

**WASHINGTON-SARATOGA-WARREN-HAMILTON-ESSEX  
BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION**

**BUS ACCIDENT PROCEDURE**

In the event of a bus accident, the following procedures should be placed into effect:

**BOCES STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:** (e.g. teacher, teaching assistant, others)

1. Contact police, and the appropriate (BOCES/school district) administrator. If the BOCES operated class is located in a component school, the school principal, as well as the BOCES administrator, should be notified. If the immediate BOCES supervisor is not available, the staff member is to notify another administrator in that division or the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional and School Support Services. Let them know the location and seriousness of the accident and the number of students injured. Request medical assistance and indicate whether there is a need for ambulances at the scene. If appropriate, the administrator will report to the scene of the accident.
2. Assess the situation. As a professional, you must train yourself to overcome panic and to calmly assess the situation immediately after the accident. Do there appear to be student or other injuries? Is there danger of fire, downed wires, or another collision? Are your students safer in the bus, or should you evacuate? What is your exact location?
3. Reassure your students. Your ability to remain calm and in control can have an enormous effect on your students, and especially with young children or children with special needs. Take a moment to reassure students.
4. Ensure the safety of the children. If children have been evacuated, make sure they are located in a safe place and are not wandering off.
5. Follow approved procedures. In accidents involving injury, the following procedures should be used:
  - a. Contact medical personnel giving information concerning the location of the accident and the injured persons, the nature, number and extent of injuries, the supplies available at the scene of the accident, and first aid is being given.
  - b. Do not move injured persons unless absolutely necessary and then only when the extent of injury has been determined and such movement is deemed safe.
  - c. Keep injured persons lying down to prevent fainting and shock.
  - d. Provide aid to your best ability and training.
  - e. Keep the injured person warm, make him/her comfortable, and promote his/her ease of mind in any way possible.
  - f. Notify the nearest police authority as soon as possible. (New York State Motor Vehicle Law requires this in an accident involving personal injury.)
  - g. In the event that students are injured, a staff member should, where available, accompany them to the nearest medical facility, contacting the appropriate administrator and the parent/guardian.
6. Account for all passengers in the vehicle. As soon as possible, make an accurate passenger list. If possible, document exactly where each passenger (students, bus monitor, etc.) were located at the time of the accident. Note whether seat belts were worn.

7. Do not release students. Even in minor accidents, do not release students to good Samaritans, neighbors, etc. or allow any students to walk home on their own. Keep students at the scene until authorities arrive. If parents arrive at the scene, ask them to remain with their child until authorities arrive. If a parent does insist on taking a child from the scene, ask parent to leave a signed note.
8. Make a determination as to who will contact all of the parents and inform them of the accident and the steps taken to ensure their child's safety. This should be done as soon as possible after the safety of students is assured and injured students receive medical attention.
9. Cooperate with authorities. In severe accidents, a command post will be established to coordinate rescue efforts. As emergency personnel arrive, they will take over. Let them do their job.
10. Be professional and polite. Admit nothing, promise nothing, and don't argue with other motorists. What you say at the scene may be admissible in court. Do not discuss the accident with anyone other than law enforcement personnel, your supervisors, or district administration. (You may also be approached at home by insurance company investigators or lawyers representing the other side - do not discuss the accident with them - refer them to your supervisor.)
11. Make no statements to media at the scene. If approached by media, politely explain that district/company policy forbids staff members to comment at the scene. Ask media representatives to talk to your supervisor. However, do not antagonize the media - for instance by saying "no comment," which may sound like you have something to hide.
12. Have BOCES students checked by a school nurse. At any time that BOCES students are involved in any type of motor vehicle accident while under the supervision of BOCES staff, they are to be checked by the (BOCES/school district) nurse, regardless if there appears to be injuries or not.
13. Make legible written notes. As time allows, make legible written notes of everything you remember about the accident. Keep these notes.

