

**IT HAPPENED,
DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU!**



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Michigan School Bus Driver Continuing Education Curriculum Manual

Certification for
2019-2021



April 20, 2018

Acknowledgement

Section 51 of Act No. 187 of 1990 (Pupil Transportation Act), Section 257.1851 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, requires that a driver of a school bus transporting pupils to or from school or school-related events complete an entry level school bus safety education course and a six-hour continuing education course within two years after the entry level certification, as well as each succeeding two years thereafter. Each course must be completed at an educational agency approved by the Michigan Department of Education.

This continuing education curriculum, approved by the Michigan Department of Education for the training period July 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019, for certification through September 30, 2021, was compiled with the cooperation of many individuals concerned with the safe transportation of Michigan's children.

Michigan School Bus Training Agencies and Representatives

Eastern UP* ISD** – Gary Davis	Northern Michigan University – Lori Malnor
Genesee ISD - Chad Sexton	Oakland ISD - Lori Richardson
Iosco RESA*** – Jo Allen	Ottawa Area ISD - Angela Brown
Jackson ISD – Larry Ostrander	St. Clair RESA – Lisa Meredith
Kalamazoo RESA – Bill Dawson	Saginaw ISD – Matt Dowdy
Kent ISD – John Savage	Washtenaw ISD - Thomas Moore
Macomb ISD – Lori Richardson	Wayne RESA - Kim Hooper
Northern Michigan Training Consortium – Bill Coaster	

**Upper Peninsula, ** Intermediate School District

*** Regional Education Service Area

Curriculum Resources

- OK2SAY – Special thanks to Mary Gager Drew from the Michigan Attorney General's office and Chelsea Schneller from the Michigan State Police
- Curriculum Compiler and Writers – Lori Richardson, Oakland Schools with assistance from Jo Allen, Iosco RESA and guidance from Gary Davis, Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District.

Introduction

Welcome to the Michigan school bus driver biannual continuing education class. Michigan school bus drivers are professional drivers who are concerned about student safety. You are part of a statewide pupil transportation system that strives to safely deliver over one quarter of a million pupils each school day. This continuing education program was written with the goal of reviewing and sharing information that will help you to continue to provide safe travel for the pupils you transport.

The Michigan Pupil Transportation – *It Happened – Don't Let it Happen to You* curriculum that will guide you through your six hours of required continuing education training will provide each participant with the opportunity to review and improve their bus driving knowledge and skills. As you proceed through the training, please consider future continuing education topics you would like to see provided and share these ideas with your instructor. A goal of this training is to be relevant to the current needs of you as a professional school bus driver, and that is best done with your input on topics that will assist you to be the best driver possible.

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Michigan Beginning School Bus Driver Manual

Every driver should maintain their *Beginning School Bus Driver Manual* in a fully updated status. The beginning school bus driver manual is updated and revised by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) as procedures or laws are changed. The most current version is always available on the MDE Pupil Transportation website. (Search the web for: Michigan Department of Education Pupil Transportation and look under Curriculum).

Driver Updates

Michigan Speed Limit Change

Significant changes to the Motor Vehicle Code with respect to speed limits have been made. One change related to commercial motor vehicles was MCL 257.627(4)...which states, "Where the posted speed limit is greater than 65 miles per hour, a person operating a school bus, a truck with a gross weight of 10,000 pounds or more, a truck-tractor, or a truck-tractor with a semi-trailer or trailer or a combination of these vehicles shall not exceed a speed of 65 miles per hour on a limited access freeway or a state trunk line highway."

Speed limits in Michigan are now:

- Mobile home parks - 15 miles per hour
- School Zones – 25 miles per hour minimum (PA 446 of 2016) 257.627a(2)
- Business districts – 25 miles per hour
- Residential – 25 miles per hour
- State highways if not otherwise posted – 55 miles per hour
- State highways for school bus, posted speed to a maximum of 65 miles per hour when posted
- Limited access freeways for school bus – 65 miles per hour (minimum 55 miles per hour)

Speed limits may be found at: [Link to Michigan speed limit laws](#)

Points for violations of the speed laws

Violations in a work zone (MCL 257.627(6)) by:

- More than 15 miles per hour - 5 points
- More than 10 but less than 14 miles per hour – 4 points
- 10 miles per hour or less – 3 points

Violations for exceeding the maximum speed limit (non-work zone) by:

- More than 15 miles per hour – 4 points
- More than 10 up to 15 miles per hour – 3 points
- 10 miles per hour or less – 2 points
- More than 1 up to 5 miles per hour – 1 point

Points placed on your driver record remain there for two years from the date of conviction.

CDL Drivers - Convicted of a Serious Traffic Violation

If you are convicted of certain traffic violations while operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV), you are subject to stiffer penalties which may result in driver disqualification as described in 49 CFR 383.51. Your operator/chauffeur license may also be affected, depending on the severity of the violation.

Any traffic violation in a non-commercial motor vehicle resulting in a suspension or revocation of your operator/chauffeur license will also result in a suspension or revocation of your CDL.

The following information outlines the various penalties for convictions of major offenses and serious traffic violations as defined in 49 CFR 383.51.

Serious Traffic Violations include:

- A traffic violation connected with a fatal accident
- Speeding 15 mph or more over the posted limit
- Following too closely
- Careless driving
- Changing/using lanes erratically/improperly

If Convicted of Serious Traffic Violations, a driver may be:

- Disqualified for a minimum of 60 to 120 days

Major Offenses include:

- Operating under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance
- Leaving the scene of a CMV accident
- Committing a felony using a CMV
- Manslaughter
- Fleeing/eluding a law enforcement officer (felony)

If convicted of Major Offenses, a driver may be:

- Disqualified for a minimum of one year to Life

Basic Speed Law

Michigan's Basic Speed Law (MCL 257.627) requires motorists to drive at a "careful and prudent" speed in all driving conditions to be able to stop within the clear distance ahead. It may require driving slower than the posted speed limit.

Note: Proceed with caution when changing or merging lanes. Merge slowly. Sudden movements may cause vehicles to skid. Keep plenty of distance between you and the vehicle in front of you, and always wear your seat belt.

