

Collision or Incident Procedure

Procedure

If a school bus is involved in a collision or incident, a series of communications and actions must take place depending on the seriousness of the collision or incident. Our first and foremost priority is the safety of students.

Definitions

Motor Vehicle Collision:

A collision is the term used to define a vehicle unintentionally 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” collisions or “broadsided,” 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 involve three or more vehicles.
- Pedestrian accident is any accident in which a vehicle makes contact with a person who is not in a vehicle.

Incident:

- An occurrence related to a student, Driver, monitor, educational assistant, nurse, parents/guardians, school personnel that can lead to serious consequences, including a medical emergency;
- When a Pre-Primary to Grade 2 student is not met at the 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;
- Or any other disturbance to service not related to student behaviour.

School bus collisions and incidents, although rare, are a fact of student transportation, and a series of communications and actions must take place because of the collision or incident. The safety and well-being of our students are 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 Providers. The responsibilities for all partners involved have been defined in this protocol below.

Service Provider Responsibilities:

- Driver of the school bus must notify the Service Provider's Dispatcher of the collision/incident via school bus radio. Dispatcher 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.
- Service Provider Dispatcher will confirm that 911 has been notified and on route or at the scene.
- Service Provider'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 school bus
 - All relevant information of students' health and well-being
 - Summary of incident
 - Route number
 - Schools serviced by this school bus.
- The Service Provider's Dispatcher will contact the Operations Manager and provide the preliminary report in the attached ***Preliminary Collision/Incident form***. 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 Service Provider's Safety Supervisor or Representative, once on the collision/incident scene, will determine if the run/route can continue with or without the Driver.
- The Service Provider'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 Supervisor 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 all of the following:
 - Director/Coordinator of School Administration
 - Regional Executive Director
 - Senior Staff Advisor
 - Transportation Coordinator
 - Communications Coordinator and Communications Specialist.
- The Director/Coordinator of School Administration will contact:
 - School Administration Supervisor, who will then advise the Principal to contact the parent/guardian of each student and advise them of the collision/incident and the student's condition. See the ***Collision/Incident Guidance Script*** for Principals for assistance on how to notify the parents/guardians of the collision/incident.
 - 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 regular daily commutes to and from school and school trips. Principals will ensure that BusPlanner Web is accurate for regular daily 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 the parent/guardian of each student involved in the bus collision (both injured and uninjured) to advise them of the collision/incident and the student's condition.
 - 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 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 student.



- 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 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 the departure of the 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 Emergency Health Services (EHS) arrives. The Teacher should explain to parents/guardians on the scene that EHS is 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 the parent/guardian before allowing students to leave the scene. The Teacher must also ensure the safety of the remaining students on the scene.
- If students are injured and require immediate medical attention and/or hospitalization, the Teacher will take their direction from EHS.
- The Teacher will remain in contact with the Principal (or Designate) as appropriate until the scene has been completely cleared of students.