



TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURE

NWOSSC 123

SECTION 100 GENERAL

123 BUS EVACUATION DRILLS

Statement and Rationale

In the interest of student safety, school bus evacuation drills will be performed annually. Evacuation drills provide an opportunity for students and drivers to experience and practice emergency evacuation procedures in a controlled environment.

The objective of school bus evacuation drills is to practice moving students off the bus safely, in the shortest reasonable time, and in an orderly manner while reinforcing driver direction and the proper use of available emergency exits.

Procedure

1.0 Bus Evacuation Process

Bus evacuations will be completed following established internal operating procedures. Internal operating procedures and training resources will be updated as needed to remain current with industry best practices, as well as federal and provincial regulations and guidance.

Physical evacuation drills should be completed wherever possible. However, where a physical evacuation drill is not safe or appropriate for a student, class, route, or vehicle type, the drill may be delivered as a modified or narrative exercise.

2.0 Accessibility

Detailed internal operating procedures and evacuation plans will be developed annually for students with disabilities or special needs, in consultation with the applicable Bus Operator and, where appropriate, school staff.

Participation in evacuation drills by students with special transportation or evacuation needs, including students using specialized or lift-equipped vehicles, will be supported through individualized planning, alternative instruction, or school staff-assisted review, as appropriate to the student's needs and safety plan.

3.0 Bus Evacuation Drill Types

3.1 School Site Bus Evacuation Drills

School site bus evacuation drills will be conducted in coordination with the delivery of the standardized Ontario school bus rider safety training program.

Wherever possible, school site bus evacuation drills will be conducted in the school bus loading zone.

The Consortium will coordinate scheduling with the training provider, school, and the applicable Bus Operator to identify an appropriate date, time, and location for the drill.

School site bus evacuation drills will be led by the Bus Driver, with supervision by school staff.

3.2 Enroute Bus Evacuation Drills

Enroute evacuation drills will be completed during regular home to school bus runs, at a pre-arranged, approved location. Where possible, school sites will be used for enroute evacuation drills.

School administration and Ontario Provincial Police (or local police services, as appropriate) will be notified in advance of enroute evacuation drills.

To preserve the training value of the drill, enroute evacuation drills may be unannounced to students and parents/guardians.

The Consortium will issue alerts to stakeholders the day of enroute evacuation drills to advise of possible route delays resulting from the drill.

4.0 Frequency and Timing

Bus evacuation drills will be conducted twice annually, including one school site bus evacuation for all elementary students (kindergarten to Grade 8), and one enroute bus evacuation for all bus riders.

School site bus evacuation drills will be completed in coordination with school bus rider safety training delivered annually in all elementary schools.

Enroute bus evacuation drills will be completed during the a.m. bus run to avoid conflicting with the Consortium's Visible Parent/Guardian procedure.

5.0 Recordkeeping and Follow-up

The Consortium will maintain a record of school site bus evacuation drills and enroute evacuation drills, including the date, school, participating driver, format of the drill, accessibility accommodations used, incidents or issues identified.

The General Manager or designate will review records of each bus evacuation drill and identify any follow-up actions required.

New Bus Driver training will include evacuation procedures, and Bus Operators will review evacuation procedures with all Drivers twice annually. Bus Operators will maintain records of all required training.

Date Last Reviewed	June 2026 (October 2020)
Date First Approved	2014
Associated Policies/Procedures	NWOSSC – 001 Transportation Policy, section 3.3
References	