Flex Route Technology

The Michigan Department of Transportation is introducing Flex Route, a new lane control system that uses cameras and electronic message boards to let drivers know when an additional lane is available for use during peak travel periods. The Flex Route is designed to reduce travel time and increase safety. Electronic signs will advise drivers as to which lanes are open and closed, and posting alerts regarding any incidents that may be ahead.

The first Flex Route, located north of Ann Arbor between M-14 and M-36 on US 23, will also utilize Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technology, including a lane control system consisting of overhead signs, cameras and electronic message boards that will be constantly monitored and adjusted as needed to advise motorists of recommended speeds and incidents.

When the Green Arrow is displayed, the shoulder will be open. When the Red X is displayed, the shoulder is closed.

Michigan Driver's License Options

The federal standards known as REAL ID which were drafted in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks was signed into law in May 2005. The REAL ID Act sets document and security protocols for the production of driver's licenses and ID cards, and include features to prevent illegal copying or altering.

Beginning October 1, 2020, your driver's license must be REAL ID compliant if you wish to use it to fly domestically in the U.S. or enter certain federal facilities, military bases and nuclear power plants.

In compliance with the act, beginning August 28, 2017, Michigan residents have another option when applying for a driver's license. Michigan license options include:

- REAL ID, allowing holders to board domestic flights, enter federal buildings, nuclear plants or military bases
 - REAL ID compliant licenses will be marked with a star inside a gold circle on the upper right
 - There is no extra fee for the REAL ID
- Enhanced Driver's license, allowing land or sea travel from Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and Caribbean nations.
 - Michigan Enhanced Driver's licenses are REAL ID Compliant
 - Enhanced licenses will be marked with a U.S. flag
- Michigan standard driver's license, which is still valid for driving, identification and buying age-restricted items
 - Standard licenses will have "Not for federal identification" printed on it
- To apply for a REAL ID license you will need:
 - Certified U.S. birth certificate with stamp or raised seal, or
 - A valid, unexpired U.S. passport or passport card;
 - Other approved proof of legal presence outlined in (SOS-428)
- If your name is different, you must:
 - Bring proof of name change, such as marriage license or divorce decree or both

CDL holders that have already had their legal presence documents verified by the Department of State automatically qualify for a Real ID.

Additions to the DOT Drug Testing

The Department of Transportation (DOT) published a final rule on November 12, 2017 in the Federal Register 82 FR 52229. The rule, among other items, added four semi-synthetic opioids to the DOT drug testing panels and will be included in pre-employment and random drug tests.

What does this mean for CDL holders?

Beginning January 1, 2018, commercial drivers will also be tested for semi-synthetic opioids including hydrocodone, oxycodone, hydromorphone and oxymorphone. Common names for these include OxyContin®, Percodan®, Percocet®, Vicodin®, Lortab®, Norco®, Dilaudid®, and Exalgo®.

It Happened – Don't Let it Happen to You

Don't Veer for Deer

What Happened?

Western Kentucky school bus driver is found guilty of reckless homicide and sentenced to one year in jail for the death of Logan Simpson. The 6 year old was killed after his school bus from Carlisle County, Kentucky swerved to avoid a deer, drove off the right side of the two-lane highway, overcorrected, went onto the other side of the road and rolled over several times ending up in a ravine. Sixteen children and 3 adults were taken to the hospital.

Don't Let it Happen to You

According to the MSP Office of Highway Safety Planning: Each year, there are nearly 50,000 reported vehicle-deer crashes in Michigan. About 80 percent of these crashes occur on two-lane roads between dusk and dawn. The most serious crashes occur when motorists swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or a fixed object, or when their vehicle rolls over. While the state's two million deer are most active in spring and fall, vehicle-deer crashes are a year-round problem.

What Can You Do?

Stay aware, awake and alert, especially in the fall and spring and at dawn and dusk. Keep in mind that vehicle-deer crashes occur year-round. Watch for deer crossing signs. Know that deer frequently travel in groups; if you see one deer slow down, chances are there are others nearby.

If a Crash is Unavoidable

- Don't swerve!
- Brake firmly
- Hold onto the steering wheel
- Stay in your lane
- Bring the bus to a controlled stop

After a Crash

- Pull off the road.
- Turn on your emergency flashers and be cautious of other traffic if you leave your vehicle.
- Don't attempt to remove a deer from the roadway unless you are convinced it is dead. An injured deer's sharp hooves can easily hurt you.
- Report the crash following your agency's accident policy

Student Left on the Bus

What Happened?

Hun Joon "Paul" Lee, who was described as non-verbal and was reliant upon adults to lead him off the bus, died Sept. 11, 2015, in Whittier, California, after being trapped on the school bus with the windows closed. Outside temperatures that day topped 90 degrees. His family began a search for him after he failed to return home from school.

After the driver Armando Abel Ramirez was alerted by the transportation staff that the student was missing, he checked the bus and found the student collapsed on the floor and unresponsive. An autopsy revealed that Lee died of overheating.

Armando Abel Ramirez, 37, who was found to have been texting a coworker, plead guilty to one count of dependent adult abuse. He was sentenced to serve two years in a state prison.

Lee's family was awarded a \$23.5 million settlement ending a lawsuit filed against the bus company.

Don't Let it Happen to You

A school bus driver must always operate the bus safely, without distractions and protect the students from harm. Wait until after the end of your shift and your bus is parked safely in the bus yard to conduct personal business.

There is ***never*** an excuse for leaving students on a bus. It is ***your responsibility*** to see that ***no children are left behind***. You must make thorough trip inspections a habit you never break. Even if you've never found anything or anyone during hundreds of other checks.

