

TENNESSEE HIGHWAY PATROL

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION



STATE IN-SERVICE

2016 - 2017



PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
1 228 FOSTER AVENUE
NASHVILLE, TN 37243

BILL GIBBONS
COMMISSIONER

TRACY TROTT
COLONEL

Dear Transportation Professionals:

How quickly the last twelve months have passed. The 2015/2016 school year brought about much conversation regarding school transportation. The conversation centered around driver training at both the state and federal levels.

Our training this year will focus on the following topics:

- Special Needs Emergency Evacuation
- Distracted Driving
- Rail Road Crossings

This is your class! Please ask questions and get involved in the discussion. Let our goal of safe transportation continue to drive our daily work.

Finally, thank you for what you do. Our professional drivers are the backbone of safe transportation in Tennessee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lt. Ray D. Robinson'.

Lieutenant Ray D. Robinson
Tennessee Highway Patrol



Pupil Transportation Points of Contact

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Distractions: Loading/Unloading and Driving

“A deadly combination”

Definition:

Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person’s attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. <http://www.distraction.gov/stats-research-laws/facts-and-statistics.html>

According to the United States Department of Transportation, "text messaging while driving creates a crash risk 23 times higher than driving while not distracted." Despite these statistics, more than 37% of drivers have admitted to sending or receiving text messages while driving, and 18% admit doing so regularly. (Wikipedia)

Distracted loading /unloading is any act that would cause the driver (you) to lose sight of children at the bus stop. The results of this can be catastrophic. http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2015/10/mother_of_5-year-old_killed_by.html

Three distinct groups of distractions:

Visual: _____

Manual: _____

Cognitive: _____

Types of distractions while driving:

Types of distractions while loading and unloading:

DO YOU LIKE THE ODDS!

THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN A SAFETY CRITICAL EVENT REACHING FOR AN OBJECT!

SIX TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN A SAFETY CRITICAL EVENT DIALING A CELLULAR PHONE!

What are the risks?

Besides penalties and possible driver disqualification, recent research shows that the odds of being involved in a safety-critical event (e.g., crash, near-crash, unintentional lane deviation) are 23.2 times greater for CMV drivers who text while driving than for those who do not. Texting drivers took their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. At 55 mph, this equates to a driver traveling the approximate length of a football field — without looking at the roadway! For CMV drivers who dial a mobile phone while driving, the odds of being involved in a safety-critical event are six times greater than for those who do not.

Why take chances?

Bottom Line: Using a hand held device while driving is a serious traffic violation that could result in a driver disqualification.

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/driver-safety/distracted-driving#sthash.KROyAWal.dpuf>

Overcoming driving distraction:

Overcoming bus stop distractions:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-8-192, is amended by deleting the existing language in its entirety and substituting instead the following: (a) No driver shall operate a school bus as defined by § 55-8-101 anywhere in this state while using a portable electronic device: (1) While the vehicle is in motion and while the vehicle is transporting one (1) or more children; or (2) When the vehicle is stopped for the purposes of loading or unloading one (1) or more children from the vehicle.

(b) As used in this section, “portable electronic device” means any:

- (1) Mobile, cellular, analog, wireless, or digital telephone;
- (2) Personal digital assistant;
- (3) Hand-held device with mobile data access;
- (4) Laptop computer;
- (5) Pager;
- (6) Broadband personal communication device;
- (7) Two-way messaging device;
- (8) Electronic game;
- (9) Camera;
- (10) Portable computing device;
- (11) Global positioning system, if the driver is using at least one (1) hand to hold the device or to enter data into the device while the school bus is in motion; or HB1484 009071 -2-
- (12) Electronic device used to input, write, send, receive, read, or view text or media for present or future communication.

(c) This section shall not apply to:

- (1) Two-way communications, or any device used in a similar manner as two-way radio communications, made to and from a central dispatch, school transportation department, or its equivalent; or
- (2) The use of a device capable of voice communication to report an emergency to the 911 system, a law enforcement agency, fire department, or emergency medical provider.

(d) A violation of this section is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a minimum period of confinement of not less than thirty (30) days; a minimum fine of not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000); and the court shall order that a person convicted of violating this section is permanently prohibited from operating a school bus as defined by § 55-8-101 in the state of Tennessee.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-50-501, is amended by adding the following new subsection (d):

(d) The commissioner shall permanently revoke a school bus endorsement held by any operator or chauffeur upon receiving the record of such operator’s or chauffeur’s conviction for using a portable electronic device while operating a school bus, as prohibited by § 55-8-192.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016, the public welfare requiring it.

