

**POLAND LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM  
SCHOOL BUS EMERGENCY/ACCIDENT PLAN**

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**Purpose:**

Emergencies and/or accidents involving students and/or school vehicles may occur off campus. The purpose of this plan is to provide for the orderly and safe handling of these situations. This plan is broken down by individual responsibilities.

**I. Bus and Van Drivers**

A. Initial Activity

The bus driver shall:

1. Stop and turn off the ignition.
2. Address the situation. By observation and questioning, attempt to determine whether anyone is injured.
3. Make students feel as safe as possible. Do not remove students from the bus unless an imminent threat to the safety of the students is present.
4. Notify public safety officials of the accident. Advise of location and whether persons are injured or not. In Mahoning County, call 740-2370. Outside of Mahoning County, call 9-1-1.
5. Notify the transportation office of the accident (757-7022). Advise as to the severity of the accident and whether additional bus(es) will be required to complete the route or transport students to the school. If the transportation office is closed, the school principle shall be notified.
6. Not permit any of the vehicles involved to be moved or leave the scene until the police arrive, unless the bus or other vehicle(s) involved will present a traffic hazard.
7. Place hazard flags, cones, or triangles to alert oncoming traffic of the accident. Flares should be used as a last resort, when other warning devices are inadequate, and it is safe to use these devices.

B. Post Accident Transportation of Students

1. All drivers of school vehicles will have with them:
  - The names and addresses of pupils on board;

- Medical emergency forms for said pupils.
- 2. The bus driver will provide a copy of the student list to the safety officers on the scene.
- 3. Students who require medical attention will be transported to local medical facilities for treatment. The facility of destination for treatment shall be determined by the paramedic in charge.
- 4. A bus driver who has received instruction in first aid and/or CPR, and is properly certified, may voluntarily render care to injured students. No bus driver shall be required to render medical assistance to any person, however. When emergency medical care is provided, the bus driver shall document that fact on his or her school accident report.
- 5. Students who are not injured in an accident involving injuries shall be transported to the school by a second bus.
- 6. Students may be transported to their original destination in those accidents where there are no injuries. Whether a replacement bus for transportation is used will depend on the degree of damage to the bus involved in the accident.
- 7. Under no circumstances shall any student be released to any person, including parents or guardians, prior to being transported either to a medical or school facility. No student shall be permitted to walk to his or her home from the accident scene.

C. Post Accident Investigation

- 1. A bus driver shall keep calm and never lose his or her temper. He or she should not argue with anyone or attempt to place blame for the accident.
- 2. A bus driver shall get the license number and other pertinent information necessary to complete the accident report from the other driver(s) involved in the accident.
- 3. A bus driver shall present his or her CDL and other required forms and answer any verbal questions directed to him or her by safety service officials. If the accident involves severe injuries, the driver may wait for the arrival of the Transportation Director before answering any questions. The driver also has the right to consult with an attorney of his or her own choosing before answering any questions as well.

4. No *written* statements regarding the facts of the accident shall be provided to safety officials without prior approval of the transportation coordinator. The bus driver shall be courteous, and shall advise safety officials that school policy does not permit drivers to make statements without prior approval.
5. An accident report form must be filed within five (5) days with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles as required by state law.
6. Bus drivers may also be asked to provide oral and/or written statements to the School District's attorney or insurance carrier.

## **II. Transportation Director**

### **A. Initial Activity**

1. Upon receipt of a call from a bus driver or other person regarding an accident involving a school bus, the Transportation Director, or his designee (Chief Mechanic or Assistant Mechanic), shall immediately:
  - Gather information, including location/time of the auto accident, the number of injuries, if any, and the degree of damage to property, including the school bus, if any,
  - Confirm that safety service officials have been notified,
  - Notify the school principal,
  - Notify the District superintendent,
  - Refer all parental calls to the school and/or Superintendent's office,
  - Refer all media calls to the Superintendent.

### **B. Post Accident Transportation of Students**

1. The Transportation Director shall proceed directly to the scene of the accident, where he shall identify himself to safety service personnel.
2. The Transportation Director shall determine whether alternative transportation for students is required, and shall make arrangements for transportation if needed.
3. The Transportation Director shall consult with safety service personnel to make sure that students who require medical attention are transported to local medical facilities for treatment.
4. In the absence of a principal, the Transportation Director shall identify the students who were on the bus, and shall in the event of injured students,

obtain from safety service personnel the names of the injured students and the names of the hospitals to which the students were transported.

