



Bus Safety: The Danger Zone

The Danger Zone is the area surrounding the bus, including the area around the front bumper, rear bumper, front and rear tires and door when opened. This is important to know because the area around our buses presents a significant hazard to the well being of the children we serve.

According to National Statistics, Danger Zone Accidents account for three times the number of serious injuries and student fatalities than any other type of school bus accident. One of the most common examples of a Danger Zone accident occurs when a driver inadvertently closes the door on a student, their clothing, or back pack.

To prevent such accidents, the following steps must be followed when unloading students:

- Check traffic in front of and behind the bus prior to the stop.
- In Accordance with state law, activate the amber warning lights before the stop.
- Stop the bus in area prescribed by state regulation (If no state regulation, stop as far to the right side of the roadway as possible).
- Set the parking brake and place the transmission in neutral.
- Activate the red warning lights.
- Ensure all traffic has stopped before fully opening the door.
- Instruct students to remain seated until the door is fully open and you inform them that it is safe to exit the bus.
- Before opening the door, ensure traffic has stopped and the area is clear of suspicious persons or other dangers are near the stop.
- Count the number of students exiting the bus making sure the students who have exited have moved a safe distance from the vehicle.
- Before closing the door, make sure no backpacks, belts, straps or passengers can be caught in the door.
- Account for each student before disengaging the brake. If you are not sure of a student's whereabouts, get out and check.
- When safe, disengage the brake, activate the left turn signal, and perform a five-point mirror check looking for students, pedestrians, and traffic. Re-enter traffic when it is safe to do so.