the scene. As soon as possible, when your responsibilities to the students have ended or have been assumed by the proper authority, fill out all required accident forms. Explain what you actually observed. Details such as weather, road conditions, time of day, and the actions of other driver(s) should be included.

III. Administrative procedures

- A. Emergency services agencies, if called, will take charge of the accident scene upon their arrival. A school district representative (the superintendent or his/her designee) with decision making authority will be dispatched to the accident scene (distance, time and severity depending) to assess the accident and assist as necessary.
- B. If the school superintendent or a designee isn't immediately available when the call comes in, the base station (office) operator will contact the school superintendent or designee immediately and relay all available information. A pre-designated telephone line should be kept open for the duration of the emergency.

- C. The superintendent, or a pre-designated person to act on behalf of the superintendent of schools if he or she would be absent, shall serve as official school spokesperson, and all calls will be referred to the district office.
- D. The school superintendent or his/her designee will dispatch a substitute bus and driver once notified, to the scene to render assistance and provide alternate transportation for students.
- E. The responsibility for the determination of injuries and potential injuries for any person involved in the accident rests with the highest appropriately trained on-scene EMS personnel. All injured and potentially injured persons (as determined by EMS personnel) will be transported to an area hospital.
- F. If it has been determined by emergency response authorities at the scene that the accident is minor in nature (little or no damage to school bus, no complaints or signs of injury), every effort will be made to avoid unnecessary transport of the children to the hospital.
- G. Based on the route and the passenger list, immediately attempt notification of the affected parents/guardians by telephone with a summary of the situation and emergency procedures in effect. Inform parents/guardians of the route delays and estimated time of arrival. Be prepared to answer parent calls and concerns dealing with the accident. Inform parents/guardians they will need to monitor their children to note if injuries develop.
- H. If the bus proceeds directly to school or an alternate bus transports suspected uninjured students directly to school, an adult (school nurse, teacher, principal, EMT, etc.) should interview each student to see if he/she has unreported injuries. With any appearance of injury, immediate local medical attention should be obtained and parents contacted for medical care preference. Students who do not have apparent injuries will be monitored throughout the day by their teacher and checked by the school nurse. Students will be referred for further treatment, if needed.
- I. In the case of a major accident when students are taken to the hospital, the school superintendent or his/her designee, the school principal and/or school counselor will go to the hospital to meet with students and parents/guardians. Contact the district's crisis team to alert them to the situation and to ask their assistance in dealing with parent and student needs.
- J. No statement by staff shall be given to the media or parents/guardians other than, "The accident is under investigation and no details are being released at this time." The school superintendent or designee shall be the only person to release additional information.

- K. The superintendent and/or Director of Transportation will investigate all accidents. The investigation may be more involved depending on the severity of the accident. Investigations may include but are not limited to the following: Immediate on-site investigation, examination of police reports, interviews with witnesses, including students involved in the accident, examination of the accident scene, examination of photographs, interview with the driver, an examination of the damage and/or a review of alcohol and drug test results.

- L. All preventable accidents will carry some form of progressive rehabilitative disciplinary action. After each accident is investigated, the superintendent will notify the driver in writing, explaining the decision.