

## **November's Fast Facts; What's the Story with Party Buses?**

Ahhhhhhhh, a “party bus”, what a great idea! No mess to pick up, students are secure, in a small area away from those who might be put off by their noise and/or behavior. Takes care of transportation issue and after party location. Seems like a safer solution...right?



Ummm, not so fast. Judging by the number of legal battles generated in the last two years by deaths and injuries sustained on party buses, this “solution” may not be optimal.

What, exactly, is the expectation when one hires a “party bus”?

If you are expecting the driver to provide supervision to prevent the guests from bringing or using alcohol and/or other substances which are illegal, you should know that this is not the driver's role. Party buses also fall into an exception of the Minnesota Statute which addresses open bottles (MN 221.012, subdivision 26). The bus companies provide the vehicle and driver. Typically, the language used in the “terms and conditions” to state that the renter is legally responsible for whatever happens aboard is something like this; “Client will indemnify Risky Business Buses of any and all costs incurred that are associated with any legal action resulting from underage possession, distribution, or consumption of alcohol including but not limited to fines, court costs, and attorney fees.”

Video from YouTube confirms the promise that the party bus is simply “a nightclub on wheels” where clients can “fulfill their wildest fantasies”.

The following headlines (just a few of the many similar reports within the last 14 months), make clear the fact that the party bus solution is not without drawbacks:

- Citing safety, Marine bulletin declares ‘Party Bus’ off limits
- Parents sue party bus co. for teen’s death
- Student guilty of supplying alcohol in “party bus’ death
- Staten Island family blames ‘party bus’ in death of teen
- Teens charged for raunchy party bus antics
- Funeral Set for man killed in Party Bus Accident

We in Student Support Services encourage any parent thinking of hiring a party bus, or considering allowing their child to attend a party bus gathering to be aware of the facts in order to make an informed decision.