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**Guidelines for determining
Driver-Designated Place of Safety**

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Chapter 3301-83 of the administrative code contains operation and safety rules regulating pupil transportation, and governs all pupil transportation in Ohio. These rules pertain to both safety and administrative procedures for pupil transportation. Compliance with these rules is mandated under Ohio Revised Code 4511.76.

Within this chapter there are rules specific to a driver-designated place of safety for students who are loading or unloading from school buses. The primary reference is in Section 3301-83-13 B6, and reads as follows: “Each pupil shall be assigned a residence side designated place of safety. Driver must account for each pupil at designated place of safety before leaving. Pupils are not to proceed to their residence until the school bus has departed.”

In section 3301-83-08 C2 additional language states: “Pupils must wait in a location clear of traffic and away from the bus stop.”

The purpose of the place of safety is to reduce as much as possible the potential of a student being hit by a school bus while they are in the process of being picked up or dropped off.

While the code cited above does not further define a “designated place of safety”, a standard of teaching has been developed within the preservice program that all bus drivers are required to participate in. The following principles are being taught to bus drivers as reflective of “best practice”.

1. The place of safety should be at least 20 or more steps away from the bus stop. [Drivers are instructed to teach ‘steps’ instead of feet so that the distance will be readily understood by all ages of students being transported.]
2. The place of safety should be far enough away from the bus so that the bus can proceed without any chance of the student running back into the path of school bus as it leaves the designated stop.
3. When possible, the driver should choose a stationary and recognizable object – such as a flag pole, garage door, or sign post.
4. The place of safety should be such that a driver can account for the location of the child before moving the bus. At stops with multiple students, a place of safety should be identified where each student can be seen.
5. School bus drivers who do not believe a place of safety can be determined at a given stop should communicate with their supervisor and ask for assistance.
6. Drivers should always count their students twice before leaving the school bus stop.

For more information, contact the Pupil Transportation Office of the Ohio Department of Education