

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents

FROM: Michael A. LaRocco, Director, Office of School Transportation

DATE: January 9, 2018

SUBJECT: Seat Belt Instruction and Bus Evacuation Drills

In 2013, the Indiana General Assembly passed IC 20-27-3-6.5 concerning seat belt instruction and bus evacuation drills. The rules established by the State School Bus Committee under that law require that by June 30 of each year, districts, non-public schools, and contractors are required to report the completion of seat belt instruction and bus evacuation drills for each semester. See the pertinent statute and rules below.

The purpose of this memo is to provide a reminder to any school district, non-public school, or contractor that has a presence in DOE Online (School Traffic Safety section) and transports students that some form of seat belt instruction and a bus evacuation drill is to be done at least once each semester. Additionally, this is a reminder that the seat belt instruction and bus evacuation drills that are completed are to be reported in DOE Online.

Please note that the requirement for seat belt instruction (only if the school bus has a seat belt other than the driver's) pertains only to school buses, not activity buses; the bus evacuation drill must be completed within forty-five (45) school days of the beginning of each semester (if you have multiple dates for drills in a semester we only need the last drill date).

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Mike LaRocco at (317) 232-0891 or mlarocco@doe.in.gov, or Carrie Glisson at (317)232-1377 or cglisson@doe.in.gov.

IC 20-27-3-6.5 Committee to adopt and enforce rules concerning proper fastening of safety belt on school bus passenger's body and conducting a school bus passenger evacuation drill

Sec. 6.5. The committee shall adopt and enforce rules under IC 4-22-2 to require that a school bus driver operating a school bus do the following at least one (1) time each semester:

(1) If the school bus is equipped with safety belts meeting the standards set forth in IC 9-19-10-2, provide instruction to the passengers on the school bus on the proper fastening of the safety belt about the passenger's body.

(2) Conduct a school bus passenger evacuation drill.

575 IAC 1-10-1 Safety belt instruction

Sec. 1. (a) A school bus driver operating a school bus that is equipped with safety belts meeting the standards set forth in IC 9-19-10-2, not including the driver's safety belt, shall at least once a

semester provide instruction to the passengers on the school bus on the proper fastening of the safety belt.

(b) The instruction shall include the following:

- (1) Proper position of the safety belt when fastened.
- (2) How tight the safety belt should be when fastened.
- (3) Improper safety belt placement.
- (4) Requirements for use of safety belts.
- (5) Consequences of failure to use or improperly using safety belts.

(c) Documentation of the completed training for each bus shall be reported to the designated school corporation or private school representative.

(d) Documentation of the completed training for each district or private school shall be reported to the Department of Education by June 30 of each year.

575 IAC 1-10-2 Bus evacuation drills

Sec. 2. (a) A school bus driver operating a school bus shall at least once a semester conduct a school bus passenger evacuation drill.

(b) All school bus passenger evacuation drills shall meet the following minimum standards:

- (1) Be completed in two (2) minutes or less.
- (2) Be conducted within forty-five (45) school days of the beginning date of each semester.
- (3) Use only emergency exit doors or service door for the passenger evacuation drill.
- (4) Driver must be present at all passenger evacuation drills.

(c) At the completion of each school year, the bus passenger evacuation drills for each school corporation or private school shall have included the following:

- (1) The use of all emergency exit doors and service door.
- (2) One (1) drill with the school bus driver not directing the passenger evacuation drill.
- (3) Each student receiving appropriate instruction for the passenger evacuation drill.

(d) Documentation of the bus passenger evacuation drill shall be reported to the designated school corporation or private school representative.

(e) Documentation of the bus passenger evacuation drill for each school corporation or private school shall be reported to the department of education by June 30 of each year.

(f) Any student exempted from physical participation in a passenger evacuation drill shall have documentation on file at the school.