

WAC 392-145-080 Emergency exit drills and procedures. The following requirements are designed to provide maximum passenger safety in emergency situations:

(1) All school districts shall prepare written policies or rules which establish procedures for school bus safety and emergency exit drills.

(2) One actual emergency evacuation drill shall be held within the first six weeks of school each semester. The first actual exit drill shall be followed by at least one verbal review of the emergency exit drill prior to the second actual exit drill. For schools on a trimester system, an actual emergency evacuation drill shall be held within the first six weeks of school of each trimester and no verbal review is required.

(3) Only those passengers whose participation in an exit drill poses substantial difficulty to themselves or to other passengers shall be excused and/or excluded from exit drill participation. Passengers who are excluded from such participation shall receive oral instruction in school bus safety and exit drills at least three times during the school year.

(4) Required exit drills shall be held upon school premises.

(5) The school bus driver shall:

(a) Assure that emergency exit drills make allowance for individual differences;

(b) Provide instructions on the location and use of emergency equipment;

(c) Provide instruction to helpers that they should offer a helping hand palm up and avoid grasping a student's hand or arm; and

(d) Time the exit drill to assure that procedures provide for an orderly and expedient exiting from the vehicle.

(6) At the start of each field trip or extracurricular trip, the school bus driver shall review with all passengers, the location and use of the emergency exits and emergency equipment, and any district emergency procedures.

(7) No school bus driver, except in accordance with emergency procedures adopted by the district, shall leave the immediate vicinity of his/her school bus while there are passengers aboard. In the event of a school bus breakdown, assistance shall be sought in accordance with school district policy.

(8) The emergency evacuation of a school bus shall only be conducted when staying on the school bus is more hazardous than exiting the school bus.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 46.61.380. WSR 07-05-058, § 392-145-080, filed 2/20/07, effective 11/1/07.]