

School Is Back: Recheck the Driving Route

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Why this matters

A familiar work route can change when school starts or the timetable changes. More children, buses and parked vehicles may share the same space. Review the route and delivery arrangement before the driver is committed to a tight arrival time.

Objective: Identify school-related route changes and verify the rules, visibility and safe access plan.

Key hazards or failure points

Old travel timing; children hidden by vehicles; school-bus stopping signals missed; backing across a sidewalk; unclear state rules; navigation distraction; pressure to rush.

Practical controls

- While parked, plan the route and timing around school movements where practical. Confirm a lawful delivery and parking location. Leave time to wait or use a safer route.
- Follow posted school-zone controls, crossing-guard instructions and applicable state school-bus stopping rules. Slow and prepare for a bus's yellow flashing lights; obey required stopping for red lights and the stop arm.
- Set navigation before moving. Keep mirrors and windows usable, scan for pedestrians and avoid backing where practical. Where backing is needed, use the agreed safe arrangement and stop when the path or communication is uncertain.

Verify It in the Field

Identify school zones, bus stops and pedestrian crossings on today's route. Check current state guidance for the actual road layout; do not assume an exception for a divided road. Resolve uncertainty before dispatch.

At a safe parked position, check visibility and the planned driveway or sidewalk crossing. Identify loads or parked vehicles that conceal people. Change the access or parking arrangement when the view is inadequate.

Ask the driver to explain the response to bus signals and loss of a clear path. Confirm the dispatcher supports waiting or rerouting. Record route changes and unresolved access issues; never use a child in the path to test the plan.

Stop and reassess

Stop as required for bus signals or crossing instructions. Do not move into an occupied or unclear path. Reassess an unexpected route, blocked sight line or delivery change from a safe stopped position. Correct uncertainty before continuing.

Ask the crew

1. Where does our route meet a student walking or bus route?
2. What does the state require for this road layout?
3. How can we remove backing or rushing from this trip?

Before dispatch: check the route, rules and time to wait.

Sources: NHTSA School Bus Safety and current state traffic guidance.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance, references, supervisor check and attendance record accompany this talk.