

SafeGuard Case Study

SafeGuard School Bus Seating Case Study Beaumont Independent School District Beaumont, Texas

Beaumont Independent School District made the decision to use belted seating on school transportation in June of 2006, following a motorcoach crash that killed two girls and seriously injured many other soccer team members traveling to a game that March.

In the aftermath of the accident, parents formed West Brook Bus Crash Families (WBBCF) to advocate safer bus travel for school children, including the addition of lap-shoulder belts in all forms of school transportation. Beaumont ISD the first school district in Texas to require lap-shoulder belts on all new school buses purchased. Of its 237 buses on the road, 42 are equipped with SafeGuard school bus seats.

On June 8, 2007, Texas Governor Rick Perry signed “Ashley and Alicia’s Bill” into law at a ceremony in the library at West Brook High School, mandating lap-shoulder belts on school buses and charters, beginning in September 2010.



Clifton Guillory
Beaumont Transportation Director

Beaumont Transportation Director Clifton Guillory says the transition to belted seating has been uneventful – something that quickly became a “natural thing” in school transportation. Students are expected to wear their seat belts, and compliance rates are very high.

“We’re serious about it, and we’ve been very firm about compliance. That’s made my job real easy,” Guillory explained. “A while back, I got a call from an AP reporter in New York who asked me, ‘What if they don’t want to wear the belts?’ I told him, ‘I don’t know how it is in New York, but in Texas, adults are in charge, and we have certain expectations. If you don’t wear your seat belt, you don’t ride the bus.’”

Discipline issues have been reduced on the buses equipped with belted seats. “The discipline issues are on the unbelted buses,” Guillory said. “I have not been called into even one discipline situation on the buses equipped with seat belts. Students aren’t moving around, and that makes a difference.”

Guillory said maintenance issues have been minor during the first two years of product usage. “Originally, we were concerned about the cost of maintenance increasing. That’s not happening,” he said. “We’ve had writing on some of the seats and a couple of cuts. The kids can’t move around, so we think that’s the reason we’re not seeing the same damage we see with regular seats.”

Guillory reflects on the district's decision to go with SafeGuard. "I looked at the data on the product and studied what SafeGuard had on its website about how the seat is built and how it reacts in crash testing," he recounted. "Comparing to other products on the market, and looking at it from a parent's perspective, we chose SafeGuard because it seems like a safer seat. Everything just made more sense."