5. In the absence of a principal, all information regarding the accident (names of students involved, hospitals to which injured students were transported) shall be provided to the school and Superintendent's office as soon as possible.
6. The Transportation Director shall make sure that all students who are not injured in an accident involving injuries are transported to the school by a second bus.
7. The Transportation Director shall make arrangements for the transportation of students to the original destination in those accidents where there are no injuries. The Transportation Director shall determine whether a replacement bus for transportation will be required to transport these students.
8. The Transportation Director shall confer with the bus driver regarding the basic facts and circumstances of the accident. The Transportation Director will determine whether the bus driver will be permitted to make a formal statement to investigating law enforcement personnel.
9. The Transportation Director will determine whether the bus driver may make a written statement to investigating law enforcement personnel. If a written statement is made, the Transportation Director will review it with the bus driver prior to the bus driver acknowledging or signing the accident report form.
10. The Transportation Director will ensure that all required accident and report forms are completed by the bus driver, and are submitted to the proper parties (school district, district insurance carrier or attorney, and Bureau of Motor Vehicles).
11. The Transportation Director will also provide copies of these forms to the District Superintendent prior to submission to outside parties.

### **III. Principal**

#### **A. Initial Activity**

1. Upon receipt of a call from a bus driver, the Transportation Director, or other person regarding an accident involving a school bus, the school principal, or his or her designee (Asst. Principal, Guidance Counselor, etc.) shall immediately:

- gather information regarding location/time of the automobile accident, the number and severity of injuries, if any, and the damage to the property,
- confirm that safety services have been notified,
- notify the District Superintendent and Transportation Director,
- refer all parental calls to the school,
- refer all media calls to the Superintendent's office.

**B. On Scene Activity**

1. The principal shall proceed to the scene of the accident with the applicable student list and emergency forms. The principal shall identify himself to safety service personnel upon arrival at the scene.
2. The principal shall consult with the safety service personnel to make sure that all students who require medical attention are transported to local medical facilities for treatment.
3. The principal shall identify the students who are on the bus, and shall, in the event of injured students, obtain from safety service personnel the names of the students and hospitals to which students were transported.
4. All information regarding the accident/names of students involved, hospitals to which students transported, shall be provided to the school and Superintendent's office as soon as possible.
5. The principal, in the absence of the Transportation Director, shall determine whether alternative transportation for students is required, and shall make necessary arrangements with transportation office to do so.
6. The principal shall make sure that the students who are not injured in an accident involving injuries are transported to the school .
7. The principal shall make sure that no student is released to any person; including parents or guardians, prior to being transported to either medical or school facilities.
8. After the principal has concluded his or her responsibilities at the scene of the accident, he or she may proceed to the school or medical facilities to meet and confer with the parents of students. All information regarding the principal's activities and knowledge known to him or her should be provided to the District Superintendent as quickly as possible. The school Superintendent may request a face-to-face meeting with the principal prior to the principal proceeding to either the school or medical facility.



#### **IV. School Nurse**

##### **A. Initial Activity**

The school nurse or district nurses shall proceed to the school, and shall wait for notification from school personnel at the accident scene regarding the names of injured students and the destination/name of the medical facility to which students were transported. If the facts and circumstances of the accident so warrant, the school nurse, in consultation with the district Superintendent, shall initiate the District's crisis plan and crisis intervention team.

##### **B. Coordination of Notification of Parents**

1. The school nurse shall coordinate the notification of parents/guardians of injured students.
2. Parents shall be instructed to proceed to either the school or medical facility to meet the student.
3. Parents should not be informed of the location of the accident. Parents or guardians shall not be provided with information regarding the medical condition of other students on the bus.
4. The school nurse shall forward all media calls to the Superintendent.
5. After the parental notification process has been initiated, the school nurse may proceed with additional school personnel (Principal or Asst. Principal, Guidance Counselor(s), Athletic Director, etc.) and may initiate a check-in process at the school. Administrative personnel shall release students only to parents/guardians/or other persons authorized on the emergency medical forms which shall be maintained at the school. The identity of all persons to whom students are released must be confirmed by picture identification.

#### **V. School Staff**

##### **A. Notification Process**

All available school staff (Principals, Asst. Principals, Guidance Counselors, Athletic Directors, and Teachers) shall assist the school nurse in the notification of parents regarding the accident. Parents/guardians of injured students should be notified first providing information regarding the location of the student (the hospital destination). Under no circumstances shall parents be notified of the location of the accident. If the destination of the student is not known, the



parents/guardians should be instructed to proceed to the school to receive additional information.