Be diligent, not complacent. Whenever you complete a bus run and have some layover time you should perform a *Between Trip* Inspection to check for a number of items. Follow these steps **each time** for all between trip inspections:

- Check for pupils remaining in the bus. This is accomplished by walking from the front to the back of the bus, and checking in and around every bus seat. Repeat the steps while returning to the front of the bus.
- Check for vandalism of seats, walls, windows, etc., that may have occurred during the trip
- Check for anything that should not be on the bus, such as a bag or package that might look suspicious
- Check for materials that pupils may have left behind
- Clean the bus
- Check bus for any possible mechanical defects that may have developed during the trip
- Secure bus if not going out on a run immediately
- Report any bus defects found during the trip

Follow these steps each time you park your bus at the end of a route and at the end of each day:

- Check for pupils remaining in the bus. This is accomplished by walking from the front to the back of the bus, and checking in and around every bus seat. Repeat the steps while returning to the front of the bus.
- Refuel bus. Record mileage and amount of fuel taken in
- Check for needed supplies
- Clean bus interior
- Park bus in designated location
- Secure the vehicle
- Close windows and door
- Remove key
- Remove other equipment, if required
- Turn in items left by pupils
- Turn in all necessary paperwork and records

**Michigan Department of Education Advisory and Guideline
End of Route Student Checks**

Leaving even one child unattended on a school bus is a serious concern for Michigan families and schools. The possibility of leaving a child on the bus after a completed bus route is not acceptable and has potentially serious safety ramifications. This is a preventable problem that can be addressed with an effective policy that requires drivers to check their bus before they exit it at the end of their route. Most districts have procedures for the drivers to check the bus at the end of a route, but not all districts have a board policy to reinforce the importance of end of route checks. The State Board of Education encourages all districts to adopt a policy that defines the responsibilities for all school transportation providers that ensures no students are left on school buses after the completion of a route.

Pedestrians Have the Right of Way

What happened?

Incident #1: Carmen Puello was struck by a school bus as she was crossing in a marked crossing. The bus strikes and then runs over the woman and left her lying in the crosswalk in Bronx, NY. She was pronounced dead at St. Barnabas Hospital.

Incident #2: School Bus Driver Billie Jean Neel was convicted of careless driving for striking Renee and Shawn Bates of Portland, Oregon. The bus made a right turn into the couple who were in a crosswalk. The bus knocked Mrs. Bates to the ground with the front right wheel, running up the abdomen and chest, stopping with the full weight of the wheel resting on her. After "a few moments at the urging of bystanders, the bus backed up off of Mrs. Bates" who died about an hour after the crash. The bus hit Shawn Bates with a "glancing blow", but he was able to stay by his wife's side until she died. The couple's only child, then 11, was orphaned after his father died of cancer about 4 months later.

Don't let it Happen to You

Turning a bus at an intersection can present many challenges. One of the key dangers in turning the school bus is limited visibility; the school bus's mirrors with

proper adjustment and use are essential to its safe operation, can also create blind spots.

Researchers at the Oregon State and Portland State universities say that permitted left turns are often allowed by a “confusing hodgepodge” of signals, and drivers have to pick their way through narrow windows of oncoming traffic. Types of permitted left turns include round green lights or green arrows.

Often times school bus drivers have to make turns without the “protection” of a green arrow or left turn signal. The research showed that as drivers wait to make a permitted left turn, they focus mainly on the traffic and signal, rather than pedestrians and use the narrow openings in oncoming traffic. The heavier the traffic, the less attention is paid to the pedestrians.

School bus drivers should perfect the art of operating their bus and how to steer it to allow them to focus on watching for objects or people in the intersection.

To ensure safe turns, a school bus driver must:

- Adjust mirrors and use them properly
- Look around the mirrors to avoid blind spots
- Look around for fixed and movable objects
- Know the turning capability of the school bus
- Use reference points to turn correctly and safely

Yielding the right-of-way at all intersections

- When turning, check the road you are turning onto and yield to pedestrians and other vehicles
- Yield the right-of-way to vehicles, bicycles *and pedestrians* in the intersection

The correct way to make a right turn

- Move into the far right lane
- Turn on your turn signal
- Check all mirrors for traffic surrounding the bus
- Slow to 10 mph or less
- Put your hands in the correct turning position
- Check that you are 4 feet from the curb or parked cars
- Keep your wheels straight
- Check all mirrors for pedestrians and other vehicles before starting turn
- When you can see straight down the curb line of the lane you are turning into, turn your steering wheel into the full-lock position
- As you begin to turn, check your left side mirror for tail swing
- Check the tail swing again in the middle of the turn
- Make adjustments, slow down or stop if you are about to come into contact with an object or person
- Check the right side mirrors and complete your turn keeping the full lock position
- Straighten the front wheels
- Check all mirrors after completing the turn

The correct way to make a left turn

- Turn on your left turn signal
- Move to the far left lane
 - If there are two turning lanes, use the right lane of the two
- Check all mirrors for traffic surrounding the bus
- Slow to 10 mph or less
- Put your hands in the correct turning position
- Keep your wheels straight
- Bring the front of the bus to the center of the intersection before you start the turn
 - Don't move into the intersection until traffic in front of you has completed the turn
- Check all mirrors for pedestrians and other vehicles before starting your turn
- Watch for problem objects
- As you begin to turn check your right side mirror for tail swing
- Check tail swing again in the middle of the turn
- Make adjustments, slow down or stop if you are about to come into contact with an object or person
- Complete your turn and check mirrors again

Mistakes at the Bus Stop

Backpacks caught in door

Seven year-old Ally Rednour, a first-grader, sustained non-life-threatening injuries after a school bus dragged her about 500 feet in Jefferson County, Kentucky in May 2015. The bus from Wilkerson Traditional Elementary School was dropping off students when the child's backpack got caught as the door of the bus closed. The bus started moving traveling 10 to 15 miles per hour while dragging the child. People were chasing the bus that kept moving until a red Camaro got in front of it and stopped it. Ally sustained extensive road rash and was hospitalized. Police said that driver inattention was the cause of the incident as the bus driver, Melinda Sanders, did not see that Ally was caught in the door.

Don't let it happen to you

School bus drivers must take due care and caution when loading and unloading students. Loading and unloading a bus properly can be a matter of life or death. Loading and unloading requires ALL of your concentration.

