

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT Chief Operating Officer

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SUBJECT: BULLETIN NO. BUL-698
TRANSPORTATION BRANCH
EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PLANS

DATE: December 22, 2003

DIVISION: Business Services Division

APPROVAL: MICHAEL A. EUGENE, Business Manager

ROUTING
Administrators
Local District
Administrators
Local District
School Support
Directors
Principals

For further information, please call David Palmer, Deputy Branch Director, Transportation Branch, at (323) 342-1400 or Bus Operations Dispatch at (323) 342-1460.

This revision replaces Bulletin C-62 (Rev.) of the same subject dated March 5, 2001. The content has been updated to reflect current procedures.

I. BACKGROUND

If a major earthquake causes extensive roadway and structural damage within the boundaries of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), a Transportation Branch emergency plan is necessary to insure the safety of traveling students. The procedures in this plan apply to students riding both LAUSD and contract buses.

This plan will be implemented only in case of a major earthquake (usually 5.0 or above on the Richter scale) and/or where there is obvious and widespread damage to roads and structures. In minor earthquakes, "take cover" procedures will be initiated for students and buses will be parked in a safe location off the road or freeway. If there is no reported damage to roads and structures, normal operations should resume in about 15 minutes.

II. EMERGENCY PLAN

A. Early Morning Earthquake

If the earthquake occurs during early morning pickup hours, students who have not been picked up should be instructed by parents and school staff to do the following:

1. Special Education students with home pickup should remain at home.

2. Students waiting at or near an LAUSD school pickup point should report to that school office for temporary shelter. School administrators should designate in advance which school entrance point should be used.
3. Students waiting at a location other than a school should return home if a responsible person will be there or go to the nearest LAUSD school if there is no such at home.

B. Earthquake Occurring With Students Aboard Buses

1. All drivers whose buses are enroute will pull to the side of the road, away from tall buildings, trees, street lights, and power lines, if possible. They are not to stop on or below overpasses or bridges.
2. Students will be told to take cover by putting their heads down between their knees and remaining their seats until an "all clear" is given by the driver. Students will be kept on the bus because they are safer there.
3. When the shaking stops, bus drivers will move the bus, if necessary, and park in a safe location. If in a low coastal area, the bus should be moved to a higher elevation. The entry door will remain closed and the driver will check for pupil injuries, calm the students and render first aid where necessary.
4. The bus driver will then drive (or walk the students if vehicle is inoperable or streets are impassable) to the nearest LAUSD school, preferably a secondary school or a Special Education Center if severely handicapped students are involved. Drivers will have a roster of all students. If students are walked to a school site, information regarding the names of students and location will be left on the bus.
5. Drivers will await further instructions from the school administrator if contact with Dispatch cannot be made. Even though students may be badly frightened, they must not be allowed to leave without adequate supervision. The driver will personally carry the bus roster to keep track of students and report injuries during the emergency.

C. Earthquake Occurring While Students Are In School

1. If the earthquake occurs during school hours, buses will not attempt to pick up and return students to their sending school/homes until authorized by the District's

Emergency Operations Center via Transportation Bus Operations Dispatch, School Police or Transportation Branch Staff. This may be done on a school-by-school or regional basis.

2. Bus drivers who are not at a school site at the time of the earthquake will drive to their first pickup school if possible, or the nearest school or bus lot that can be accessed safely and wait for further instructions before proceeding.

D. Out-of-Area trips

Drivers of buses on special trips outside the District will attempt to make radio contact with their Dispatch office and to return to the nearest District secondary school. The driver and students must remain at that location until they can return safely to their sending schools/homes. If finding an open school is not possible, drivers will ask for local public school or law enforcement assistance to house and feed the students until they can return. Drivers and adult escorts are to remain with the students until they are able to return to their communities.

E. Parent Concern Lines

After a major earthquake, the Transportation Branch will open parent concern lines at 1-800-LA BUSES OR 1-800-522-8737. However, because of the high volume of anticipated calls, there is no guarantee that all incoming calls can be received and answered in a major emergency. Radio and TV announcements will be made by the District and should be monitored by parents.

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