#### SCHOOL BUS DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Stop the bus/vehicle and turn off the ignition. Do not leave the scene of an accident or incident, no matter how minor, until so directed by your supervisor. This includes incidents that do not involve collisions, such as an on-board injury to a student. If such a non-collision incident occurs while the bus is moving, pull the bus over at the first safe location and contact your supervisor.
2. After a collision, do not move the bus/vehicle unless absolutely necessary. Documenting the final position of vehicles involved in a collision is extremely important. Unless directed by police or your supervisor, do not move your bus simply to let traffic pass. Move it only if there is danger of another collision, to move it away from a fire, etc. In such a case, make a clear mental note of exactly where your bus/vehicle was stopped after the collision - for instance, the bus bumper was over the stop line etc.
3. Place reflectors or ask bystanders for assistance in placing reflectors or warning traffic. Place them far enough back to truly protect the bus from another collision. Make sure 4-way flashers are activated.
4. Protect the scene. In cases involving serious injury to students - for instance, severe bleeding - you may not have time to fully protect the accident scene before beginning first aid. This is your judgment as a professional.

5. Be prepared to provide emergency responders with the exact number of passengers on board. This is extremely important. Also, be prepared to notify emergency responders of which children have special needs, and the nature of those special needs.
6. Note all witnesses to the accident - ask people who may have observed the accident to wait for police to arrive. Jot down license plate numbers of vehicles at the scene, especially of potential witnesses who are leaving before police arrive. Use statement or courtesy cards if available. If no witnesses are available, identify the first people who arrived at the scene.
7. Radio base - in a severe emergency, you should begin evacuating students while radioing base.

Use your school district or company emergency or accident code, if any. If there are no pre-arranged codes in your operation, make it clear that your message is urgent by stating, "This is bus number \_\_\_\_\_ and I have an emergency." Stating your bus number is most important, for it allows dispatch to pin down where your vehicle should be even if no other information is forthcoming.

If possible, give the following information to base: exact location; do there appear to be any injuries; does there appear to be danger of fire; are you evacuating the students.

If base does not answer your radio call, repeat your basic message (give your bus number each time). Base may hear you, but you may not hear their response. If evacuating the bus, leave key open and place microphone out the side window for possible use outside the bus.

All other drivers should clear the air whenever there is an emergency reported by radio.

8. If another vehicle is involved, get license and insurance data from them.
9. Be professional and polite, but admit nothing, promise nothing, and don't argue with the other motorists. What you say at the scene may be admissible in court. Do not discuss the accident with anyone other than law enforcement, your supervisors, or district administration. (You may also be approached at home by insurance company investigators or lawyers representing the other side - do not discuss the accident with them - refer them to your supervisor.)
10. Make no statements to media at the scene. If approached by media, politely explain that district/company policy forbids drivers to comment at the scene. Ask media representatives to talk to your supervisor. However, do not antagonize the media - for instance by saying "no comment," which may sound like you have something to hide.
11. As time allows, make legible written notes of everything you remember about the accident. Keep these notes.

#### ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OR DESIGNEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Contact Superintendent of Schools and brief him/her of the situation.
2. Contact (BOCES/school district) nurse and brief them of the accident and have them transported to the scene.
3. Go to the accident scene.
4. Contact the BOCES business office so they may report the accident to the insurance agent.
5. File appropriate reports with insurance company and State Education Department through the BOCES business office.
6. Arrange for component school notification.

TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Determine if another bus is needed at the scene to transport non-injured students to school or home after being released by the (BOCES/school district) school nurse or school physician.
2. Determine if a wrecker is needed to remove the bus, but do not remove it until Police have investigated the accident.
3. Notify the appropriate BOCES program administrator.

(BOCES/SCHOOL DISTRICT) SCHOOL NURSE RESPONSIBILITIES:

If the BOCES operated class is located in a component school district, it is the district school nurses responsibility to check the students. BOCES school nurse should be notified and, if available, report to the scene.

1. Report to the scene of the accident and assist medical personnel on the scene.
2. Screen ALL students to determine the extent of injuries.
3. Maintain a written record of every student involved in the accident as well as any contacts with parents or other parties involved.

BOCES ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Report to the scene of the accident.
2. Check with all parties to ensure that all parents/guardians were contact and that there were no problems.
3. Contact the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional and School Support Services and brief him/her of the situation.