



## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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**CONTACT:** Jean Henshaw  
Public Relations Specialist  
Berks County Intermediate Unit  
610-987-8423; jeahen@berksiu.org

### **BCIU to Stage Mock Bus Accident**

*Hundreds of BCIU and Public School Bus Drivers Will Watch and Learn*

READING, PA – A BCIU school bus transporting students to the Berks Career & Technology Center’s west campus in Leesport will topple on its side August 11, killing the driver and injuring at least 15 students. Several students will be transported by ambulance to the Reading Hospital and Medical Center and St. Joseph Medical Center, and at least one may be transported by helicopter to Reading Hospital. Emergency police, fire, and medical personnel will cope with the students’ injuries as well as panicked parents desperate to reach their children.

And it all will happen for a good reason: as training for hospital personnel as well as bus drivers and transportation administrators from the BCIU and several Berks County school districts.

The mock bus accident will be staged at 10 a.m., Tuesday, August 11 (rain date: August 13) at the Reading Fairgrounds, County Welfare Road, Bern Township.

Local police departments, fire departments, and emergency/rescue crews from Reading, Muhlenberg, and Bethel will participate.

“This will be a great training exercise for our drivers, as well as emergency personnel,” said Chris Celmer, program administrator, BCIU Operations. “We hope we’ll never have such a bad accident in real life, but it’s always best to prepare for the ‘what ifs.’”

The BCIU’s 215 school buses and 69 vans transported 9,170 students more than 4.6 million miles in the 2008-2009 school year with no major accidents or injuries.

Most of the intermediate unit’s 368 bus drivers and driver’s assistants will watch the mock accident from the fairgrounds’ bleachers. A film crew hired by Lehigh Carbon Community College also will shoot the staged incident for a training film to be released in time for National School Bus Safety Week October 19-23.

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V&M Towing of Reading will bring a retired bus to the fairgrounds and place it on its side. All fluids will be emptied and all windows will be removed from the bus beforehand.

The students involved in the accident are children of BCIU employees or friends of those children. Several BCIU employees also will portray parents of the accident victims.

Ambulances will transport “victims” to the hospitals where they will be picked up by their (real-life) parents. The PennSTAR4 trauma helicopter may be on hand (unless it’s needed for an actual emergency).

For more information, contact Chris Celmer, program administrator, Operations, at 610-987-8583 / [chr cel@berksiu.org](mailto:chr cel@berksiu.org); or Donna Kaley, assistant program administrator, Transportation, at 610-987-8620 / [donkal@berksiu.org](mailto:donkal@berksiu.org).

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