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-2107, is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriate designated subsection: Each local education agency (LEA) that provides transportation services shall submit to the department of safety the names of persons authorized to drive a school bus. The department of safety shall maintain a database of all those persons authorized to drive a school bus and notify the appropriate LEA if the driver license or driving privileges of a listed person have been suspended or revoked. Upon receiving the notification, the LEA shall suspend or revoke the person's authorization to drive a school bus and inform the person of the suspension or revocation. Any person authorized to drive a school bus shall notify the LEA if the person's driver license or driving privileges have been suspended or revoked. If the person's driver's license or driving privileges have been reinstated and the person meets the other requirements set out by the LEA, the person may request new authorization to drive a school bus. As used in this subsection, "local education agency: has the same meaning as defined in § 49-1-103.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-50-323 (a) (2), is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated subdivision: () Notwithstanding this section, any person applying for a school bus endorsement, as defined in § 55-50-102(22)(E), or renewal thereof, shall pay a total fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) for each school bus endorsement;

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016, the public welfare requiring it.

Reality

December 2, 2014 two school buses crashed into one another killing two children and one adult teacher assistant. This crash was the direct result of distracted driving. Too many times we do not fully consider the consequences of our actions. Just one text, what differences can that make? For the families of Zykia Burns, Seraya Glasper and Mrs. Kimberly Riddle, one text has forever changed their lives.

Conclusion:

- **Distractions come from many sources**
 - **Distractions can be overcome**
 - **Know the children that you transport**
 - **Know the roads that you travel**
 - **Anticipate potential problems**
- **Today is the first day of the rest of your life**

TRAINING-PREPARATION- ACTION

If I fail to prepare I have prepared a foundation for failure

How to Safely Evacuate a Special Needs Bus

Introduction

As a special education bus driver you have a lot to remember; here are some of the key concepts you will need to apply when transporting special needs students. Some students have physical disabilities which require you to drive the bus in a manner that will not injure students with low muscle tone or other physical ailments. Some students display emotional or behavioral disabilities which require you to intervene and interact with them.

Now, ask yourself this question.....**Do you know how YOU would react if you needed to perform an emergency evacuation of the school bus?**

Preparation and Inspection

1) One of the keys to a successful school bus evacuation is preparation. There are several important aspects of preparation. One of these is the pre-trip inspection of the special needs bus. Here are several of the items that need to be inspected. Each item plays an essential role during the evacuation of a special needs bus.

- Wheelchair lift should be in good working condition.
- Emergency latches and exits should all be working - open and close with ease.
- Check all warning and stop lights.
- Check ALL safety and first aid equipment.
- Seat belt cutter must be available and easily accessible to the driver.

Disabilities and Abilities of Special Needs Students

2) Special education bus drivers must be aware of the disabilities of the students they are transporting. Some students are physically disabled and other students are mentally challenged. There may be other students who are visually or hearing impaired. **Learn everything you can about your students so that during an evacuation you can make decisions that will minimize risk to these students.**

3) Some special needs students can act as helpers and many non-ambulatory students can assist themselves during an evacuation. And it is **important to remember that if an aid or monitor rides the bus, you should share this information with them.**

Preparation for Evacuations

4) Knowing the locations of all emergency exits and seating arrangements can be critical when evacuating a school bus. If smoke limits the driver's visibility, the driver must have these locations committed to memory. This will ensure that the students can evacuate the bus in the most efficient manner.

5) The order in which you evacuate students is an important consideration. If an evacuation becomes necessary, it is quicker and easier to first evacuate ambulatory students. Next, you should evacuate wheelchair students. However, if your ambulatory students have behavioral disorders, do not evacuate them first unless they are accompanied by an aid or the driver.

Mental Preparedness

6) An emergency evacuation of the school bus can be a traumatic event. Special education bus drivers should rely on their training and knowledge of what actions to take during such a crisis. **The key is to stay calm and focused.** You should concentrate on the task at hand and not on the negative consequences that COULD take place. **Don't let the fear of the evacuation distract from your overall purpose of getting the students to safety.**

Maintain Personal Safety

7) Speed becomes particularly important during an evacuation. And make sure you don't ignore your own personal safety when evacuating students off the bus. When lifting, kneeling or carrying students, you should use proper body mechanics. You should always lift with your legs and not your back. When kneeling, do so in a manner that will not require over stretching. Overstretching could strain your back. Do all you can to protect your back from injury, because as Martin mentioned, you can't evacuate the students if you are injured. Remember, don't rush and compromise proper body mechanics when evacuating the bus.

NON EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

8) A *non-emergency evacuation*, is one in which the speed of the evacuation is not critical to the safety of the students.

