

Investigation continues into Victor bus crash

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MPNnow.com — State and local officials are looking into what caused a crash between two Victor Central School District buses that sent eight children and a bus driver to the hospital Monday morning.

Victor Superintendent Dawn Santiago-Marullo said the district will cooperate with Ontario County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Department of Transportation investigations as well as conduct its own investigation. In the meantime, she praised emergency responders and district employees for their quick action.

"This is never good news but I think everyone got into a 'let's deal with this mode,'" Santiago-Marullo said. "We're just relieved that most of the kids just received bumps and bruises."

Multiple ambulances were called to School Street shortly before 9 a.m. yesterday after one Victor Central School District bus rear-ended another that had stopped to pick up several students.

Ontario County deputies said the first bus, driven by Lori Fuller, 46, of Pine Hill Lane, Farmington, was stopped on School Street with its red lights activated when it was struck from behind by a second bus, driven by Claudia Poh, 57, of Lambert St., Victor. Poh's bus also swerved into oncoming traffic and hit a car driven by Rebecca Carrozo, 43, of Sterling Circle, Victor.

At the time of the collision, 6-year-old students Andrew Jakubowski and Raelyn Seward were boarding the bus and the impact caused them to be thrown to the ground.

Jakubowski and Seward, along with Liam Haller, 9; Mary Catherine Braddon, 10; and Surinder Ahluwalia, 10; were taken to Strong Memorial Hospital. All were treated and released except for Jakubowski, who was under observation Monday afternoon.

Poh was briefly trapped in the bus and had to be freed by members of the Victor Fire Department. She and three students were taken to Thompson Hospital. They were Sarah Armstrong, 11; Chris Mette, 10; and Samantha Plews, 9.

All were treated and released.

Poh's bus was carrying 20 students at the time of the crash and Fuller had 33 students on her bus.

Deputies and the Victor Fire Department were joined at the scene by state troopers, Victor-Farmington Ambulance, Honeoye-Falls Mendon Ambulance, East Bloomfield Fire Department and Shortsville Fire Department.

Shortly after the incident, the scene was sealed off and packed with emergency vehicles and concerned parents who were notified of crash by the school district or heard about it from neighbors.

"Even though I live a mile down the road, it felt like the longest drive of my life," said Christine Benetti, who had two children riding one of the buses.

Santiago-Marullo said a school nurse joined paramedics at the scene, and the students who were not hospitalized were checked over by other nurses when they arrived at the school.

Adam Oplinger, ALS chief for Victor-Farmington Ambulance Squad, said that calls involving children can be tough to respond to.

"Anytime we get a dispatch like that, there is a lot of anticipation on the way there," Oplinger, who has a 10-year-old daughter himself, said.

"Once you get there, though, the training takes over."

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