

**Newark Grade School District #66 / Newark Community High School District #18**

**SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENT**

**Release of Minors Involved in School Bus Incidents**

**POLICY**

STATEMENT: Incidents involving school buses pose unique challenges to the EMS provider in assuming proper release of uninjured children. Once Medical Control confirms that the minor children are not injured, the custody and responsibility for these uninjured children will remain with the responding EMS provider until the children are transferred to parents, legal guardians, school officials or the hospital. If no procedure exists to have children transferred to a parent, legal guardian or school official, then these children will need to be transported to the hospital.

PURPOSE: To reduce the number of uninjured children transported to the hospital and to reduce the EMS time and resources used at the scene of school bus accidents.

PROCEDURE:

- A. On arrival at the scene, EMS personnel shall determine the category of the incident and request appropriate resources. EMS must also accomplish a complete assessment of the scene to include at least: mechanism of injury, number of patients, damage to the vehicle, triage as outlined in the System Plan. Once this has been accomplished, then the patients may be assigned to one of the following categories:
  1. CATEGORY A: Mechanism of injury, school bus occupancy indicates that at least one child may reasonably be expected to have significant injuries: (IE: roll-over, high speed impact, intrusion into the bus etc.) or significant injury is present in one or more children. All children in this incident category must be transferred to an appropriate hospital unless a System refusal form is signed by a parent or legal guardian.
  2. CATEGORY B: Mechanism of injury, school bus occupancy indicates that at least one child may reasonably be expected to have minor injuries: (IE: speed of impact, intrusion into bus, etc.) or minor injury in one or more children exists with no obvious mechanism of injury that could reasonably be expected to cause significant injuries. EMS personnel must complete an EMS multiple casualty form and secure a signature of an appropriate school official.
  3. CATEGORY C: Mechanism of injury, school bus occupancy indicates no injuries may be present and that the release of uninjured children may be the only EMS need. No injuries are present in any children and no obvious mechanism of injury exists (use approved System Multiple Patient Release School Bus Incident form).
  4. CATEGORY D: If the pediatric patient(s) have special healthcare needs and/or communications difficulties, then all of these patients must be transported to the hospital for evaluation and disposition unless approval for release is received from Medical Control or parent/legal guardian has signed the approval refusal form.
- B. After determining the category of the incident, EMS personnel shall determine the extent of EMS involvement and contact Medical Control. Medical Control shall approve the implementation of this policy.

## MANDATORY FORMS ATTACHED

- C. Adults, victims 18 years old and older, and occupants of other vehicles will be treated or released in accordance with routine system operating procedures.
- D. If Medical Control has approved usage of this policy/plan, then each provider will implement their procedure for contacting parents, legal guardians or appropriate school officials to receive custody of uninjured children.

The approval system Multiple Casualty form for School Bus Incidents must be utilized for all children who will not be transported.

Each child transported must have a completed run report.

One run report indicating the nature of the incident (etc.) shall be completed and must include all information regarding the incident including the number of patients released. Keep a copy of this report with the release form or with refusal forms signed by the parents.

Parents/legal guardian(s) or appropriate school official must be given a copy of the Patient Education sheet for refusal release of care.

Any parent or legal guardian who arrives on scene to remove and assume responsibility for their child will be requested to sign an individual refusal form.

- E. EMS providers shall use reasonable means to contact the parents and school officials. This could include use of telephone, cellular phone or direct contact by police. If contacted by phone, EMS providers shall take reasonable means to confirm the identity and authority of the parent or school official.
- F. Once the identity and authority of the parent or school official has been established, the EMS provider may release the child to the parent, guardian, school official or alternate transport source. School officials will follow their established program for informing parents and/or legal guardians in regard to incidents.
- G. *The health and safety of the child is the primary concern. It is the responsibility of the EMS provider to assure the child is returned to the parent or placed on the schools alternate transport vehicle. If the EMS provider on the scene determines a child should receive a physician evaluation or offered medical care, the child WILL BE TRANSPORTED to the hospital unless the parents are on scene and consent to refusal.*
- H. Each Pre-hospital provider agency in the System who may likely respond to a school bus accident, must contact the school superintendent in their district to obtain the name and title of the “appropriate school official” who may take responsibility for the children on the bus involved in the accident.
- I. Utilization review (CQI) will be conducted by the EMS System of the agency(s) involved for each implementation of this procedure.