



June 1, 2018

Madera County Grand Jury
PO Box 534
Madera, CA 93639

Judge Dale Blea
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera Superior Court
200 South G Street
Madera, CA 93637



Attention: Madera County Grand Jury

This letter is to serve as a response to the Madera County Grand Jury findings and recommendations released on May 9, 2018 regarding School Transportation Safety.

The report called out five (5) findings for Madera Unified School District (MUSD) and provided five (5) recommendations to address the reported findings. Below you will find MUSD's response to each of the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

F1. Because senior management of MUSD and GVUSD was unaware of the requirement to provide written bus safety information to parents, there is a potential violation of Education Code 39831.5 (a)(A,B,C,D,and E)(2).

R1. Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, MUSD provide parents with written information on bus emergency procedures and passenger safety pursuant to Education Code 39831.5.

Response:

Ed Code 39831.5 (a) (1) (A, B, C, D, and E) states:

- (a) All pupils in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, in public or private school that are transported in a school bus or school pupil activity bus shall receive instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety. The county superintendent of schools, superintendent of the school district, or owner operator of a private school, as applicable, shall ensure that the instruction is provided as follows:
 - (1) Upon registration, the parents or guardians of all pupils not previously transported in a school bus or school pupil activity bus and who are in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall be provided with written information on school bus safety. The information shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 - (A) A list of school bus stops near each pupil's home.
 - (B) General rules of conduct at school bus loading zones.
 - (C) Red light crossing instructions.



- (D) School bus danger zone.
- (E) Walking to and from school bus stops.

The district provides this information to parents through several avenues and to the families of all students enrolled in our district.

School bus stops are posted on the district website and a flier is provided to each school site listing the bus stops for each of our bus routes organized by school of attendance. These routes are developed annually based on student enrollment and the location of student residences.

Written information on general rules of conduct, red light crossing instructions, and school bus danger zones are included in the district handbook that is provided to all students at the beginning of every school year. Currently, staff is revising these sections based on examples of other school districts. The revised version will be included in the 2018-2019 School Year District Handbook for Students and will be distributed to all enrolled students upon the start of the new school year.

The district failed to include information on walking to and from bus stops in its most recent notification to parents. Staff has included this information in the district handbook mentioned above. This handbook will be provided to all enrolled students/families at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

A copy of the written material included in the 2018-2019 District Handbook for Students is attached as Exhibit A.

F7. Drivers turning left out of Alpha Elementary School onto Stadium Road create congestion problems and dangerous conditions for pedestrians.

R7. MUSD immediately enforce the "No Left Turn" rule at the exit onto Stadium Road at Alpha Elementary School.

Response:

Madera Unified School District will replace the "No Left Turn" signage at Alpha Elementary School prior to the start of the 2018-2019 School Year. Alpha Elementary will also send home information to parents regarding not turning left onto Stadium Road and will also send home phone message reminders. MUSD has worked in collaboration with Madera Police Department to have traffic officers patrol Stadium Road during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up and to assist in enforcing traffic signs. Staff members will also be assigned to the parking lot exits to encourage right hand turns out of the parking lot to assist in creating a better vehicular traffic flow.

F8. Drivers turning left into Alpha Elementary School from Stadium Road create congestion problems and dangerous conditions for pedestrians.

R8. MUSD work with the City of Madera to develop a plan to prevent left turns into Alpha Elementary School by August 1, 2018.



Response:

MUSD has met with the City Traffic Engineer to begin discussions on how to prevent left hand turns into Alpha Elementary School on Stadium Road. The district will continue to work with the City to determine if center medians are a possible solution on Stadium Road in front of Alpha Elementary School.

F9. The Transportation Department manual contains duplicate information and needs revision.

R9. MUSD eliminate duplications in the transportation manual by August 1, 2018.

Response:

MUSD Transportation staff will revise the transportation manual to eliminate duplications found by August 1, 2018. The district would like additional information from the Grand Jury on what duplications were found to ensure that all duplications are found and corrections are appropriately made.

F10. Several emergency evacuation forms were incomplete because they were not signed by school staff in violation of Education Code 39831.5(a) (4) (b)

R10. MUSD ensure complete documentation of annual student bus emergency procedures and passenger safety training beginning fall term, 2018.

Response:

The district will require a school site administrator be present for all annual student bus emergency procedures and passenger safety training beginning with the fall term of the 2018-2019 school year. The Director of Transportation will then review all evacuation forms to ensure that required school personnel are present and have signed the required documentation.

Implementation of the recommended measures will have negligible financial impact on the district at this time and will only require the improvement of systems and processes currently in place. The Madera Unified School District Governing Board thanks the Grand Jury for their diligence and recommendations for improving our community.

Sincerely,

Al Galvez
Board President
Madera Unified School District Governing Board

Todd Lile
Superintendent
Madera Unified School District

Enclosure

EXHIBIT A

TRANSPORTATION

Student Walking Limits

Students who reside outside the established radius zones as defined below will have bussing services available to them:

1. Radius zone will be drawn at a distance of 1 mile from the school site for K – 6th.
2. Radius zone will be drawn at a distance of 1.5 miles from the school site for 7th - 8th.
3. Radius zone will be drawn at a distance of 2 miles from the school site for 9th - 12th.

The radius zone will be measured by drawing a circular radius from a central location at the school site campus and around the school within the school's attendance boundary.

