

**Subject:** Re: School Bus

**From:** Kathy Scarnecchia <scarnecc@aaps.k12.mi.us>

**Date:** Mon, 17 Oct 2005 09:57:10 -0400

**To:** Kyung-Hee Kim <kkim7@emich.edu>

Dr. Kim-I spoke with the driver's supervisor just now. He is putting an aide on the bus for this afternoon, he has spoken with the assigned driver and the substitute who was driving on Friday. The driver is assigning seats today. I am handling the discipline reports later this afternoon. Please let me know is anything like this continues to occur.

On Oct 15, 2005, at 3:42 PM, Kyung-Hee Kim wrote:

Dear Mrs. Scarnecchia,

Thank you for your effort to arrange the buses for the Korean educators. I am excited about showing the creative teaching to the Korean educators so that they can learn how to encourage Korean students' creativity.

I want to talk about something else now.

For a while now, Ji has been telling me that the 5th graders on the bus have been making fun of him for how he looks: "Are you Chinese?" "Are you Japanese?" "Why are your eyes so squinted?" "Why are your eyes so mixed up?" "Why are your eyes so small?" Or, for how his name sounds like: "I know why your parents named you Ji-SUCK. Because you really, really sure do SUCK." Even though Ji has been telling them his name spelled differently they keep at it. However, I have been telling him that if he behaved like a really good boy, nobody would make fun of him. I handled it this way because he is talkative, active, and making odd sounds, so that I think other children were annoyed enough by this to make fun of him.

Fortunately, making fun of him for his look or his name has never happened in Ms. Hagan's class. I think she has been doing a wonderful job with classroom management and multicultural awareness. I did not talk about the problem on the bus with Ms. Hagan because I thought that she would think the same way I do---that Ji needs to behave better. I also thought that the kids are making fun of him partly because Ji is new, so things may calm down with time, once they do not see him as "the new boy".

Yesterday, however, Ji got off the bus crying. It sounds like things were confusing on the bus. I was wondering if you could help all of the students have a safe ride. I know that Ji was in the middle of things and I have been dealing with him at home this weekend. He has lost privileges and has extra chores for the weekend as well. We have talked about it and he has helped me put events in chronological order, which I am including below as he wrote them. He is also writing an apology letter to Victoria, and we are discussing events and trying to come up with better ways of handling the situations.

It sounds like he was making a paper airplane on the bus, and David asked Ji to give it to him and then, Ji threw it to David. David also made one and threw it to Ji. Trent, who was sitting in front David, grabbed paper from David and crushed the paper into little balls and threw them at children including Ji. Once one ball went out the window, everyone got excited and started grabbing paper to throw them out the window. That's what I am assuming from his report. It also sounds like around this point, things got more than a little crazy, with everyone scrambling around in that area. I am also concerned about the girl pulling other children's hair. He said it was the first time that girl did it, but that Victoria does it often. It also sounds like Victoria has a history of taking his things (give them back to Ji only when he does what she wants him to do. For example, Ji has to pick up a pencil that she dropped). As I asked him further, he talked about kids on the bus taking book bags (mostly Ji's book bag)

and passing them around to each other. He also talked about bumping Victoria when he took his book bag back. He swears that it was an accident caused by his jerking his bag from her at the same time she stood up. I am also worried about the threats (especially the throat-slitting motion) made by some of the children around him.

I am worried about the kinds of activities the children are involved in while on the bus. I only have my son's report and he is implicated, so I do not have reliable and valid information. I am working with him, and he is facing consequences this weekend, but I am hoping that the account is helpful to you and that you can help me know the truth so that I can better deal with my son's behavior. I also know, however, that it will take a change with everyone on the bus, not just with my son, for anything I do to be effective. He, too, needs to feel safe from threats, racial comments, and having his things taken, in order for him to behave appropriately. Is there a video camera on the bus that I could watch, or that you could at least watch if confidentiality is an issue? I trust you to get to the bottom of things and help with the children's safe ride.

Thank you for reading this letter and for the work you do with all children. I know you can help the bus situation. I am including Ji's account below.

Sincerely,

Kyung-Hee Kim, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Teacher Education  
Eastern Michigan University  
313K Porter Building  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
Phone: 734-487-7120, ext.2649  
Fax: 734-487-2101

[the following is what Ji wrote about Friday]

October 14, 2005

Ji-Seok Lee

Got on the bus after school. There was a different bus driver today.

Got some paper from my book bag

Played with it.

Made a paper airplane. The guy sitting next to me (David) asked me to give it to him. I flew it to him and gave paper to him. He made one and flew it to me.

