



## **School Bus Collision/Incident Protocol 2019-20**

### **Background:**

School bus collisions and incidents, although rare, are a fact of driving, a series of communications and actions must take place because of the collision or incident. The safety and well-being of our students is the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)'s priority.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a consistent methodology in the management of school bus collisions/ incidents for HRCE and its contract transportation service provider(s) indicated here by "Operator".

The responsibilities for all partners involved has been defined in this protocol below.

### **Operator Responsibilities:**

- Driver of the school bus must notify the Operator's Dispatcher of the collision/incident via school bus radio. Dispatch contacts 911. The driver must then follow the steps as 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 relieved the driver if required.
- Operator's Dispatcher will confirm that **911** has been notified and on route or at the scene.
- Operator's Dispatcher will get some preliminary information from the Driver for the Collision / Incident Report to include but not limited to the following:
  - Location of Collision/ Incident
  - Time of Collision/ Incident
  - Number of Students on the Bus
  - Anything relevant information of students' health and wellbeing
  - Summary of incident
  - Bus number
  - Schools serviced by this Bus



- The Operator's Dispatcher will contact the Operations Manager and provide the preliminary report. The Operations Manager will in turn contact the HRCE Director of Operations (or designate) and provide the preliminary information ideally within 30 minutes of the collision/ incident or as soon as feasible.
- The Operator's Safety Supervisor or Representative once on the collision/ incident scene, will determine if the run/route can continue with or without the driver and if a replacement bus is needed.
  - The Operator's Maintenance Team or Safety Supervisor will assess the bus for serviceability prior to operation after a collision/incident.
- Within 24 hours of collision/incident, the Operations Manager or Safety Manager will provide a detailed Collision/ Incident Report to the HRCE.
- The Operator's Operations/General Manager will report to the HRCE Director of Operations (or designate) all collisions/incidents in the monthly updated report.

### **HRCE Departmental Responsibilities:**

- The Director of Operations (or designate) will contact the Director, School Administration and Coordinator, School Administration. The Director of Operations (or designate) will also contact the Transportation Coordinator, Communications Coordinator and Communications Specialist, Transportation.
- The Director/Coordinator of School Administration will contact the School Administration Supervisor to advise the Principal to contact a parent/guardian of each student involved in the bus collision/incident to advise them of the collision/incident and the student's condition and present location. See the **Collision/ Incident Guidance Script** for assistance on how to best notify the parents of the collision/incident.
- The Coordinator, School Administration will contact the Coordinator of Student Services and will initiate the School Crisis Response Team if required.
- The Communications Coordinator and Communications Specialist, Transportation will work together and be responsible for all media inquiries.



### **School Principal Responsibilities:**

- The Principal must keep the most up-to-date list of all students on every bus trip. This includes a list for all daily regular commutes to and from school and for school trips. Principals will ensure that [Bus Planner Web](#) is accurate for daily regular commutes. In addition, a detailed manifest of all students on school trips will need to be kept at the school.
- Upon being contacted by the School Administration Supervisor (and/or the Operations Manager), the Principal or designate will contact a parent/guardian of each student involved in the bus collision (both injured and uninjured) to advise them of the collision/incident, the student's condition and present location.
- If reasonable, the Principal or designate should drive to the scene of the collision/incident to assist in any way possible.
- If students are injured and hospitalized, the Principal (or designate) will attend the hospital where possible and if applicable. This is to assist parents/guardians and to provide support to students, as appropriate.
- At the first appropriate opportunity, the Principal (or designate) should notify relevant school staff of the collision/incident and of any details.
- The Principal or designate will complete the necessary SIP Incident Report Form for any injured student.
- In the days subsequent to 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 Trips):**

- The Teacher on the bus must have a list of all students on the bus. A copy of the list is to be left at the school prior to departure of trip from the school. The list will include all emergency contact information.
- The Teacher will inform the school Principal (or designate) of the collision/incident and any injuries as soon as possible.
- The Teacher will assist with bus evacuation if necessary.
- The Teacher must hold all students at the scene until EHS arrives. The Teacher should explain to parents/guardians on scene that EHS are on their way to assess the students. If the Parent/ Guardian insists on removing their child, the Teacher is to take note on the student list and notify the school.
- Students may only be permitted to leave with a Parent/ Guardian after an EHS professional has evaluated them. Confirmation must be made of Parent/ Guardian prior to allowing students to leave the scene. The Teacher must also ensure the safety of the remaining students on scene.
- If students are injured and require immediate medical attention and/or hospitalization, the Teacher will take their direction from Emergency Health Services (EHS).
- The Teacher will remain in contact with the Principal (or designate) as appropriate until the scene has been completely cleared of students.