9) During the video, Martin mentions a very important point. ***The only time you should evacuate a bus, is when students will be safer being off of the bus, than being on the bus.*** Two good examples include a bus that is stalled on a busy road way and another example is a bus that breaks down around a blind corner. In both of these examples students are safer staying on the bus.

10) During the video we used a wide open location for the non-emergency evacuation. This is to show the correct procedures for a general evacuation.

11) **When preparing to evacuate students, you should:**

- a. Alert dispatch of the evacuation. Let them know your location and any other viable information, such as injuries to students.
- b. Activate your hazards to warn motorists approaching the bus from either direction.
- c. Secure the bus and take the key from the ignition.
- d. Let students on the bus know that they will be evacuating the bus. Special needs students may be thrown off by the sudden change in routine.

12) The video made it obvious that there is no apparent or immediate danger. None of the students on the bus have major behavioral disabilities, so the driver evacuates her wheelchair student first. And if there were students with behavioral problems you would want to leave them on the bus anyway. They will be safer there than letting them off the bus in an unsupervised environment. If the speed of the evacuation is not critical, then evacuate the wheelchair students first and keep other students on board the bus.

13) In the video, we show the driver release the tie downs and unload her wheelchair student first. She then comes into the bus and informs the other students that it is time to evacuate. Since there is no immediate emergency, the driver has the students evacuate out the front service door. She gives them a location to go to that is approximately 100 feet from the bus and far from the roadway. **Martin mentions in the video that when evacuating the bus you should give students a tangible object to go to.....such as a tree or a sign.**

14) If a bus is experiencing mechanical problems, but is not in immediate danger, students should wait on that bus until another arrives. Once the backup bus arrives they can then be safely transferred.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

15) At the beginning of the video, we showed an emergency evacuation taking place when smoke began to fill the bus, placing students and the driver in a dangerous situation. Obviously, if smoke begins to fill the bus, there is a possibility of a fire on board.

16) The first decision to make is where to pull the bus over. In an emergency situation such as this, you want to get the bus over as soon as you have even a suspicion that there may be a fire on board. Then you would:

- a. Alert dispatch of the situation. Be sure to let them know the area you are at and any injuries that may have occurred to the students or yourself.
- b. It is also a good idea to hang the radio out of the driver's window. By doing this, you can still communicate with dispatch if it safe and becomes necessary to do so.
- c. You can also do the same with the first aid kit in case students are already injured or an accidental injury takes place during the evacuation process.

17) In the video, Martin observes smoke coming from the front of the bus and close to where he is sitting. And that is why he makes the call to evacuate students at the rear of the bus to minimize the risk of the students walking out of the front service door and possibly sustaining injuries.

18) **Remember to give special needs student's direct instructions.** They will not remember a laundry list of details. So, let them know what needs to be done right at that moment.

19) If you have special needs students that can understand directions well and can aid with the evacuation, utilize their help. During the video Martin wants the students off of the bus as quickly as possible. He makes the decision to do the evacuation himself. The point is also made that the students shown in the video have been trained in evacuation

procedures. This shows the value of practicing evacuations with special needs students. The evacuation at the rear of the bus runs smoothly and efficiently.

20) Martin has the students wait at a tree, which is far from the bus and any traffic that may be traveling on roadways.

21) After Martin gets the ambulatory students off of the bus, he has them wait next to a tree. This places them a safe distance from traffic. Next, he has to evacuate his wheelchair student. In the scenario provided, there is only one wheelchair student on board. He obviously would not use the lift due to the time it would take to go through the unloading process. So, he improvises. He uses the wheelchair lift cover to lay the student on it then drags him to the rear of the bus.

22) Martin has the student wrap his arms around his neck. He then uses his legs to lift the student and gently lay him on the lift cover. Once there, Martin then uses the lift cover to drag the student out the rear emergency exit. He grabs the student under the arms and drags him out of the bus safely.

23) The one thing that you can notice about the evacuation is how martin stays calm and focused throughout the evacuation process. And remember this: evacuations present different challenges and the driver has to adapt to each situation. The adage that one shoe fits all situations is not applicable in school bus evacuations.

CLOSING

In the video, we showed several procedures and demonstrations of how to evacuate a special needs bus. We went over the importance of knowing student disabilities as well as the abilities of the students who ride the bus. We touched on the importance of maintaining the bus and the equipment on it. We also went over how bus drivers should protect themselves during an evacuation. And now, it is up to you, the special needs bus driver to apply these procedures and techniques if you are ever faced with an evacuation of any kind. Remember to stay calm and focused. The children rely on your composure and direction. Think outside the box if it becomes necessary to get all students off the bus in an emergency situation.

