

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

Safety Equipment

Each school bus shall be equipped with at least one fire extinguisher located in the driver's compartment which meets the standards specified in law. (Education Code 39838; 13 CCR 1242)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that any school bus which is purchased or leased by the district is equipped with a combination pelvic and upper torso passenger restraint system at all designated seating positions if that bus: (Vehicle Code 27316, 27316.5; 13 CCR 1201)

1. Is a Type 1 school bus designed for carrying more than 16 passengers and the driver and is manufactured on or after July 1, 2005
2. Is a Type 2 school bus or student activity bus designed for carrying 16 or fewer passengers and the driver, or designed for carrying 20 or fewer passengers and the driver and having a manufacturer's vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, and is manufactured on or after July 1, 2004

The Superintendent or designee shall prioritize the allocation of school buses purchased, leased, or contracted to ensure that elementary students receive first priority for new school buses equipped with passenger restraint systems whenever feasible.

When a school bus or student activity bus is equipped with a passenger restraint system, all passengers shall use the passenger restraint system. (5 CCR 14105)

Bus drivers shall be informed of procedures to be followed to reasonably enforce proper use of the passenger restraint system.

Safe Bus Operations

School buses and student activity buses shall not be operated whenever the number of passengers exceeds bus seating capacity, except when necessary in emergency situations which require that individuals be moved immediately to ensure their safety.

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

School bus operations shall be limited when atmospheric conditions reduce visibility on the roadway to 200 feet or less during regular home-to-school transportation service. Bus drivers for school activity trips shall have the authority to discontinue bus operation whenever they determine that it is unsafe to continue operation because of reduced visibility. (Vehicle Code 34501.6)

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(cf. 3516.5 - Emergency Schedules)

(cf. 3540 - Transportation)

(cf. 3541.1 - Transportation for School-Related Trips)

(cf. 3542 - School Bus Drivers)

A driver shall not use a wireless telephone while driving a school bus, student activity bus, or other motor vehicle, except under the following conditions: (Vehicle Code 23123, 23125)

1. For emergency purposes, including, but not limited to, an emergency call to a law enforcement agency, health care provider, fire department, or other emergency service agency or entity
2. For work-related purposes
3. When he/she uses a wireless telephone that is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking, provided it is used in that manner while driving

(cf. 3513.1 - Cellular Phone Reimbursement)

(cf. 4040 - Employee Use of Technology)

The Superintendent or designee may place a notice at bus entrances that warns against unauthorized entry. The driver or another school official may order any person to disembark if that person enters a bus without prior authorization. (Education Code 39842; 13 CCR 1256.5)

The Superintendent or designee shall review all investigations of bus incidents and accidents to develop preventative measures.

(cf. 4112.42/4212.42/4312.42 - Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers)

Transportation Safety Plan for Boarding and Exiting Buses

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a transportation safety plan containing procedures for school personnel to follow to ensure the safe transport of students. The plan shall include procedures for boarding and exiting a school bus at a school or other trip destination: (Education Code 39831.3)

1. Procedures for determining if students in grades prekindergarten through 8 require an escort to cross a private road or highway at a bus stop pursuant to Vehicle Code 22112
2. Procedures for all students in grades prekindergarten through 8 to follow as they board and exit the bus at their bus stops

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A copy of the plan shall be kept at each school site and made available upon request to the California Highway Patrol. (Education Code 39831.3)

Notifications

The Superintendent or designee shall provide written safety information to the parents/guardians of all students in grades prekindergarten through 6 who have not previously been transported in a school bus or student activity bus. This information shall be provided upon registration and shall address: (Education Code 39831.5)

1. A list of school bus stops near each student's home
2. General rules of conduct at school bus loading zones
3. Red light crossing instructions
4. The school bus danger zone
5. Safety while walking to and from school bus stops

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

Student Instruction

All students who are transported in a school bus or student activity bus shall receive instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety. (Education Code 39831.5)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that instruction is provided to students as follows:

1. Each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate instruction in safe riding practices and emergency evacuation drills. Each student who receives home-to-school transportation in a school bus shall be required to receive this instruction. (5 CCR 14102)
2. At least once each school year, all students in grades prekindergarten through 8 who receive home-to-school transportation shall receive safety instruction which includes, but is not limited to: (Education Code 39831.5)
 - a. Proper loading and unloading procedures, including escorting by the driver

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- b. How to safely cross the street, highway, or private road
- c. In school buses with passenger restraint systems, instruction in the use of such systems as specified in 5 CCR 14105, including, but not limited to, the proper fastening and release of the passenger restraint system, acceptable placement of passenger restraint systems on students, times at which the passenger restraint systems should be fastened and released, and acceptable placement of the passenger restraint systems when not in use
- d. Proper passenger conduct

(cf. 5131.1 - Bus Conduct)

- e. Bus evacuation procedures
- f. Location of emergency equipment

As part of this instruction, students shall evacuate the school bus through emergency exit doors. Instruction also may include responsibilities of passengers seated next to an emergency exit. (Education Code 39831.5)

Each time the above instruction is given, the following information shall be documented: (Education Code 39831.5)

- a. District name
- b. School name and location
- c. Date of instruction
- d. Names of supervising adults
- e. Number of students participating
- f. Grade levels of students
- g. Subjects covered in instruction
- h. Amount of time taken for instruction
- i. Bus driver's name
- j. Bus number

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k. Additional remarks

This documentation shall be kept on file at the district office or the school for one year and shall be available for inspection by the California Highway Patrol. (Education Code 39831.5)

3. Before departing on a school activity trip, all students riding on a school bus or student activity bus shall receive safety instruction which includes, but is not limited to: (Education Code 39831.5)

a. Location of emergency exits

b. Location and use of emergency equipment

This instruction also may include responsibilities of passengers seated next to an emergency exit. (Education Code 39831.5)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

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Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

39830-39842 *Transportation, school buses*

51202 *Instruction in personal and public health and safety*

PENAL CODE

241.3 *Assault against school bus driver*

243.3 *Battery against school bus driver*

VEHICLE CODE

545-546 *Definition of school bus and school pupil activity bus*

22112 *Loading and unloading passengers*

23123 *Use of wireless telephone prohibited while driving motor vehicle*

23125 *Use of wireless telephone prohibited while driving school bus*

27316 *Passenger restraint systems*

34500 *California Highway Patrol responsibility to regulate safe operation of school buses*

34501.5 *California Highway Patrol responsibility to adopt rules re: safe operation of school buses*

34501.6 *School buses; reduced visibility*

34508 *California Highway Patrol responsibility to adopt rules re: equipment and operations of school buses*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

14100-14105 *School buses and student activity buses*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 13

1200-1293 *Motor carrier safety*

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 49

571.1-571.500 *Motor vehicle standards, including school buses*

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

California Association of School Business Officials: <http://www.casbo.org>

California Association of School Transportation Officials: <http://www.castoways.org>

California Department of Education, Office of School Transportation: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/tm>

California Highway Patrol: <http://www.chp.ca.gov>

National Coalition for School Bus Safety: <http://www.ncsbs.org>

National Transportation Safety Board: <http://www.nts.gov>

U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>