Critical things you must remember when loading or unloading the bus.

- Don't take your eyes off what is happening outside the bus
- Never rush, if you are running late on a route, don't hurry
- Take each stop one at a time
- Don't get complacent and skip over any part of the proper loading/unloading procedure
- NEVER move the bus if students are within 10 feet of any side

- Count and recount
 - Know how many students should get on or off at each stop
 - Count them as they get off
 - Before you move the bus, count them again as they move away
 - Don't move until you are sure that all students are safely away from the bus
- If you cannot account for a child outside the bus
 - Secure the bus
 - Get out and check around and underneath the bus
- Follow these procedures at **EVERY** stop **EVERY** day!

Don't let ANYTHING distract you while loading or unloading

- If there is a behavior problem on the bus
 - Wait until the students loading or unloading are safely off the bus and have moved away
 - If necessary, pull the bus over to handle the problem
- If you receive a call from dispatch
 - Wait until the students loading or unloading are safely off the bus and have moved away
 - If necessary, pull the bus over to handle the problem
- Michigan law 257.602(b) prohibits a person using a hand-held mobile telephone to conduct a voice communication while operating a commercial motor vehicle or a school bus on a highway, including while temporarily stationary due to traffic, a traffic control device, ***or other momentary delays.***

Don't Let What You Do off the Job Effect Your Job

NTSB: School bus driver in fatal bus crash should not have been licensed

John Tieman, was behind the wheel of the school bus that in February 2012 pulled into the path of a dump truck which had the right-of-way. The crash killed 11-year-old Isabelle Tezsla and injured 15 other students including critically injuring two of her triplet sisters. The National Transportation Safety Board conducted an investigation of the crash and determined the following:

- The truck was within the school bus driver's available line of sight and within a hazardous proximity when the bus driver began to cross the intersection.
- The school bus driver did not effectively scan Burlington County Road 528 for oncoming traffic and failed to observe the approaching truck prior to impact.
- The school bus driver was fatigued due to acute sleep loss, chronic sleep debt, and poor sleep quality associated with his medical conditions and alcohol use; the sedative side effects from prescription medications; and the synergistic effect of these factors.

- The school bus driver's fatigue contributed to his reduced vigilance and detection of the approaching truck.
- The school bus driver failed to disclose pertinent information about his medical history as required on the commercial driver's license medical certification examination form, which prevented the accurate assessment of his qualifications to drive a school bus in commercial operations.
- Based on the school bus driver's combination of medical conditions and use of multiple prescription medications, it is likely that he would not have been medically certified to drive a school bus if: (1) he had fully disclosed his medical history on the commercial driver's license medical certification examination form, or (2) the medical examiner had completed a more thorough evaluation.

Don't Let it Happen to You

American Academy for Pediatrics Guideline 6-21 Bus Drivers and Alcohol/Drug Use

"At the very least, bus drivers should be instructed not to operate school buses if initiating any medication, any new dose of a medication, or initiating any new combination of medications which may result in drowsiness, lightheadedness, or other adverse reaction that could impair ability to safely operate a school bus.

If any previous experience with a medication or combination of medications has resulted in such an adverse reaction, it must not be taken within 24 hours of operating a school bus. A bus driver on a medication (over-the-counter and prescribed) should report this immediately to his/her supervisor."

Illegal or Street Drugs and Medications

According to the Michigan Department of State - because everyone's metabolism is different, it's difficult to predict the effect of drugs and medications. Those substances can be as dangerous as alcohol when mixed with driving.

Illegal or "street" drugs are sold without a prescription, and are particularly dangerous. Users do not always know the contents, purity, or possible effects of these drugs.

Prescription and non-prescription medications may also contain things that can have an adverse effect on your ability to drive safely. Some drugs such as antihistamines, which are found in many cold and allergy preparations, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, and pain relievers may cause drowsiness. Diet pills, "stay awake" drugs, and other medications with stimulants, such as caffeine, ephedrine, or pseudoephedrine, may cause excitability or drowsiness. The effects may also vary depending on the combination of drugs. Know the contents and possible side effects of any drugs you take, and be sure it is safe to drive when you use them. For more information, consult your physician or pharmacist.

The Law:

It is illegal to drive while impaired or under the influence of prescribed and over-the-counter medications.

MCL 257.625(1) A person, whether licensed or not, shall not operate a vehicle upon a highway or other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles, including an area designated for the parking of vehicles, within this state if the person is operating while intoxicated. As used in this section, "operating while intoxicated" means the person is under the influence of:

- Alcoholic liquor
- A controlled substance, or other intoxicating substance, or
- A combination of alcoholic liquor, a controlled substance, or other intoxicating substance.

Commercial Driver's Convictions

MCL257.625(a)(5) A person who was operating a commercial motor vehicle and who refuses to submit to a preliminary chemical breath analysis upon a peace officer's lawful request is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than \$100.00, or both.

(MCL 257.319(b)) Commercial drivers will lose their license for a year or more:

- For a first conviction or refusal to be tested while operating a commercial motor vehicle or non-commercial motor vehicle
- Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance

Medications – What Should You Do?

Prescription and nonprescription medications may contain substances that can adversely affect your ability to drive safely. According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), a commercial motor vehicle driver may be disqualified if a legally prescribed drug could adversely affect the driver's ability to drive safely. If a driver uses a drug identified in 21 CFR 1308.11 (391.42(b)(12)) or any other substance such as amphetamine, a narcotic, or any other habit forming drug, the driver is medically unqualified.

When a doctor prescribes medication:

- ***Always, tell them you are a school bus driver***
- Ask if you can take the medication while driving your school bus
- If doctor says no
 - Ask how long do you have to wait to safely drive your school bus after taking medication

But it's an Over the Counter Medication!

The FMCSA advises drivers to avoid medication that may induce drowsiness. Most drowsiness-inducing medications include a warning label indicating that you should not operate vehicles or machinery during use. Some of the most common medicines

that may make you drowsy are: tranquilizers, sleeping pills, allergy medicines and cold medicines. In a recent study 17 percent of CMV drivers were reported as having “over-the-counter drug use” at the time of a crash. Cold pills are one of the most common medicines that may make you drowsy. If you drive with a cold, it is safest to suffer from it than drive under the effects of the medicine.

