



Tabletop Exercise #2

School Bus Slides into an SUV

CSDSIP Tabletop Exercise Series | May 2021

Working in K-12 schools can bring with it a bevy of a different challenges. Having effective emergency plans can help schools to operate efficiently no matter what happens throughout the year. Tabletop exercises are a great tool to ensure healthy operations by honing key stakeholders' response skills and helping you understand when and how emergency plans fit into various incidents. CSDSIP is back with another scenario-based tabletop exercise, based on real life events, to test your emergency response skills. Each exercise is intended to improve your teams critical thinking abilities in realistic scenarios, help coordinate the right people to assist in an emergency, and facilitate confidence-building knowledge within your team.

Tabletop Exercise 2

School Bus slid into SUV. What do you do?

When: February at 3:30 PM

Where: One block from the High School

Incident: At approximately 3:30 PM, a 72-passenger school bus with 15 students on board was coming around a bend in the road. The road was icy due to a snowstorm the day before. As the bus rounded the corner an SUV pulled out in front of the bus. The bus driver stepped on the brakes but due to the icy conditions slid into the rear of the SUV causing visual body damage. Some students on the bus were unseated upon impact.

What was the response? The bus driver immediately notified dispatch of the incident. The bus driver then notified law enforcement and EMS. Students who were not injured on the bus began to depart the bus to wait for pickup. The injured students were told to remain on the bus until EMS arrived. The driver made note of the students that were injured. The transportation director arrived on-site and called another bus to the site to transport the uninjured students. The injured students were transported by EMS to a local hospital. The school was provided a list of the students on board and office staff began notifying parents.

The bus driver then took photos of the damage to the bus, the other vehicle, and the accident scene. The bus driver also obtained the name/address/contact information of the other vehicle's driver.

It took three total hours to clean up the accident in its entirety. The transportation director sent the driver for drug and alcohol testing in accordance with law and district policy EEAEAA-R. Once the transportation director received the police report, a claim was submitted to district's insurance company three days later.

Critical Thinking:

1. What current emergency plans would be activated if this occurred at your district?
 - a. Was the response adequate to the magnitude of the incident?
2. Are there District and CDE Transportation guidelines that should be followed?
3. Was everyone notified in the correct order?
4. Would you have involved anyone else?
5. What would you have done differently?
6. What lessons can be learned from this scenario?



Recommendations

School Bus Slide Tabletop Exercise

In this scenario the initial response should be to assess and attend to the safety and wellbeing of the passengers, and then to secure the bus and students. The bus driver should immediately survey for injuries and take note. Check for immediate dangers in and around the bus. Downed power lines, fuel leaks, fire and traffic are all hazards that can make an already bad situation worse. Use care, caution, and common sense when dealing with these situations. Unless there are immediate danger, it is best for all passengers to remain on the bus and in their seats. If it is unsafe to remain on the bus the bus driver should facilitate a safe evacuation of the passengers away from traffic. After the securing of the uninjured passengers, contact law enforcement/ emergency medical services (EMS) and the transportation dispatcher. If it is the district practice to call transportation dispatch to coordinate emergency response, please adhere to district policy. For some districts it is necessary to involve the communications person. When reporting an accident share the following details:

- Location of accident
- Your bus number
- Route number
- Injuries
- Accident event

Set out reflectors to prevent further accidents. Follow the CDE recommendation in regards to staking out your vehicle found [here](#). CDE also recommends gathering information such as names, license numbers, registration numbers, location, time, road and weather conditions, insurance information, and witnesses and written down accurately. It is important after an accident, that a district obtain photos of not only the district vehicle, but other vehicle/vehicles involved at the accident scene. Contact the school the students on the bus attended and share information regarding the accident including the students that are injured. If possible, before students are transported, get information about the location of the hospital they will be transported to. Share that information with the school. Give a factual statement to law enforcement. Do not admit fault. Alcohol and controlled substance tests should be conducted as soon after an accident as practicable in accordance with EEAEAA Policy and FMCSA guidelines that can be found [here](#).

Inform the district's insurance company as soon as possible (within 48 hours). Do not wait for police report.

Conclusion: Transportation staff on occasion will have to make quick but meaningful decisions in a crisis situation. Having an effective plan in place can drastically change the outcome of a situation. Please reach out to CSDSIP to talk through this tabletop exercise or to answer any questions that may arise out of the completing this exercise.

Resources

School Bus Slide Tabletop Exercise

Unit 6 of CDE's Operator Guide covers Accidents and Emergency Procedures. The manuals can be found linked below. Refer to the Operator guide for recommendation on transportation procedures.

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/transportation/2020cdetypeamultifunctionsmallvehiclerouteactivityoperatorguidea-0>

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/transportation/2020cdetypeamultifunctionsmallvehiclerouteactivityoperatorguidea>

[Sample EEAEAA Policy](#) | [FMCSA Guidelines](#)