

https://www.pmg-sc.com/carolina_gateway/news/article_5f337c70-2888-52cf-a7c6-97de72fcf7f3.html

10-year-old gets concussion on school bus

By Haley Jones hjones@thelancasternews.com

Feb 14, 2023

An Indian Land student was hurt in a school bus incident last month.

Luis Elias, 10, fell out of his seat on the bus while en route to an after-school facility Feb. 10 and sustained a concussion.

The student's mother, Mary Rivera, said her son and other students on the bus told her the driver ran over a curb by a karate facility, causing the children to shift in their seats and Luis to fall and hit his head on the back door of the bus. "He (Luis) said that he blacked out, and was screaming and crying," Rivera said.

"They should pull over and make sure he's OK."

Bryan Vaughn, director of communications, safety and transportation for Lancaster County School District, said Rivera spoke with Ronnie Plyler, assistant director of transportation, on Feb. 10 after she called him with concerns.

Vaughn said he confirmed that the bus went over the curb, which the bus driver said was due to a car coming toward them, causing him to try to move over to make space for it.

“My understanding is that he (the bus driver) reported the incident to his supervisor, and then in turn, they reported it to Mr. Plyler, who reached out to the family,” Vaughn said.

Rivera said when her daughters picked Luis up from the after-school facility, the boy told them he had hit his head.

They took him to an urgent care facility, where doctors said they should go to the emergency room. Rivera said Luis was diagnosed with a concussion. “I just think the way he reacted to that, he should have pulled over and asked if he was OK,” Rivera said of the bus driver.

Vaughn said that Plyler reviewed the bus camera footage and listened to the audio, but could not see Luis fall out of the seat from the camera angle, and could not hear any screaming and crying over the noise of the other children on the bus.

Vaughn said that it is hard to see everything on a bus, due to the seat height. “If a child was hurt during the course of a ride, and the driver was aware, or the child needed aid, that absolutely is the situation where the bus driver would be expected to pull over, render aid and call for an ambulance if it’s necessary,” Vaughn said.

But he said from the information he got, the bus driver “did not know that it had occurred until after it was well over with and the child was getting out.” Vaughn said the bus driver said when Luis got off of the bus, he was holding his ear, and the driver asked what was wrong and if he had hit his head, but the boy did not answer and walked off the bus.

The driver also said Luis was not crying when he got off the bus.

“It is a safety concern, because we do have to rely on kids coming up and telling drivers if there’s an issue... if a child...fell out of a seat or something like that, and nobody brought it to the driver’s attention, very easily the driver would not know about it.”

Haley