Be Responsible – It Can Happen to You!

Professional drivers must be available and able to operate their school bus **safely** at all times.

- Use all prescribed and over-the-counter medications *wisely*.
- Know when it is safe to take the medications.
- If you are unsure if you can operate a bus while taking a medication, check with your supervisor.
- Don't use medication as an excuse not to do your job.
- If you suspect a fellow driver of being under the influence of medication or alcohol, notify your supervisor immediately. **Doing so may save a life!**

Medical Marijuana

The Department of Transportation's Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation – 49 CFR Part 40, at 40.151(e) – does not authorize “medical marijuana” under a state law to be a valid medical explanation for a transportation employee's positive drug test result.

Regardless of whether someone has a Medical Marijuana Card, marijuana remains a drug listed in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. It remains unacceptable for any safety-sensitive employee subject to drug testing under the Department of Transportation's drug testing regulations to use marijuana. Therefore, possessing or using medical marijuana will disqualify a driver from driving any commercial vehicle.

What happens if a driver is not truthful about his/her health history on the medical examination form?

The FMCSA medical certification process is designed to ensure drivers are physically qualified to operate commercial vehicles safely. Each driver is required to complete the Health History section on the first page of the examination report and certify that the responses are complete and true. The driver must also certify that he/she understands that inaccurate, false or misleading information may invalidate the examination and medical examiner's certificate.

FMCSA relies on the medical examiner's clinical judgment to decide whether additional information should be obtained from the driver's treating physician. Deliberate omission or falsification of information may invalidate the examination and any certificate issued based on it. A civil penalty may also be levied against the driver under 49 U.S.C. 521(b)(2)(b), either for making a false statement or for concealing a disqualifying condition.

Let's All Stand Up for Student Safety - It's OK2SAY

What Happened?

16-year-old Daniel Briggs, of Clayton, New York was a normal high school kid who "had a soft side of him that was second-to-none for a kid his age," according to his mother Amy Briggs. "Daniel had been bullied for most of his school career". He didn't fit in with a lot of school crowds; he was interested in hunting and trapping, something most kids in his class weren't interested in.

The bullying started out as words and progressed as he got older, turning into physical violence. Daniel's peers would throw trash at him, punch him in the stomach, and one time **forcefully made him lick a school bus window**. "They looked for any little thing, just to make his life miserable" said Amy Briggs. Daniel was silently struggling. His parents knew what was going on, but they weren't aware of how bad it really was.

On March 3, 2014, Daniel got a text from one of the teens who relentlessly bullied him. It said "Why don't you take one of your precious guns and do the world a favor and go kill yourself." Daniel responded saying, "You won't have to worry about me anymore, I'm going home and kill myself." The bully replied with a text that read "Put up or shut up."

Throughout the day, Daniel told multiple people that he was going to kill himself. Including kids at school, students on the bus and **even the bus driver, who responded "I'll see you on Monday Dan."**

That day after school, Daniel did what he had promised. He took his own life with one of his shotguns. Daniel's mother recounts the days following his suicide, saying several students his age reached out and sent her letters. "I just wish he knew how much he meant to so many people. He did matter. He does matter. We will never recover from this."

So why are we talking about a student in New York? Because Daniel's death was preventable. Many acts of violence (to others, to oneself) can be reduced if we just pay attention and say something when something doesn't seem right.

So let's talk about the type of challenges Michigan students deal with.

According to the 2015 Michigan High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- 1 in 4 Michigan high school students report being bullied on school property in the last 12 months.
- 1 in 6 Michigan high school students seriously considered attempting suicide within the last 12 months. 1 in 7 made a plan about how they would attempt suicide, and about 1 in 11 attempted suicide one or more times during the previous 12 months.
- 1 in 5 Michigan teens report dating violence or sexual assault.

- Alarming, almost 32% of students report feeling sad or hopeless almost daily for two weeks or longer. They also reported that they stopped usual activities over the last 12 months.
- Each year, about 1 in 5 adolescent females and 1 in 7 adolescent males engage in self-injury.
- More than 25% of students report they were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug during the last 12 months. Almost 16% reported taking prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription.
- About 1 in 5 Michigan high school students report being in a physical fight one or more times during the last twelve-months.
- 1 in 6 Michigan high school students reports carrying a weapon in the last 30 days.
- 1 in 15 Michigan high school students report being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property one or more times during the last 12 months.

In many schools there is a pervasive sense among students and some adults that telling grownups that another student is in pain or may pose a threat violates an unwritten, but powerful, "code of silence". A code of silence has the potentially damaging effect of forcing students to handle their pain and problems alone, with the benefit of adult support. These codes also suggest that a student should not bring any concerns that he or she may have about a peer's behavior to the attention of responsible adults.

Fortunately, we have the ability to help change this code of silence to a code of responsibility with a student safety program called OK2SAY.

The Michigan Student Safety Act PA 183 of 2013

This law Requires the Attorney General to collaborate with the Michigan State Police (MSP), the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), to establish, operate, and staff a hotline that:

- Provides for confidential reports of potential harm or criminal activities directed at students, school employees, or schools;
- Protects the identity/confidentiality of all tipsters;
- Operates 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year; and
- Promptly provides tip information to appropriate school officials, law enforcement, or other agencies.

OK2SAY is a result of the Michigan Student Safety Act. It serves as a confidential reporting system encouraging anyone who has information about a student safety threat (students, teachers, parents, etc.) to submit a tip by text message, mobile app, email, phone, or on the OK2SAY website. OK2SAY is available to all public and private schools in Michigan.

OK2SAY is designed to encourage and empower

Michigan students can submit confidential tips about anything that threatens their safety or the safety of others. The program is operated through a partnership between

the Department of Attorney General, Michigan State Police, state agencies, schools, parents, law enforcement, and community leaders.

