

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY DRILLS

Section 3623 of the State Education Law and Section 156.3 (h) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require that school districts conduct a minimum of three School Bus Safety Drills on each school bus during the school year, the first to be conducted during the first seven days of school; the second, between November 1 and December 31; and the third, between March 1 and April 30.

The drills on school buses shall include practice and instruction in the location, use and operation of the emergency door(s), fire extinguishers, first aid equipment and windows as a means of escape in case of fire or accident. Drills shall also include instruction in safe boarding and exiting procedures, with specific emphasis on when and how to approach, board, disembark and move away from the bus after disembarking.

Each drill shall include specific instructions for passengers to advance at least twelve feet in front of the bus before crossing. Each drill shall emphasize specific hazards encountered by passengers during snow, ice, rain and other inclement weather, including, but not necessarily limited to, poor driver visibility, reduced vehicular control and reduced hearing.

All such drills shall include instruction in the importance of orderly conduct by all school bus passengers, with specific emphasis given to passenger discipline rules and regulations promulgated by the Board of Education. Such instruction and the conduct of the drills shall be given by a member(s) of the teaching staff. All children attending public and nonpublic schools who do not participate in the drills held pursuant to this paragraph shall also be provided drills on school buses, or as an alternative, shall be provided classroom instruction covering the content of such drills.

1. Contractor's Responsibilities

- a. Contractors shall work with every school/site to which they transport children and shall comply with the schedule provided by the principals.
- b. Each vehicle should be able to accommodate a class of 35 children every half hour between 9:30 A.M. and 11:30 A.M. on safety drill dates.
- c. Certificates will be distributed to each bus contractor at the start of the school year.
- d. Additional certificates may be obtained from the Contract Compliance Office.

2. Instructions for Safety Drills

In order to ensure consistency in school bus safety drills, teachers are to follow the specific instructions for conducting the drills presented here.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOL BUS SAFETY DRILL

(Regulation of the Chancellor: A-806)

These instructions are provided to assist teachers in conducting school bus safety drills. Buses will be assigned to each school in order to facilitate conducting the drills. **Every child in the school is required to participate in drills, whether or not he/she regularly receives school bus transportation.** Each class should be allotted thirty minutes to practice on the bus. The instruction provided during each drill can prepare all school children to act quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.

Guidelines for conducting school bus safety drill

1. Explain the concept of emergency: “a dangerous situation requiring immediate actions”.
2. Review situations that would create an emergency: fire; threat of explosion; accident; bus in an unsafe position; etc.
3. The Teacher shows the children how to evacuate the bus safely.
 - 3.1 The Teacher demonstrates opening the rear emergency door (by lifting the handle and pushing out), the operation of the emergency windows and the location and operation of the overhead escape hatch(es). The Teacher instructs the children to remember the location of the signs denoting “Emergency Escape Window” and “Emergency Door”.
 - 3.2 The operation of fire extinguishers and the use of first aid equipment are simulated as part of the drill instruction.
4. The Instructor emphasizes specific hazards encountered by children during snowy, icy and other inclement weather conditions; slippery road conditions; and poor visibility.
5. The Instructor emphasizes the following safety rules:

Boarding the Bus

- 5.1 Wait for the bus on the sidewalk. Do not step into the street.
- 5.2 Board the bus directly without pushing or shoving.
- 5.3 Use the handrail, if provided.

Orderly Conduct on the Bus

- 5.4 Remain orderly throughout the ride.
- 5.5 Talk quietly to your friends on the bus; do not shout or scream.
- 5.6 Keep hands, arms, legs, and heads inside the bus.
- 5.7 Do not throw objects on the bus or from the windows.
- 5.8 Behave considerately toward the other riders.
- 5.9 There is no fighting or wrestling on the bus.
- 5.10 Keep books, book bags, musical instruments and other objects out of the aisle.
- 5.11 Do not play with door handles or windows.

Exiting the Bus

The following instructions are to be given to all passengers.

- 5.12 Walk directly to the sidewalk when you get off the bus.
- 5.13 If you must cross the street when you get off the bus, cross only at the corner after making eye contact with the Driver. Cross at least twelve feet in front of the bus. Be careful of oncoming traffic. Go directly to the opposite sidewalk.