



PLEASE COPY AND DISTRIBUTE THIS MEMO TO YOUR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

To: All School Bus Drivers
From: Brian Nevin, Director, Office of Student Transportation
Re: School Bus Evacuation Drills

Information to Drivers: The Howard County Public School System will continue conducting school bus evacuation drills in accordance with the Code of Regulations. All students, to include those with an IEP or 504 Plan, must participate. **Schools will schedule and conduct the drills according to the following procedures. DO NOT CONDUCT DRILLS AT ANY OTHER TIME OR LOCATION OTHER THAN THAT DESIGNATED BY EACH SCHOOL.**

The driver will pull the bus into a designated area, turn the bus off, remove the key from the ignition, and stand to address the students.

The driver will then inform all students on their bus that they are to participate in a bus evacuation drill. It is imperative that drivers emphasize the importance of the drill and that all students give their complete attention. The driver should explain that there are three (3) types of evacuation drills. They are front door, rear door and side door.

- Front door evacuation: Students should evacuate from the rear of the bus toward the front while alternating rows.
- Rear door evacuation: Students should evacuate from the front of the bus toward the rear while alternating rows. Advise students to duck their heads while exiting and under no circumstances are they to jump.
- Side door evacuation: Students should evacuate starting at the exit door. As with the front and rear door evacuations, they are to alternate rows.

Conducting the Drill: Students should be informed that they will be participating in a bus evacuation during which they will be required to exit towards the rear or side emergency door.

The driver should review with the students where the emergency exits are located and how to operate each of them. All buses have a front service door and rear (or side) emergency door. In addition, many buses are equipped with roof hatches and side pop-out windows.

At this time the driver should review the emergency procedures. The students are required to:

- a. Remain orderly and listen to directions from the driver.
- b. Leave all loose belongings such as books, backpacks, etc. on the bus.
- c. Exit through the emergency door (rear or side) as designated by the driver.
- d. Students should step down to the pavement. Students may sit on the floor at the rear exit and scoot out the door if they prefer. Students should take enough steps to clear the door. Do not pass underneath the door.
- e. Form an orderly group or line away from the bus and wait for directions. In case of an actual emergency, the students should go about 10 feet up-wind from the bus (the distance between two telephone poles). Furthermore, should the driver become injured or preoccupied with the bus, he/she should not hesitate to appoint bystanders to supervise students.

The driver should initiate the actual drill by saying, "EVACUATE BY THE REAR DOOR". It should be noted that the driver should remain on the bus until the last student has exited. However, during these drills, if school administrators and/or instructional staff are not available to supervise the bus evacuation drill, then the driver should position him/herself outside or inside the bus, as circumstances require.

Students and drivers have carried out their parts in a very creditable manner during past drills. I trust we will receive the same help and cooperation again this year.