



Issued: 4/3/2024

Preliminary Report HWY24FH004

*This information is preliminary and subject to change.*

# School Bus Roadway Departure and Overturn

Mount Zion, West Virginia  
March 4, 2024

On Monday, March 4, 2024, about 5:50 p.m. eastern standard time, a 2022 IC school bus operated by Calhoun County Schools, Calhoun County, West Virginia, was southbound on West Virginia Route 16 (South Calhoun Highway) transporting students on an activities/after-school route. As the bus negotiated a left-hand curve in the 8900 block, the right-side tires crossed the white edge line, departed the paved roadway, and began to enter a ditch along the right side of the road. The front tire struck the end of a driveway culvert, the bus went airborne, and began to rotate counterclockwise while rolling to the right. The front of the bus landed back in the southbound lane of Route 16 and continued to rotate and roll, coming to rest on its right side across both lanes of Route 16 (see figure 1).

At the location of the crash, West Virginia Route 16 is a two-lane, two-way roadway with a 55-mph speed limit. At the time of the crash, it was daylight, the weather was clear, and the roadway was dry.

A preliminary breath test, administered to the bus driver on scene by the West Virginia State Police, indicated the driver had a blood alcohol concentration above the state's *per se* limit for driving under the influence (DUI). A second test, administered at a State Police detachment after the driver was taken into custody, also indicated the driver was over the West Virginia *per se* limit for DUI. As a result of the crash, 3 students on the bus sustained serious injuries and the driver and the remaining 16 students sustained minor injuries.



**Figure 1.** The school bus at its final rest position across the roadway. (Source: West Virginia State Police).

*Alt text: The Calhoun County, West Virginia, school bus on its side across both lanes of the roadway.*

Parties to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation include:

- West Virginia State Police
- Calhoun County Schools

All aspects of the crash remain under investigation while the NTSB determines the probable cause, with the intent of issuing safety recommendations to prevent similar events.