

**TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES**

**Transportation Safety Plan**

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a transportation safety plan which includes procedures for boarding and exiting a school bus at a school or other trip destination. (Education Code 39831.3)

A copy of the plan shall be kept at each school site and made available upon request to the California Highway Patrol. (Education Code 39831.3)

**Safe Bus Operations**

School bus operations shall be limited when atmospheric conditions reduce visibility on the roadway to 200 feet or less during regular home-to-school transportation service. Bus drivers for school activity trips shall have the authority to discontinue bus operation whenever they determine that it is unsafe to continue operation because of reduced visibility. (Vehicle Code 34501.6)

(cf. 3516.5 - Emergency Schedules)

(cf. 3540 - Transportation)

(cf. 3541.1 - Transportation for School-Related Trips)

School buses and school student activity buses shall not be operated whenever the number of passengers exceeds bus seating capacity, except when necessary in emergency situations which require that students be moved immediately to ensure their safety.

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

When a school bus or student activity bus is equipped with a passenger restraint system, all passengers shall be required to be properly restrained by that system while the bus is in motion.

Bus drivers shall be informed of procedures to be followed to reasonably ensure that all passengers are so restrained.

The Superintendent or designee may place a notice at bus entrances that warns against unauthorized entry. The driver or another school official may order any person to disembark if that person enters a bus without prior authorization and has intent to commit a crime. (Education Code 39842; 13 CCR 1256.5)

Each school bus shall be equipped with at least one fire extinguisher located in the driver's compartment which meets the standards specified in law. (Education Code 39838; 13 CCR 1242)

The Superintendent or designee shall review all investigations of bus incidents and accidents to develop preventative measures.

### ***Foggy Day Procedures***

*In conjunction with Section 34501.6 of the California Motor Vehicle Code regarding the transportation of students in school buses on days when visibility on roadways is reduced to less than 200 feet by fog or other atmospheric conditions the Merced Union High School District Transportation Department will put into operation the following Foggy Day School Bus Operational Procedures:*

- 1. The Transportation Department has identified certain employees who will act as "spotters" on foggy days. The spotters will evaluate the fog situation in the following areas on the way to work each morning. The areas are:
  - a. Atwater to Merced*
  - b. Chowchilla to Merced*
  - c. Merced to Livingston*
  - d. Snelling to Merced*
  - e. Atwater to Livingston**
  
- 2. Spotters will report to Dispatch at the Merced Transportation office by 5:30 am regarding visibility. If the majority of spotters indicate visibility due to fog is reduced below 200 feet, by 5:45 am, Dispatch will call a **PLAN A** foggy day alert and advise all district staff via email, and parents and students by local radio station KYOS – 1480 AM and television stations KSEE Channel 24, KMPH Channel 26, KSFN Channel 30 and KGPE Channel 47 that Merced Union High School District is on a **PLAN A**, one hour delay, foggy day school bus schedule. (NOTE: When the District web site is revised there will be a number of links to the Foggy Day Policy. Dispatch will access the web site and indicate whether Plan A or any of the other below mentioned Plans are in effect or if the foggy day schedule has been cancelled.)*
  
- 3. After an additional 30 minutes, at 6:15 am, another group of spotters will be sent out to check on conditions throughout the District. The areas of evaluation are:
  - a. McSwain*
  - b. El Nido*
  - c. Highway 140 toward Gustine*
  - d. North Merced – Hopeton/Snelling*
  - e. Cressey/Ballico**

4. *When visibility conditions improve, the foggy day schedule will be cancelled. School buses will go on routes. Merced Union High School District staff, parents and students will be notified via email, TV and radio.*
5. *If conditions have not cleared so that visibility exceeds 200 feet Dispatch will notify Merced Union High School District staff via email. Parents and students will be notified via TV and radio stations that foggy day **PLAN B**, a second hour delay, is now in effect.*
6. ***PLAN B:** At 7:15 am the same spotters as in number 3 above will be sent out to their respective areas. If visibility conditions have improved, the foggy day schedule will be cancelled. School buses will go on routes. MUHSD staff, parents and students will be notified by staff email, TV and radio. If extreme low visibility conditions persist, Dispatch will implement **PLAN C**, a third hour school bus delay. Notification will be by the same method as PLANS A and B.*
7. *It is not expected that the District go beyond Plan C and cancel morning bus service entirely as visibility due to fog almost always improves beyond 200 feet by 8:45 am.*

*NOTE: The above policy is for “School Bus Riders” and district schools will operate on the same daily schedule even though Foggy Day School Bus Schedules are in effect. Students who walk or provide their own transportation to school should arrive at the regular time. Activity trips, Monday through Friday will be reviewed and if needed will be delayed until conditions improve. Unless an additional announcement is made, afternoon bus runs and athletic trips will operate on a regular schedule. Saturday activity trips will be at the discretion of the school bus driver to delay or to return to the school site for visibility reduced to 200 feet and less.*

### **Student Instruction**

All students who are transported in a school bus or student activity bus shall receive instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety. (Education Code 39831.5)

Before departing on a school activity trip, all students riding on a school bus or student activity bus shall receive safety instruction which includes, but is not limited to: (Education Code 39831.5)

1. Location of emergency exits
2. Location and use of emergency equipment

This instruction also may include responsibilities of passengers seated next to an emergency exit. (Education Code 39831.5)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

39830-39842 Transportation, school buses

51202 Instruction in personal and public health and safety

PENAL CODE

241.3 Assault against school bus driver

243.3 Battery against school bus driver

VEHICLE CODE

545-546 Definition of school bus and school pupil activity bus

22112 Loading and unloading passengers

27316 Passenger restraint systems

34500 California Highway Patrol responsibility to regulate safe operation of school buses

34501.5 California Highway Patrol responsibility to adopt rules re: safe operation of school buses

34501.6 School buses; reduced visibility

34508 California Highway Patrol responsibility to adopt rules re: equipment and operations of school buses

34508.5 Investigation of accidents

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

14102 Instruction in bus safety and evacuation

14103 Authority of the driver

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 13

1200-1293 Motor carrier safety

Management Resources:

## WEB SITES

California Department of Education, Office of School Transportation:  
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/tn>

California Highway Patrol: <http://www.chp.ca.gov>

National Coalition for School Bus Safety: <http://www.ncsbs.org>

National Transportation Safety Board: <http://www.nts.gov>

Regulation **MERCED UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

approved: November 15, 2006 Atwater, California

*revised:*