



WISCONSIN SCHOOL TALK

A Safety and Health Bulletin for K-12 Schools From
Gallagher National Risk Control

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The Gallagher Way.
Since 1927.

School Driving Exposures: How Is Your Fleet Safety Program?

Driving is a significant exposure for schools. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), each year the number of motor vehicle accident fatalities continues to increase. The situations vary: From a maintenance employee running to the local hardware store to get supplies, to a teacher going to a school-supported training event, to a volunteer parent driving athletes to a tournament — all of these present different levels of risk to the organization. Although you don't have control over a driver's actions while they're on the road, you do have a lot of control over the selection process and establishment of rules to be followed to ensure that employees and volunteers drive in a safe manner. Following are some suggested practices for school administrators to consider in minimizing driving risks for both schools and employees.

Driver Safety Policy

- Develop a driver safety policy that clearly establishes the administration's concern for the well-being of students, employees and the public. The policy should include requirements for selecting qualified drivers, rules of the road and how the program will be administrated. All drivers should sign an acknowledgement form to confirm they are aware of the policies; they will operate all vehicles (regardless of ownership) in a safe manner; and they will notify administration of any accidents, violations or other situations related to driving a motor vehicle.
- Establish safe driving rules and communicate them to all drivers. These rules will vary by organization, as the exposures can differ greatly. Rules should address safe vehicle operation (e.g., cellphone usage limitations, mandatory seat belts, distracted driving, drug/alcohol policy), pedestrian safety, maintenance, vehicle inspections and specific procedures such as transporting students, etc.
- Provide a policy for drivers of non-district-owned vehicles (such as private vehicles of employees or volunteers) on district business.
- Gallagher has a sample fleet policy for review. Please contact your Gallagher NRC representative for a copy.



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Driver Selection

- Ensure that only qualified and safe drivers are selected to operate a vehicle for district use, even if it is their own vehicle. Anybody who drives for the district should be pre-authorized to ensure they meet the basic qualifications. This can be accomplished by:
 - » Verifying a current driver's license
 - » Checking motor vehicle records (MVRs) — Gallagher can provide an MVR evaluation tool upon request
 - » Conducting a road test (depending on the purpose of the vehicle)
 - » Confirming that drivers carry at least the minimum insurance limits for their personal vehicles if using for district business
 - » Ensuring that drivers who operate their personal vehicles for school business list the school district as an additional insured on their automobile insurance policy

Driver Recognition Program

- After driver selection, it is important to continue to encourage safe driving behavior. The school can consider bonuses paid out to drivers on a quarterly or semi-quarterly basis for drivers not involved in at-fault motor vehicle accidents or for drivers who safely avoid a motor vehicle accident. The school can provide annual awards to safe drivers with safe driving celebrations at year end.

Vehicle Maintenance

- Make sure the vehicles your drivers operate are appropriate for their intended use, as well as properly maintained. A well-maintained vehicle not only helps the driver prevent accidents and control their vehicle, but also reduces downtime (delayed arrival for students being transported to events and activities), reduces breakdown costs and lengthens the service life of the vehicle.
- Make sure that maintenance records are kept on file for all vehicles. Maintenance records can demonstrate that your vehicle was in a safe condition while it was operating on the road. Without the maintenance records, an opposing attorney may argue that your vehicle was not well maintained.



Driver Training

- Provide defensive driving training to all drivers. Gallagher has developed defensive driving training modules in their proprietary Safety Training Education Platform (Gallagher STEP) to assist with training. To enroll in the following defensive driving modules, please contact your Gallagher NRC representative.
 - » Accident Scene Management
 - » R Is for Reverse
 - » Changing Lanes Safety
 - » Driving Safely in School Zone
 - » Intersections
 - » Reducing Deer — Related Accidents
 - » Reducing Springtime Weather Accidents
 - » Defensive Driving — Reducing Winter Weather Accidents
 - » Safe Following Distance, Avoiding Rear-End Collision
 - » Defensive Driving — General Auto Risk Program for Drivers

Given the unique role that school bus operators play in K-12 fleet safety, it is recommended that they watch [Bus Driver Safety and Wellness](#) for additional information.

Telematics

- Fleet telematics software can help determine which drivers may need enhanced safe driver training by monitoring driver behavior such as speeding, hard braking, improper lane changes, hard cornering and extreme acceleration parameters. Both forward- and rear-facing cameras may also be utilized. For more information on fleet telematics, please watch [Fleet Safety – What Do You Need to Know?](#)

Accident Investigation

- Investigate all vehicle accidents using an established form and procedure for which supervisors have been trained. Every accident, no matter how minor, must be reported immediately, investigated as soon as feasibly possible and reviewed by the administration. Thorough accident investigations should help identify the root cause of the accident in order to prevent similar accidents in the future.
- For additional information on accident investigation, please watch [Incident Investigation Essentials](#).

Driver Coaching Program

- For drivers involved in an at-fault motor vehicle accident, a successful coaching program should improve their safe driving behavior. A coaching program may include training modules from Gallagher's STEP program, driver ride-alongs with commentary drives and/or driver-specific safety training such as safe backing. We recommend that drivers successfully complete a driver coaching program before being allowed to operate a motor vehicle for the district.



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