Manage Your Route To School

Safely

School Bus Drivers:

As the driver, you have the premiere safety seat on the bus. It is your job to ensure the safety of your young riders. When planning the route - avoid railroad crossings whenever possible.

When you do cross the tracks, follow this Safety Route Reminder:

- 1 Advance Warning**
This sign tells you to slow down - tracks ahead.

- 2 Check Traffic Behind**
Engage bus' parking lights, pull out of lane, if necessary. (Follow your school district's policies)

- 3 Prepare Bus**
Quiet students before stopping, turn off radio and fan.

- 4 Stop Bus**
Stop at least 15 ft from crossing, further back if necessary.

- 5 Look & Listen**
For train in both directions. Open door, window to listen. *Doubletake* before crossing.


- 6 GO!**
If no trains are in sight - move out!



This message is brought to you by Operation Lifesaver, Inc. For more information on keeping your children safe while riding aboard the bus, visit our website.

Safety Tips for School Bus Drivers

For your safety as well as the safety of the children on your bus, always follow these recommended procedures at highway-rail grade crossings:



The Advance Warning sign indicates a railroad crossing is ahead.

1. Slow down, test your brakes and activate your four-way hazard lights about 200 feet before the crossing. (If your vehicle has a manual transmission, downshift before you cross.)
2. Check for traffic around you. Make sure your intentions to stop are clear. Use a pull-out lane if one is available and flashers, if necessary.
3. Prepare the bus: Put the transmission in neutral, press down on the service brake or set the parking brakes (depending on your district's policy). Turn off the AM/FM radio and all other noisy equipment; ask passengers for quiet.
4. Stop where you have the best view of the tracks, no closer than 15 feet and no farther than 50 feet from the nearest rail. Check beyond the tracks for traffic congestion, a signal or stop sign. Be certain the containment area across the tracks is large enough to hold the entire bus, plus 15 feet.
5. Open the service door and driver's window. Look and listen for an approaching train in both directions. Proceed only after checking the crossing signals.
6. GO. When certain that no train is approaching on any track, do not hesitate. Cross in low gear and do not change gears while crossing.

Special Procedures Police Officer or Flagman at the Crossing

Obey directions if there's a police officer or properly-identified railroad flagman at the crossing. If you believe the signals are malfunctioning and there is no flagman present, call your dispatcher, report the situation and find out how to proceed. Some crossings have an 800 number posted on or near the cross buck for reporting problems; use that to quickly identify your location.

Obstructed View of Tracks

Plan your route so it provides maximum sight allowance at highway-rail grade crossings. Don't try to cross tracks unless you can see far enough down in both directions to know that no trains are approaching. Take extra caution at "passive" crossings without gates, flashing lights or bells. Even with active railroad signals indicating the tracks are clear, look and listen to confirm it's safe to proceed.

Containment or Storage Area

If it won't fit, don't commit! Know the length of your bus and size of the containment area at any highway-rail intersections along your bus route. Pay attention to the amount of available room when approaching a crossing with a signal or STOP sign on the opposite side. In case you need to stop, make sure the bus has enough containment or storage area on the other side to completely clear the railroad tracks.

Evacuating a Bus

If your bus stalls or is trapped on tracks, evacuate immediately. Get everyone off the bus, move far away from the tracks, but move in the direction from which the train is coming. This procedure will keep the evacuating students away from the point of impact between the train and the school bus.



School Buses

Each day, 480,000 yellow school buses travel the nation's roads, according to the National School Transportation Association Operation.

Source: Operation Lifesaver www.oli.org

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING

TEST ANSWER SHEET

NAME _____ DRIVER LICENSE NUMBER _____
(Please print)

ADDRESS _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

_____ SCHOOL SYSTEM _____

_____ BUS OWNER _____

COUNTY IN WHICH YOU LIVE _____ DATE OF TODAY'S CLASS _____

I certify that the above information is correct/true.

Signature _____

Choose the one best answer for each question and black out that letter on the answer sheet.

EXAMPLE

1. (A) ● (C) (D)

-
1. (A) (B) (C) (D)
 2. (A) (B) (C) (D)
 3. (A) (B) (C) (D)
 4. (A) (B) (C) (D)
 5. (A) (B) (C) (D)
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18. (A) (B) (C) (D)
19. (A) (B) (C) (D)
20. (A) (B) (C) (D)

WE'D LIKE YOUR OPINION ...

Please take a moment and answer the following questions. You may turn this in to the instructor, or fax to Pupil Transportation (615-253-2280).

Is there a subject that you'd like to have covered in the class that was not discussed?

Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the class?

Comments:



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY
Tennessee Highway Patrol

SAFETY FIRST!

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