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# Rail TOS John Sanchez Rescues Children from Smoking School Bus Stranded on the Hollywood Freeway



## School Bus Fire

KNBC-TV

A school bus carrying 23 third graders and their teachers catches fire, prompting a hasty escape.

Click above to view KNBC news video

Rail TOS John Sanchez, at left, and motorist Brian English are interviewed by reporter Patrick Healy for the KNBC evening news. The two men stopped to help children escape a burning school bus Wednesday, May 19, on the 101 Freeway in the Cahuenga Pass.

Read broadcast w/photos - and link to news video - in a KNBC report:  
<http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local-beat/School-Bus-Catches-Fire-Minor-Injuries-Reported-94277479.html>

(May 25, 2010) When a school bus caught fire on the southbound 101 Freeway Wednesday morning, May 19, RAIL TOS John Sanchez was in the right place at the right time. While other motorists whizzed by the smoking bus, which was stranded in the middle lane with 25 school children inside, first-responder Sanchez stopped to help. "I saw the kids and thought, 'I've got to stop,'" Sanchez told KNBC Reporter Patrick Healy. First on the scene, Sanchez flagged down another motorist, Brian English, who pulled to the side of the road and raced to the bus. English kicked the front door open while Sanchez broke into the emergency rear door. The two men carried the children one by one to safety. Ultimately, their action saved the children's lives and

avoided a tragedy of untold proportions. Minutes later, the bus burst into flames.

Sanchez, a 17-year veteran, is a Rail Transit Operations Supervisor at the Red Line Division 20. In the wee hours of May 20, the day after the incident, Sanchez reported the details to Red Line Transportation Manager Barbara Harris in an e-mail:

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Rail Division Transportation Manager Tom Jasmin, left, presents same-day honors to Rail TOS John Sanchez for his heroic efforts in rescuing children from a stranded school bus about to burst into flames on the Hollywood Freeway.

even late last night, by channels 2/9, 4 and 7 on the events of the day. I am truly grateful for being in the right place at the right time and for the training received to observe and watch my surroundings.

At approximately 0845 hrs I was traveling southbound on the 101 freeway when I observed a school bus sitting in the number three lane with smoke coming out of the front area.

When I arrived to the bus and was parallel to its location, I noticed that there were children, approximately 25, and 8 adults sitting in the bus. I then parked the MTA unit on the left shoulder of the freeway and proceeded to the rear of the bus to access the emergency exit. When I opened the emergency exit door of the bus, the children with the adults began to line up so that we were able to carry them out to a safe location on the opposite shoulder of the freeway. Once everyone was out of the bus, the bus was engulfed in flames and completely burned out.

I was given the opportunity since then to be interviewed,

--John Sanchez  
May 20, 2010

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KNBC used the video taken by John Sanchez on his cell phone for the report that aired May 20. Photo above is a still of the burning bus from the video.

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*--from Gayle Anderson*

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