



School Bus Collision/Incident Protocol

Although rare, school bus collisions and incidents can happen. If they occur, a series of actions take place to ensure the safety and well-being of those in the vehicle.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a consistent plan of action in the management of school bus collisions/incidents for the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) and its contract transportation service providers. The responsibilities of all partners involved have been defined in the procedures below.

Procedure for Service Providers

- School bus driver must notify the service provider's dispatcher of the collision/incident via bus radio. All collisions/incidents must be reported, even if students were not on the bus at the time.
- Dispatcher contacts 911 as required.
- Driver must then follow the steps outlined in the *School Bus Driver Action Guidance Card* prepared by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) and Emergency Health Services (EHS).
- Driver must remain on scene until assistance has arrived and they are relieved, if required.
- Service provider's dispatcher will confirm with the driver that 911 has been notified and is on route.
- Service provider's dispatcher will require some preliminary information from the driver for the collision/incident report, including but not limited to the following:
 - Location of collision/incident
 - Time of collision/incident
 - Number of students on the school bus
 - All relevant information about students' health and well-being
 - Summary of incident
 - Route number
 - School(s) serviced by the bus
- The service provider's dispatcher will contact the service provider's manager and provide the preliminary report in the *Preliminary Collision/Incident form*.
- The service provider's manager will contact the Director, Operations Services at the HRCE (or designate) and the school(s) to provide the preliminary information, ideally within 30

minutes of the collision/incident or as soon as possible.

- The bus driver should explain to parents/guardians on the scene that EHS is on its way to assess the students. If parents/guardians insist on removing their child, the driver must take note on the student list and notify the school.
- Students are only permitted to leave with a parent/guardian after an EHS professional has evaluated them. Confirmation of identity must be made of the parent/guardian before allowing a child to leave the scene. The bus driver must also ensure the safety of the remaining students at the scene.
- The service provider's maintenance team or safety officer will assess the bus for serviceability prior to operation after a collision/incident.
- Within 24 hours of the collision/incident, the service provider's manager or safety officer will provide a detailed collision/incident report to HRCE.
- The operator's operations/general manager will report all collisions/incidents to the Director, Operations Services at the HRCE (or designate) in a monthly report.

Procedure for HRCE

- The Director, Operations Services (or designate) will contact the following:
 - School Principal
 - Coordinator, Transportation
 - Transportation Supervisors
 - Transportation Support Specialist
 - Transportation Routers and Administrators
 - Director and Coordinator of Programs & System Services
 - Director and Coordinator of Programs & Student Services
 - SLC Supervisor
 - Regional Executive Director of Education
 - Senior Staff Advisor
 - HRCE Communications team
- The transportation supervisor will call the principal's mobile phone to advise them to contact the parent/guardian of each child involved so that the family is aware of the collision/incident and the student's condition. See the *Collision & Incident Guidance Script for Principals* for assistance on how to notify parents/guardians (the transportation supervisor should share this script with the principal).
- If the transportation supervisor is unable to call the principal due to unforeseen circumstances or operational challenges (i.e. significant winter storm), or cannot reach them, the SLC supervisor will be notified and asked to call the principal instead.
- The Coordinator of Programs & Student Services will initiate the School Crisis

Response team if required.

- The HRCE Communications team will work together and be responsible for all media inquiries.

School Principal/Vice-Principal Responsibilities

- The principal/vice-principal must keep an updated list (manifest) of students on each bus route, and a list of those on a bus during school trips, in case of emergency.
- Principals will ensure BusPlanner is up-to-date with each child's route number, pick-up/drop-off times and locations, and parent/guardian contact information.
- Once notified of the collision/incident, the principal (or designate) will contact the parent/guardian of each student involved to advise them of the situation and the child's condition.
- The principal (or designate) should drive to the scene of the collision/incident to assist, if and when necessary (e.g. collisions or incidents where students have injuries).
- If students are injured and hospitalized, the principal (or designate) will attend the hospital where possible. This is to assist parents/guardians and to provide support to students, as appropriate.
- At the first opportunity, the principal (or designate) should notify the relevant school staff of the collision/incident and any details.
- The principal (or designate) will complete the necessary School Insurance Program Incident Report form for any injured children.
- The principal (or designate) must inform the Pre-Primary Supervisor if a Pre-Primary student is involved.
- In the days after the collision/incident, the principal (or designate) will ask teachers and parents/guardians to monitor the students to ensure that no problems develop.
- The principal (or designate) should remind parents/guardians about the coverage of student collision insurance, as appropriate.

Teacher Responsibilities (For School Trips)

- Teacher(s) on the bus must have a list (manifest) of all students in the vehicle. A copy of this list must remain at the school prior to departure for the trip. The list must include all emergency contact information.
- A teacher will inform the school principal (or designate) of the collision/incident and any

injuries as soon as possible.

- Teacher(s) will assist with bus evacuation if necessary.
- Teacher(s) must hold all children at the scene until Emergency Health Services (EHS) arrive.
- Teacher(s) should explain to parents/guardians on the scene that EHS is on its way to assess the students. If parents/guardians insist on removing their child, teachers must take note on the student list and notify the school.
- Students are only permitted to leave with a parent/guardian after an EHS professional has evaluated them. Confirmation of identity must be made of the parent/guardian before allowing a child to leave the scene. Teacher(s) must also ensure the safety of the remaining students at the scene.
- If students are injured and require immediate medical attention and/or hospitalization, the teacher(s) will take their direction from EHS.
- Teacher(s) will remain in contact with the principal (or designate) until the scene is completely cleared of students.

Definitions

Motor Vehicle Collision

A collision is the term used to define a vehicle making contact with another vehicle, person, animal, or object.

Types of Collisions:

- Rear-end collisions are traffic accidents that occur when one vehicle makes contact with another vehicle in front of it.
- Side-impact collisions, also known as “T-bone” or “broadside” collisions occur when the side of a vehicle is impacted by the front or rear of another vehicle or a fixed object.
- Head-on collisions are when the front ends of two vehicles make contact with each other.
- Single-vehicle collisions occur when only one vehicle is involved. In some cases, a vehicle makes contact with other objects.
- Sideswipe collisions are a result of two vehicles, usually moving in the same direction, coming into contact with each other’s sides.
- Vehicle rollovers occur when a vehicle flips over onto its side or roof.
- Multi-vehicle collisions, also called multi-vehicle pile-ups, occur when any one of the above mentioned collisions involves three or more vehicles.

- Pedestrian accident is any accident in which a vehicle makes contact with a person who is not in a vehicle.

Types of Incidents:

- An occurrence that can lead to serious consequences, including a medical emergency
- When a Pre-Primary to Grade 2 student is not met at their stop
- A student placed on the wrong bus
- A student dropped off at the wrong stop or school
- Injury (slip, trip, fall)
- A lost student
- Student not on the school bus list (manifest)
- Evacuation of the bus
- Security threat
- Any other disturbance to service not related to student behaviour

HRCE Student Transportation Contact Information

Telephone: 902-431-4723

Email: transportation@hrce.ca