

## 5 safety tips for school start from Calif. DOE



This danger zone diagram from the California Department of Education can be downloaded via the link in the article.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — With the start of the new school year, state pupil transportation officials are working to make sure that school bus drivers stay focused on proper procedures.

The California Department of Education's Office of School Transportation (OST) distributed a list of tips to aid in maintaining the safety of the state's school bus passengers.

"These reminders should help bus driver instructors and transportation administrators put several safety-related matters on the radar screen early in the school year," OST said in an e-mail.

1. Have drivers check their buses after each run to ascertain if sleeping children are on board. Remind drivers to walk their bus regularly.
2. Start preparing for your annual bus evacuation drills. Remember, all children who receive home-to-school transportation in grades pre-K to 8 shall participate in this exercise.
3. Drivers are prohibited from using hand-held wireless devices (e.g., cell phones) while the bus is in motion. No talking or texting while driving.
4. Share the 12-foot danger zone diagram with your staff and enlarge copies for children to read.
5. Proper loading/unloading procedures for children must be utilized at each approved school bus stop.

## **Messages to the kids:**

1. Never cross close to the front of the bus – make sure the driver can see you.
2. Never pick up anything you drop close to or under the bus – ask the driver what to do.
3. Never run after a bus or bang on the side.
4. If you must cross the street in front of the bus, follow the driver's directions, and stop and look before you cross.
5. Never run across a street, it's better to miss the bus than rush and risk being hit by a car.
6. Stay away from the rear and sides of the bus – always be in a safe place where the driver can see you.

## **Messages to the motoring public**

1. Never pass a school bus when its stop lights are flashing.
2. Be extra vigilant around school hours – assume a child might run out at any moment.
3. Be courteous to school buses, give them room and let them change lanes when they need to.

## **A message to you**

The school bus driver is the most important element for achieving school bus safety. Please make sure that every driver knows what safety is and how their personal behaviors can make school busing safer.

***Safety = Freedom from risk.*** Risk can come from unsafe conditions, but it's usually caused by unsafe behaviors. Almost every accident is caused by a driver's unsafe behavior. Drivers should know and avoid the risky behaviors. The most important are:

1. Count the kids away, know where they are before you move the wheels.
2. Always rock and roll for left hand turns.
3. Stay back four seconds – maintain a safe following distance and leave yourself an out.
4. Look ahead and be prepared.
5. Look around, always know what is going on around you.
6. Always check for sleeping children.
7. Never drop off a child at an unauthorized stop.
8. If late, stay late.

## **Conclusion**

***Making Kids Safer*** is what we do. Please take a few moments and watch this link. It's all about how to make your drivers far more aware of how their behaviors and that helps make the kids