

Bus Safety Considerations for COVID-19

Providing a safe, clean ride to school is among the key elements of students returning safely for in-person instruction this fall given the COVID-19 pandemic and related health guidelines. MREA partnered with [Palmer Bus](#) to provide this quick guide to safety considerations on buses.

Safe Drivers

- Drivers possibly wearing masks, vinyl gloves
- When sick, stay home
- DOT currently does not allow for the driver to be compartmentalized, or adding a structure inside of the bus to separate students. These are considered not safe for driving.
- Possible daily temperatures when arriving for work
- School bus drivers are mainly in a high risk age group. We encourage districts with their own buses as well as contractors to consider who else could be licensed, possibly young teachers.

Safe Ride

- Students possibly required to wear masks
- Keep family groups together as they can ride in the same seat
- CDC will be recommending students are separated in the bus every other seat
- When loading-load rear to front/unloading-front to rear
- No students seated directly behind the driver
- ABSOLUTELY NO FOOD or DRINKS passed around or consumed on the bus
- Consider assigning a paraprofessional to the bus ride to keep students socially distance and to distribute nutrition to families on the afternoon ride for the days when students are not returning to school until their next scheduled day

Clean Ride

When possible, keep roof hatches open to promote air flow. Each bus in use is cleaned following each route. Consider these key surfaces:

- Seats
- Driver Area
- Entry Handrail
- Entry Door Area

Safe Bus Garage (Terminal)

- Consider daily temperatures
- Stagger arrival times for drivers
- Keep hanging out to a minimum
- Clean break areas constantly
- Clean restrooms constantly
- Encourage good hygiene
- Discourage community donuts, snacks and other food

