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EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP – Thirty three students were taken to area hospitals Monday, Nov. 12 for evaluation following an accident on the Garden State Parkway involving a bus from the Charter Tech High School for the Performing Arts in Somers Point that was transporting Atlantic City School District students home for the school day.

An undetermined number of the students were hurt in the crash, but those injuries are believed to be minor, school officials said.

The accident occurred near mile marker 34.2 northbound sometime before 4:25 p.m., according to reports from the scene.

School Principal Arthur Tubbs said 23 students were transported to AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center's City Campus in Atlantic City, and 10 were taken to Shore Medical Center in Somers Point. Tubbs said there were reports that one of the rear wheels came off the bus, although that report has not been confirmed with police.

Tubbs, who was at Shore Medical Center to assist concerned parents and family members, said the bus was an Atlantic City School District bus and that the driver, who was also transported to the hospital following the crash, did an excellent job managing the situation.

According to Brenda Travers of Upper Township, an eyewitness who passed by the accident scene, the bus rolled down an embankment and into some trees on the right hand side of the

road at mile marker 34.2 northbound on the Garden State Parkway. On scene were numerous ambulances, police and emergency vehicles, and at least two helicopters were circling overhead.

Aerial images broadcast by an area television station showed the bus with its front end in some trees, at a 45-degree angle to the road. Its rear emergency escape door was open. It was situated about one bus length from the shoulder of the road.

Traffic was backed up at least to the Great Egg Harbor Bay Bridge toll plaza, according to a reporter.

A reporter from The Current who visited the high school at about 5:30 p.m. reported that there was no sign of unusual activity at the school, and that the lone teacher he saw was helping to set up for a concert that night.

Story compiled by James FitzPatrick, Bill LeConey, Suzanne Marino, and Laura Stetser.