OK2SAY is about early intervention and prevention

OK2SAY strives to intervene in the life of a young person who is struggling, helping them at the earliest possible point before the situation turns into a tragedy. Students know, long before adults do, what's occurring in their schools and in communities – including fighting and bullying, substance abuse, dangerous and concerning behaviors, threats, depressions, suicide, and self-injury: either witnessed in-person or online.

OK2SAY enhances our ability to know about violent activities before they occur and respond quickly. This begins with knocking down barriers that intimidate students from telling someone about planned violence.

According to studies 70% of students who have threatened suicide follow through with it.

How it Works

OK2SAY encourages those with information about a possible event to report it. In the majority of violent incidents that occur in our schools, just as in the case of Daniel Briggs, someone other than the perpetrator of violence knows of a threat before it's carried out, but fails to report it.

What Happens?

1. Students, parents, teachers, or concerned individuals confidentially submit potential harm or criminal activity tips
2. OK2SAY technicians, who are trained to receive, analyze, and promptly provide tip information to:
 - a. Schools, law enforcement, Community Mental Health, or the Department of Health and Human Services
3. Officials investigate, respond, and resolve tips
4. Outcome Reports are completed

OK2SAY Breaks the Culture of Silence

Research shows that in 81% of violent incidents in US schools, someone other than the attacker knew it was going to happen but failed to report it. In 93% of the cases, research also shows that perpetrators exhibited concerning behavior to others prior to a violent incident.

Often, students choose to keep quiet because they fear retaliation, rejection, or stigmatization by their peers. The result is a culture of silence in which students suffer harm that could have been prevented if another had chosen to speak out.

OK2SAY empowers students to break the code of silence that permeates Michigan schools. Tipster identity is protected by Michigan law. It works by encouraging confidential tips on criminal activities or potential harm directed at students, school employees, or schools. In reports filled out after a tip is received and acted upon, 67

percent of schools, law enforcement and mental health professionals who received the tip from OK2SAY tip line said they were previously unaware of the problem.

It's About Communication, Early Intervention and Prevention

OK2SAY provides the promise of hope and help and has proven to be immensely successful in saving lives and preventing tragedies. When students make the courageous decision to break the code of silence and speak out against harmful behavior, they equip authorities with the information needed to respond to threats and avert tragedy. That's a good thing for Michigan schools, communities and families.

Many times students have gone to a trusted adult and nothing happened. OK2SAY lets students know that if they have the courage to come forward with information, something will happen. A student doesn't have to fear that the tip will be ignored. The OK2SAY technicians follow up with each organization to try and ensure there is an outcome report detailing the nature of the tip, how the tip was handled, whether the situation was resolved or requires ongoing attention. The Outcome Report provides local entities an opportunity to illustrate that student safety threats are tracked and taken seriously.

OK2SAY Tips and Contacts Saved Lives in Michigan

School Violence Prevention

OK2SAY received a tip about a student who posted a video on social media bragging about a plan to go on a killing spree at school and execute any police officers who responded. OK2SAY contacted local law enforcement who investigated the tip and determined it was a credible threat. The student who posted the video not only had a plan, but access to weapons. The student was expelled from school and is facing criminal charges.

Suicide Intervention

A student sent a text message to OK2SAY that said, "I don't know who to talk to". As soon as the OK2SAY technicians received the message, they initiated contact with the student to try and gather additional information. The technician continued to text back and forth with the student asking questions to develop a rapport with the student. Eventually the student disclosed that he had written a suicide note, had plans for his funeral, and had the means to die by suicide. The technicians were able to solicit enough information to get an address for the student. While texting the student, the technicians contacted the School Resource Officer (SRO) at the school so he could do a welfare check on the student. The SRO located the student and verified that the student had the suicide note in his pocket. The SRO later called OK2SAY to advise that the student's parents were on their way and that arrangements were made for the student to receive assistance. The student received mental health counseling and is doing well."

Threats/Mental Health Referral

OK2SAY technicians received a tip that a student was carrying a poem he wrote that listed people he wanted to kill. A Detective Sergeant in the Michigan State Police

interviewed him, and he admitted that he wrote the poem, but he said he was not serious, it was just his way of venting. The school counselor also interviewed the student, and he continued to insist that he was just venting. His parents were notified and encouraged to provide him mental health counseling.

Peer Mistreatment/Kidnapping/Cyberbullying

OK2SAY received multiple tips about the safety and well-being of a high school freshman. The tips reported a “mean girls” scenario in which two seniors picked up a freshman and offered to drive her home. Once the freshman was in the car, the seniors started to yell and call her derogatory names. Although the freshman was in distress and pleaded to get out of the car, she was forced to stay in the car while the seniors drove her to a location she did not wish to be left. The seniors recorded the freshman crying and begging to be taken home and posted the recording on social media.

Concerned individuals who viewed the video contacted OK2SAY to report that the freshman had a history of self-harm and there was concern this incident could push the vulnerable student to make a rash decision. Technicians contacted local law enforcement who informed school officials and conducted a welfare check on the freshman student. The two seniors faced consequences for their actions.

Bridge suicide

When a high school student was contemplating suicide by jumping off a bridge, it was a text to OK2SAY that alerted authorities to the seriousness surrounding the student's depression. Within moments, local law enforcement was notified and with limited information, they conducted a search and found the student on the bridge preparing to jump.

Bullying

OK2SAY received a tip that a student was being bullied. OK2SAY forwarded the tip and the school principal investigated the situation. The school reviewed video footage and discovered the student was bullied and physically assaulted for ten minutes by two students. The students who assaulted the victim were suspended. Counseling services were provided to all the students involved in the situation.

Bullying at the Bus Stop

A group of students were waiting for the bus. While waiting, some of the students started to horse around. As a “joke”, a couple of students took dried dog feces and threw it at a boy with disabilities. Several students who witnessed the abuse reported the matter to OK2SAY. The school was notified and investigated the matter. The bullies received consequences and the bus driver was alerted to occurrence so she could monitor the situation.