**B. Release of Students**

1. In accidents involving injuries, all non-injured students shall be transported to the high school.
2. The high school staff shall assist the nurse, or other designated person, to meet with students and with parents.
3. The school staff shall assist the school nurse in releasing students to parents/ guardians/or other persons as authorized on the emergency medical forms.

**VI. The Superintendent**

**A. Public Information**

1. The Superintendent will gather information from the school and safety force personnel in the field.
2. The Superintendent shall obtain as much information about the accident as possible and shall prepare a statement of facts to be released to the media.
3. In the event that interviews are requested and must be given, the Superintendent, or his designee, will be the official District spokesperson.

**B. Crisis Situation**

1. In the event that severe injuries or mass casualties result from the accident, the District Superintendent, or his designee, shall determine whether to implement the District's crisis intervention plan.
2. The District Superintendent, or his designee, shall establish a crisis headquarters and will make arrangements to provide local community resources that may be helpful to address a crisis situation.

**C. Meeting With Students and Parents**

After the Superintendent has provided the necessary information to the public, and responded to other inquiries, he may proceed to either the school or medical facility to meet with students or parents.

D. Post Accident Investigation

1. The Superintendent shall review all aspects of the accident with the Transportation Director. He shall review all forms and statements to be provided to insurance carriers and to law enforcement/state officials.
2. The Superintendent shall work with the Transportation Director to recommend any changes in school bus operational or training procedures.
3. The District Superintendent may also initiate any necessary discipline action in accordance with the applicable school employee contract.

**VI. Emergency Medical Personnel**

A. Response to Scene and Treatment

1. Emergency medical service personnel will be summoned to the scene in the event of an accident involving injuries. A senior paramedic on scene shall be responsible for determining issues of patient care and transportation.
2. Injured persons will be treated in accordance with the Northeast Ohio EMS Council protocol.
3. In the event of a mass casualty incident, the patients will be treated in accordance with the Mahoning County Mass Casualty Plan.

B. Provision of Information of School Officials

The senior paramedic or triage or transportation officer will provide to school officials on the scene the names of all students transported by ambulance, and the name of the medical facility to which each student was transported.

**VII. Fire Department**

A. Response

1. The fire department will respond to all motor vehicle accidents involving personal injuries.
2. The fire department will respond in accordance with its standard operating procedures for automobile accidents.

3. The fire department shall be in charge of scene safety and the mitigation of all hazards, and shall assist in the provision of emergency medical care to injured persons.
4. Medical care shall be provided in accordance with the Northeast Ohio EMS Council protocol.
5. In the event of a mass casualty incident, members of the fire department will operate in accordance with the Mahoning County Mass Casualty Plan.

B. Interaction with Other Agencies

1. Fire department officials will work with EMS and law enforcement officials on the scene in the provision of patient care, establishing scene safety and security, and in the completion of the police department's investigation.
2. The fire department shall assist school officials in ascertaining the identity of patients who are injured and the location to which the patient is transported.
3. The fire department's designated public information officer shall provide as much information as possible directly to the District Superintendent. To the extent possible, the public information officer shall proceed directly to the Superintendent's office and shall meet with him, in person, in order to prepare a written statement. If necessary, the department's public information officer shall also assist the Superintendent in meeting with the press and/or provide any other information necessary.

VIII. Law Enforcement

A. Response to the Scene

1. Upon notification of an accident involving a school bus, law enforcement personnel will proceed to the scene. If injuries are involved and law enforcement officials arrive on the scene first, information regarding the number of vehicles and apparent injuries involved will be provided to the fire department and/or medical personnel who are also responding to the scene.
2. Law enforcement officers shall attempt, to the extent possible, to mitigate any immediate hazards to persons or property which are within their power to do so.

B. Scene Security

1. Police officers shall establish scene security, and shall determine the degree of access which shall be permitted to the scene.
2. To the extent possible, access to the scene shall be permitted only for safety service and school personnel. Access to the scene by parents, the media, and other onlookers shall be restricted in order to avoid additional traffic congestion and scene confusion.
3. In determining the degree of access which shall be permitted to the scene, law enforcement personnel shall confer with the fire and EMS officials in order to assure that scene operations will not be jeopardized and emergency personnel placed at risk.

C. Investigation

Law enforcement personnel shall conduct an investigation in accordance with the department's standard operating procedures.

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