Someone in front of David (Trent) was stealing paper from us, making balls, and throwing it somewhere else; out the window

David tried to throw the paper out the window, too.

Trent hit some one with it, then the guy threw it back to Trent, then he threw it at someone else..

They kept doing it for a bit and some people asked them to stop.

When Trent hit Brook with it, she thought it was me and pulled my hair.

I told her, "How would you feel if you got pulled on the hair?" She didn't say anything.

David's sister who was sitting behind us with her friend (Victoria) joined his brother and pulled my hair and stole my paper and kept passing it around the bus.

David and Victoria are usually mean to me, but sometimes David is nice. At first he was nice, but then he got all mixed up.

Victoria got under my seat and started kicking me, so I wiggled my legs and then she stopped. But, then, she started again.

Her friend (who was sitting next to her) helped her steal my book bag.

Then I took her (Victoria's friend) book bag because she never gives things back to me unless I can trade her something for it.

I gave her back her book bag right after I took it and said, "Okay, now give me my book bag." But she wouldn't give it to me.

She wiggled it in front of me and I took it back.

When I took it back, I accidentally hit her in the eye with my elbow, or maybe the book bag—I'm not sure, but it happened when I was reaching over the seat, when I jerked it away from her and she stood up with it. And then she pulled it.

Her friend's sister (fifth grade) came to my seat and got her little sister's book bag from her and hit me with it. The book bag felt like it was filled with heavy stuff and it hurt when she hit me several times with the book bag.

She went back to her seat and stayed there.

The girl was crying because I hurt her eye.

Then her brother said, "Why'd you hurt my sister?" and then mouthed, "You're dead" silently.

The bus driver stopped and came back and told us to write our names, grades, and teacher's names, and only me, Victoria, and her friend. I think he should have asked for David, Trent, and the girl who hit me with the book bag. He told me to tell the other bus driver instead.

So, I calmed down.

The kids around me were talking to me again and the bus driver said to be quiet. Then, David was saying things like, "Why'd you do that?" and, "You're dead." When I told him to be quiet, he just told me to shut up.

We all calmed down and got quiet.

David whispered to me, "I'm going to kill you." And then said, "I'll get you." Then, he made a hand motion like slitting a throat.

Then, I got off the bus.

----- Original Message -----

From: Kathy Scarnecchia <[scarnecc@aaps.k12.mi.us](mailto:scarnecc@aaps.k12.mi.us)>

Date: Friday, October 14, 2005 2:56 pm

Subject: Re: School Bus

Dr. Kim-It looks as if the bus will be available for your group.  
I  
just wanted to give you advance notice-I know Liz Margolis will  
also  
contact you with this good news!

On Oct 11, 2005, at 10:31 PM, Kyung-Hee Kim wrote:

Dear Mrs. Scarnecchia,

Thank you for your help, reply, and for asking about the other schools. I have been in contact with the other principals and, as you know by now, have just e-mailed the transportation coordinator. Thank> you for the suggestion. I appreciate all of your help.

Good luck with the M.E.A.P.--I hope Mitchell Elementary has THE

BEST

M.E.A.P. scores this year!!

Kyung-Hee Kim, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Teacher Education  
Eastern Michigan University  
313K Porter Building  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
Phone: 734-487-7120, ext.2649  
Fax: 734-487-2101

----- Original Message -----

From: Kathy Scarnecchia <[scarnecc@aaps.k12.mi.us](mailto:scarnecc@aaps.k12.mi.us)>  
Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2005 7:56 am  
Subject: Re: School Bus

Hello Dr. Kim-I have not had approval for the bus yet. The district contact is Liz Margolis. Her e-mail is [margolis@aaps.k12.mi.us](mailto:margolis@aaps.k12.mi.us). She was going to get back to me this week. Also, have you been successful making contact at Scarlett and Huron? Please keep me posted

and i

will let you know as soon as I hear from her. I think it would be a good idea for you to e-mail her as well.

The MEAPs seem to be going well but, you know how that is! I will be in touch soon.

On Oct 11, 2005, at 6:32 AM, Kyung-Hee Kim wrote:

I hope everything is going well with the MEAP test in your and my son's school.

I am wondering about the bus arrangement. Could you give me the contact information so that I can talk about the details with the right person?

Thank you so much for working with us.

Kyung-Hee Kim, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Teacher Education  
Eastern Michigan University  
313K Porter Building  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
Phone: 734-487-7120, ext.2649

Fax: 734-487-2101  
<kkim7.vcf>  
  
<kkim7.vcf>  
  
<kkim7.vcf>

<kkim7.vcf>  
<kkim7.vcf>  
<kkim7.vcf>