Walking To and From Bus Stops

1. Use crosswalks and/or intersections to cross streets. Do not cross in the middle of the block.
2. Use sidewalks where available. If no sidewalks are available, do not walk in the roadway.
3. Arrive at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to stop time.
4. If you are late to the bus and need to cross the street, wait for the bus driver to escort you across the street.
5. Never run to or from the bus.
6. Go directly home.

Foggy Day Schedule

MUSD Foggy Day Information Phone Line: (559) 673-2288

The following radio stations and television stations are sources to determine whether or not Madera Unified School District is on a foggy day schedule. These stations will broadcast the foggy day conditions periodically throughout the morning hours:

Radio Stations

English KMJ 580 AM

Television Stations

Channel 24 - KSEE

Channel 30 - KFSN

Channel 47 - KJEO

Fog delays will be called District wide by the superintendent. Parents and students need to look or listen for Madera Unified School District on the television or radio stations listed above.

Bus Riding Privileges

Any student who violates the bus rules or does not follow instructions from the driver may have their riding privileges suspended or revoked. Authority to suspend or revoke a student's bus riding privileges shall rest with a site administrator or the Transportation Director. The administrator will notify parents of the students of the suspension and the reasons therefore. All drivers involved will be notified.

When a student is denied bus-riding privileges, this also includes field trips.

Parents/guardians/designated people of Kindergarten students must be at the bus stop to receive the student or the student will be taken back to the school. If this happens more than 3 times during the school year, the student will lose bus riding privileges.

Video Recording Devices

Some of our school buses may be equipped with audio and video recording devices for the protection of our students and staff.

Safe Riding Practices and Emergency Procedures

Board Policy and State law require all pupils in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grades 1st to 8th who receive home to school transportation be given appropriate classroom instruction in safe bus riding practices and participate in an emergency bus evacuation drill.

The training must include the following:

1. Proper loading and unloading procedures, including escorting by the driver.
2. How to safely cross the street, highway, or private road.
3. Instruction in the use of passenger restraint systems.
4. Proper passenger conduct.
5. Location of emergency equipment.
6. Bus evacuation procedures – pupils will evacuate the school bus through emergency exit doors.

General Rules of Behavior at the Bus Stop or Loading and Unloading

1. Always arrive at the bus stop early (at least 5 minutes prior to bus arrival).

2. Stand in an orderly manner.
3. Respect private property. Do not walk on lawns or flowerbeds, or climb on cars and trees.
4. No pushing or shoving.
5. Always face the bus as it approaches.
6. Never run to or from the bus.
7. Listen to instruction from the driver.
8. Wait completely off the road for the bus. Stand at a safe distance from the bus as it pulls up to make its stop, and wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver opens the door before walking towards the bus (recommended distance is 12 feet).
9. Watch your step getting on and off the bus, especially in wet weather. Always use the handrail.
10. The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and seats will be assigned as directed by the Director of Transportation.

While Riding the Bus

1. Pupils should enter the bus in an orderly manner and should not bring aboard items of injurious or objectionable nature (animals, glass, balloons, weapons etc.).
2. All passengers are required to wear passenger restraint systems (i.e. seat belts) if the bus is so equipped.
3. Do not get out of your seat while the bus is in motion.
4. Remain seated until the bus stops and the driver opens the doors before exiting.
5. Keep hands, head, arms, etc. inside the bus at all times.
6. No screaming, yelling, or use of profanity on the bus.
7. No harassing or fighting on the bus.
8. Be courteous to fellow students.
9. No smoking on the bus.
10. Students are not allowed to make offensive remarks or gestures to pedestrians or motorists.
11. The aisle of the bus shall be kept clear of books, lunches, feet, etc.
12. Permission to leave or board the bus at other than the normal stops shall be cleared with the Principal or the school office in advance and written permission presented to the driver on a school bus pass.
13. The request must not require the bus to go off its route or require an additional stop.
14. Space must be available on the bus.
15. No objects will be thrown in or out of the bus.
16. You may not refuse to share a seat with another student.
17. Remain in your seat and be quiet at railroad grade crossings.
18. All Kindergarten students who ride the bus are seated at the front of the bus.

Red Light Crossing Instruction

(For children who must cross the street at the bus stop.)

1. In the morning, students are to gather at their assigned bus stop and wait for the bus to arrive.
2. Driver will shut bus off, activate red lights and walk to the center of the roadway to cross children, if required.
3. Children are to remain still until the driver tells them it is safe to cross.
4. Students must cross between the driver and the bus.
5. The driver will be the last person to get on the bus.
6. Drivers doing red light crossing are in control of the street or roadway upon which they are on! Cross traffic or traffic on the other streets that a student must cross to get to or from a bus stop cannot be controlled by the bus driver.
7. Grades 9 -12 will not receive a driver escort unless pre-kindergarten through 8th-grade students require an escort. Then all students will receive a driver escort.

Afternoon Drop Offs

(For children who must cross the street that bus stop is on.)

1. Children are to remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Driver will shut bus off, activate red flashing lights and open the door. Driver will be the first person off the bus.
3. The children will wait inside the bus until the driver signals them when it is safe to exit the bus.
4. The children must walk in front of the bus between the driver and the bus in an orderly manner.

School Bus Danger Zone

Any place around a school bus can be dangerous. It is safe to assume that if you cannot see the driver, the driver cannot see you. Some of the danger zones children are commonly found while loading or unloading the bus are shown in the diagram below. Never play in the following areas of a bus:

1. Directly in front of the bus.
2. The area near the entrance door.
3. The area near the front tires (on either side of the bus).
4. The area near the rear tires (on either side of the bus).
5. Directly behind the bus.