



Vermont School Safety Bus Accident Facilitated Dialogue

Objective – This facilitated dialogue is designed to initiate a conversation about how your school would respond to a school bus accident and to familiarize participants with current school emergency operations plans, policies, and procedures.

Please remember the following guidelines throughout the exercise:

- Great opportunity to walk-through a scenario together
- Low stress / no fault environment
- Absolutely no right or wrong answers
- There is no hidden agenda or trick questions
- Discussion does not establish or imply a precedent
- Respond based on current plans, policies and procedures
- “I don’t know” or “we don’t have that” are okay and acceptable answers

Scenario:

The date is February 17th (it’s currently snowing and the temperature outside is 15 degrees)

At 7:30 am – Your school is informed that a school bus carrying 20 of your children has been involved in an accident. The location of the accident is approximately five miles away from your school and there are several injuries reported.

- What would the Principal do with this information? With who/whom would he/she share this information?
- In your current role, what would you do with this information? How would you know what to do? (common sense, established policy, guidance from a supervisor)
- Is the District Office notified of this event? If so, who makes this notification?
- What strategies are developed to deal with this situation? Who specifically is involved in developing these strategies?
- Do you currently have any policies that will assist in guiding your response actions?
- Will you send a school representative to the scene to assist in your response? If so, who/whom and what will be their specific role?
- Are current plans in place to coordinate your emergency response actions with your local bus company? Have you ever conducted an exercise with your bus company to test your response actions to an incident like this?

At 7:45 am. – Your school is notified by local first responders that five children are being transported to the hospital for injuries sustained in the accident.

- What actions do you take at this point? What specific procedures are followed by school officials?
- Are you considering notifying parents of this situation? If so, who makes this notification? How does it happen? Does the District Office assist with this notification?
- How would you coordinate the transportation of the remaining un-injured children on the bus to the school or alternate location?
- What actions are you taking at your school to inform your staff and student body of the events taking place?
- What plans will you put in place to deal with parents who may be arriving at your school after hearing of this accident? Who will be in charge of developing this plan?
- What arrangements are being made (if any) for a school representative to travel to the local hospital where the injured students are being taken?
- How will you coordinate your efforts with local first responders at the scene of the accident?
- Would you implement the Incident Command System?

At 8:15 am. – Coordination has been made for the remaining children to be transported to the school.

- How do you communicate this information to the parents of the children involved?
- Who specifically at your school will coordinate these efforts?
- What plans are in place to coordinate any media inquiries about this incident? Is the District Office a part of this process?
- Do you plan to coordinate for mental health resources for any of the children involved? If so, what are those resources and who coordinates for them?
- What plans do you put in place to deal with the parents involved upon their arrival at your school? Would local first responders or a bus company representative be at your school to answer any questions the parents might have about the accident?
- What follow up plans are developed to further discuss this incident with your school community?
- Who will be in charge of communicating with the parents of the injured children? How does this communication take place? Does a representative from your school/District Office travel to the local hospital to make this coordination?

Additional Considerations



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1. What additional incident command training has been identified for school staff to attend?
2. Does your school have more than one person trained to use your mass notification system?
3. Do you have a plan for command and control during an emergency if senior school officials from your school are not present during an emergency?
4. Have you ever trained with local first responders on how to deal with a situation like this?
5. Does your local bus company have contingency plans in place to assist with immediate transport needs during a situation like this?