Planned School Attack

While riding on the school bus, two students were developing a “Columbine” school attack. Fortunately, a bystander who heard the conversation reported the incident to OK2SAY. The school and law enforcement investigated the situation and discovered the threat was real. The students had access to weapons and had developed a hit list. The individuals plotting the attack were suspended and face criminal charges.

Why Bullies Pick the Bus

The school bus is the ideal location for students who pick on/bully their peers. It can be challenging to supervise so many students at a time, especially if the only adult present is the bus driver. Student passengers who are picked on during the bus ride have no way of leaving the situation and protecting themselves. Because most students ride the same buses every day, students who bully can target the same individuals repeatedly. This puts students in a vulnerable situation.

It Happens on the Bus

About ten percent of all reported middle and high school bullying happens on the school bus. Most students who are bullied do not inform adults about the bullying. Bullying on the bus causes just as much concern as in-school bullying because it causes the same mental, academic and emotional trauma to students. Bullying on the bus is also more difficult for the driver to spot and address.

Know the Signs of School Bus Bullying

Students who are being bullied may not be willing to approach adults for help. Not all students react in the same way, a student being mistreated can range from mild to severe and may include:

- Fear of going to school or riding the bus
- Making a habit of trying to miss or stalling about riding the bus
- Regularly looking for reasons not to ride the bus
- Arriving at home or school with damaged clothes, lost or stolen property or other signs of abuse that are not occurring at school
- Panic attacks or symptoms of anxiety occurring prior to boarding the bus, or only on school day mornings
- Dropping hints about a friend who is being bullied or alluding to themselves getting picked on

Don't Let it Happen to You

Keeping students safe isn't limited to keeping your hands on the wheel and driving down the road without a crash. You may be that one person who shows that you care enough to reach that student. Even the simplest acknowledgement may provide recognition for the student that you care and connect with him or her.

What All Bus Drivers Must Do

- Foster a positive experience for all of your student passengers
- Make it a point to get to know all of your students so reporting incidents is not an issue
- Be well-versed in the signs of bullying and check in with students who show symptoms
- Encourage students to come to you if they are being "bothered" by another student

- Connect with parents of the victim and the bully when a student is showing signs of bullying

You may know your students better than many principals or tip lines. Actively listen and be aware of all threatening activity on or around your bus. If you hear or suspect anything that may present a danger:

- Always pass on the information to make others aware
 - Adult to adult is best
- The source of most of the tips are the bystander
 - Empower the bystanders to step up if you suspect they know something
- Speak up if you hear threats on or around your bus:
 - In ten seconds you can stop bullying 60% of the time
 - If you can't there is always OK2SAY

Be Persistent

You and your bus should be a safe place for a student, even if it is only 20 minutes a day. Students should know and feel your bus is a safe haven for them. You need to create that atmosphere.

- Communicate positively with your students
 - Getting students to open up can be a challenge. Many students disclose information incrementally, so building a positive rapport is essential.
- Encourage your students
- Report threatening behavior to school administrators
- Don't let anyone put up a roadblock to your report of potential violence
 - If you feel nothing has been done, follow up with the school
 - If nothing is done, then submit the tip via the telephone to OK2SAY
 - 1-8-555-OK2SAY

Bus drivers should *always* remember:

- Joking about violence is not funny
- Joking about bullying is not funny
- Joking about suicide is not funny

How to Submit a Tip to OK2SAY

- Phone: 855-565-2729
- Text: 652729 (OK2SAY)
- Email: OK2SAY@Michigan.gov
- Online – www.michigan.gov/OK2SAY
- Mobile App: Available in the App stores for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#). Search "OK2SAY."
- Submit tips 24/7-with multimedia attachments

Transporting Preschoolers

Preschool children are the youngest, most vulnerable passengers on school buses. These children may or may not have disabilities and depend on school bus drivers to

provide a safe ride to and from a variety of programs designed to help them reach their potential.

When transporting preschool children, school bus drivers' responsibilities go beyond the safe operation of the bus itself. These children may require a great deal of supervision during the time they are in and around the school bus. Drivers must be knowledgeable about each child's needs even if they have a bus attendant, including:

- Each child's specific needs, disabilities, etc.
- How to load and unload ambulatory and non-ambulatory children
- How to safely evacuate in the event of an emergency
- Proper use of Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS)
- First aid specifically designed for infants, toddlers and preschoolers

Student's Specific Needs

Bus drivers must be knowledgeable of what is necessary to safely transport toddlers, preschoolers and even infants who may also have special needs including:

- Very young children will need short and direct instructions
- Special physical, cognitive, communication or behavioral requirements
- Medical concerns including
 - Seizures
 - Life threatening allergy triggers
 - How to operate and transport special medical equipment
- Communication needs

Loading, Unloading and Riding the Bus

Special care should be taken when loading and unloading preschool children, including:

- All preschoolers shall enter or leave the school bus from the curbside
 - Unless the bus is in a protected parking area or driveway or they are assisted by a responsible adult
- All preschoolers must be received by a staff member, parent or another responsible person designated by the parent at each school or designated drop off point
- All preschoolers shall be physically assisted when entering or leaving the bus
- Preschoolers must **never** be left unattended at any drop off point
 - Drivers should know procedures when appropriate receivers are unavailable at any drop off location
- Preschool students should have assigned seats
 - Up-to-date seating charts should be available to all substitute staff and first responders in the event of an emergency
- Children carrying backpacks should wear them when loading or unloading
 - If backpack is too big or too full, adults should carry them
 - Backpacks should be in students lap when seated

Child Safety Restraint Systems

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) child safety restraint systems (CSRS) include any crash-tested device or system that is specially designed to provide infant/child crash protection. A lap belt is not a CSRS for pre-school age children. Child safety restraint systems include:

- Portable car and booster and combination seats

- Safety vests
- Integrated (built-in) seats

District's Policies and Procedures

Drivers must know and follow their district's policies and procedures regarding the use of CSRS when transporting:

- Early intervention or other students with special needs
- Head Start students
- Great Start Readiness and other preschool age students

Ensure Child Safety When Using CSRS

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration "Preschool Transportation Guidelines" include:

- CSRS should be properly secured to the school bus seat by staff trained in proper securement procedures
- Unbelted passengers must not be seated behind seats with CSRS
- CSRS should be located starting from the front of the bus so drivers may have quick access and a clear view of the students
- CSRS should be placed next to the window if there is another child in the seat
- NEVER place the CSRS in front of an emergency exit
- CSRS should be properly fitted for the school bus seating compartment and the child transported
- Regular cleaning and inspection of the CSRS is necessary for hygiene and crashworthiness

Additional Tips for Transporting Children in CSRS

- The Michigan Department of Education guidelines suggest that all buses transporting CSRS be equipped with two (2) safety belt cutters
- The proper installation of all child safety seats and equipment should be included in all pre-trip inspections of CSRS equipped buses
- It is the bus driver's responsibility to ensure all students are properly secured in their CSRS
 - Even if an aide, parent or other person assists a child into their CSRS
- All Head Start students must be transported in CSRS, unless the district has a waiver

Emergency Evacuations of Preschool Children

All school bus drivers must be aware of each of their passengers needs and have a plan for evacuating students, if necessary. The Michigan Department of Education recommends children attending Head Start are required to participate in three evacuation drills annually, including one in the bus in which the children are transported. Evacuation plans should consider the following:

- Is it possible to move the bus to a safer location instead of evacuating?
- If you cannot move the bus to a safer place, is there a safe place for riders to assemble?
- Who can assist you with the evacuation?

- Where are the 2 belt cutters located?
- What are each child's physical and mental abilities?
- Can the child exit the bus independently?
- Which children can be removed from the bus without their CSRS or specialized equipment?
- Which children must not be removed from the bus without their CSRS or specialized equipment?
- Which exits are the quickest and safest?

Ways to safely evacuate preschoolers who use Child Safety

Restraints

- Use belt cutter to cut the seat belt securing the CSRS
- Children in removable car seats should be carried off the bus in their seat
 - It may be possible to carry 2 car seats one under each arm and walk off the bus sideways
- Cut the cam wrap and use belt to lead multiple children wearing safety vests
- Stage all children at a safe distance and location away from the bus

Michigan Department of Education Advisory Practice and Guideline Pre-School Child Restraint Systems

In order to strengthen safety for pupils that are transported on school buses, it is recommended that each local and intermediate school district (in coordination with contracted pupil transportation providers, if applicable) develop policies and procedures for transporting pre-school children. Though school buses are exempt from seat belt regulations, due in part to, the passive child restraint system known as compartmentalization, it is recommended that a review of all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's child safety restraint training modules be completed prior to transporting preschool children taking into consideration the following items:

1. Each child's age, weight, and height.
2. The appropriateness of a Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS).
3. Assurance that the CSRS anchorages and school bus seats are installed and meet all applicable FMVSSs.
4. Conduct regular inspections, maintenance, and cleaning of all CSRS, anchorages, and school bus seats.
5. Regularly check CSRS and anchorages for product recalls and expiration dates.
6. Cut and properly dispose of all outdated equipment.
7. Ensure all school bus drivers are trained in the proper installation and use of CSRS.
8. Designating school-bus seats at the front of the school bus for child restraints to provide drivers quick access and a clear view of the occupant(s).
9. Equip all school buses with two (2) safety belt cutters that are accessible only to the driver and any monitors.
10. Establish and practice a plan for evacuating all CSRS equipped school buses.

Student safety is a top priority of Michigan Department of Education. The Michigan Department of Education, upon the recommendation of the Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee, recommends the implementation of this practice for all pupil transportation providers.

Michigan Department of Education Advisory Practice and Guideline Pre-school Children Transportation Considerations

In order to strengthen safety for pre-school children that are transported on school buses, it is recommended that each local and intermediate school district, in coordination with contracted pupil transportation providers, if applicable, develop policies and procedures for transporting pre-school children to and from their programs. It is recommended that the following be taken into consideration when transporting pre-school children to and from their programs:

1. Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers – Part 4 Transportation Provisions Rules R 400.8701 – R 400.8770 are strongly recommended to be reviewed and complied with.
2. When pre-school children arrive at school, home, or other designated drop off point they should be received by a staff member, parent, or another responsible person as designated by the parent.
3. Pre-school children shall enter or leave the school bus from the curbside unless the vehicle is in a protected parking area or driveway or be assisted by a responsible adult.
4. Pre-school children shall be physically assisted when entering or leaving the school bus.
5. Pre-school children shall never be left unattended at any drop off point.
6. Procedures should be developed which identify actions school bus drivers should take if there is not an appropriate person to receive a pre-school child at the drop off point.
7. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Child Safety Restraint Systems on School Buses, indicates school bus compartmentalization does not provide adequate protection for preschool children. NHTSA recommends pre-school children riding on school buses be restrained in appropriate age, height, and weight Child Safety Restraint Systems.

Student safety is a top priority of Michigan Department of Education. The Michigan Department of Education, upon the recommendation of the Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee recommends the implementation of this practice for all pupil transportation providers.

What Would You Do?

School Bus Driver Situational Scenarios

Categories: Student left on the bus, Pedestrian right of way, Mistakes at the bus stop, Post trip inspections, Medications, OK2SAY and Transporting Preschoolers.

Your instructor will be dividing the class into several small groups. After the groups have been established, each group will receive a list of school bus driving scenarios,

including things that may happen from day to day with a school bus, as well as a copy of PA 187 school bus laws.

Each group will be assigned one or two of the scenarios to review, discuss and then write down the action steps they would take to solve or deal with the scenario and finally, list the law, rule or school policy that will support their action steps.

After a few minutes, the instructor will ask each group to report the scenario, action steps and the supporting law, rule or school policy.

References

MSP Office of Highway Safety Planning – Don't Veer for Deer

State of Michigan "What Every Driver Must Know"

NHTSA School Bus Driver In-Service Safety Series

The American Academy of Pediatrics

State of Michigan, Secretary of State, Substance Abuse and Driving

NHTSA Proper Use of Child Safety Restraint Systems in School Buses

NOTES