

THE HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
10910 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Circular No. 19
Series 2021 - 22

November 23, 2021

Chief Operating Officer

Student Transportation -
School Bus Accident
Emergency Procedures Plan

To: All Staff

From: Scott W. Washington, Chief Operating Officer

Attached is a document that identifies procedures that will be implemented in the event of a school bus accident in which students are injured or if the accident is deemed severe in nature by the Student Transportation Office. Please take the time to review those procedures that pertain to your area of responsibility.

Questions may be directed to Brian Nevin, Director, Student Transportation, 410.313.6726.

Attachment

SW/BN/smf

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

School Bus Accident Emergency Procedures Plan

The following procedures are to be utilized by central office and school-based staff in the event of a school bus accident in which students are injured or if the accident is deemed severe in nature by the Student Transportation Office.

The Director of Transportation/designee will be responsible for making the determination as to the seriousness of the accident relative to initiating the “Emergency Procedures Plan.” In times when a system-level response is required, the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) calls for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to be activated by the Superintendent or the Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response. The Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response or their designee will assume the role of the HCPSS Incident Commander and coordinate the system’s response through other central administrators who have been trained to assume specific roles in times of emergency.

For the vast majority of school bus accidents, a school administrator will not be required to report to the accident scene nor will the EOC be activated.

I. School Staff Responsibilities:

- A. When requested, report to the scene of the accident or assign a designee to report to the accident scene. The principal or designee should bring a current student bus list to the scene and the appropriate school absentee list for the day. Authorize release of students to the custody of their parents/guardians if requested and can be validated.
- B. Assign a staff person to handle telephone calls related to the bus accident.
- C. Be responsible for contacting parents of students involved in the accident and the PTA president or PTA representative.
- D. Assign school-based staff to the medical treatment center where injured students have been transported. These persons will be the communication link between the medical treatment staff and the Director of Transportation/Designee, the Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee, Community Superintendents, and the Communications Office.
- E. Notify the Director of Transportation/Designee, the Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee, and Community Superintendents of the names of school-based personnel assigned to the medical treatment center.

II. Student Transportation Office Responsibilities:

- A. Report directly to the accident scene. The Student Transportation Office representative will be the HCPSS representative at the accident scene. The representative will recommend to the Director of Transportation/Designee and the Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee if the EOC should be activated.
- B. Obtain information concerning the following and report all information to the Director of Transportation/Designee, the Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee and to the school.
 - a. Extent of injuries.
 - b. Names of students on the bus at the time of the accident.
 - c. Seating chart
 - d. Hospital or medical treatment center assignment for each student.
 - e. Other applicable details of the accident.
- C. Assist the police and first responders.
- D. Remain on duty until the accident scene is cleared by the police department. If another bus is required, schedule a spare bus. Only allow release of students to the custody of their parents/guardians if verified by a Police Officer or a school administrator.
- E. Provide the Director of Transportation/Designee, and the Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee with appropriate information relative to the accident.

III. Communications Responsibilities:

- A. Be responsible for the coordination of all communications to the news media
- B. Maintain the central office information center for disseminating and receiving information concerning the bus accident, including information from:
 - i. Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee
 - ii. Student Transportation Office
 - iii. Staff assigned to the hospital or medical treatment center.

IV. Division of Operations Responsibilities:

- A. The Director of Security, Emergency Preparedness and Response/Designee will report the nature of the emergency to the following offices as needed, along with updates:
 - i. Superintendent
 - ii. Chief Operating Officer
 - iii. Community Superintendent
 - iv. Communications
 - v. Risk Management