

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

School buses when transporting students of the school district shall be operated by employees meeting all requirements of federal, state, and local laws, regulations, policies, and procedures. When not transporting students, school buses may be operated by persons properly qualified and licensed to drive this type of vehicle.

Qualifications

Pursuant to Vehicle Code 12517, school bus drivers are required to possess a commercial driver's license issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), with a special endorsement authorizing school bus operation (indicated by the letter S on the driver's license).

In addition, any driver employed to operate a school bus or student activity bus must possess a special certificate from the California Highway Patrol (CHP) permitting such service. Issuance of the certificate is based on successful completion of prescribed examinations conducted by the CHP and compliance with all applicable provisions of the Vehicle Code.

All drivers employed to operate school buses or student activity buses shall possess, and shall retain in their immediate possession while operating the bus, the following documents: (Vehicle Code 12517, 12517.4)

1. A valid driver's license issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for the appropriate class of vehicle to be driven and endorsed for school bus and/or passenger transportation
2. A certificate issued by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) which permits the operation of school buses or student activity buses, as applicable

(cf. 3540 - Transportation)

(cf. 3541.1 - Transportation for School-Related Trips)

(cf. 4200 - Classified Personnel)

(cf. 4111/4211/4311 - Recruitment and Selection)

The Superintendent or designee may use an electronic fingerprinting system, managed by the California Department of Justice, to fingerprint an applicant for an initial certificate to drive a school bus or student activity bus. (Vehicle Code 12517.3)

(cf. 4112.5/4212.5/4312.5 - Criminal Record Check)

Pursuant to Vehicle Code 12517.2, a driver who is initially applying for or seeking renewal of a commercial driver's license or a certificate authorizing him/her to drive a school bus or student activity bus must provide evidence of having obtained a medical examination by a qualified health professional. The report must be on a form approved by the DMV, which is available on its web site.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS (continued)

When initially applying for or renewing a license or certificate to drive a school bus or student activity bus, and annually upon reaching age 65 years, the driver shall submit to the DMV and to the Superintendent or designee a report of a medical examination conducted in accordance with the timelines and procedures specified in Vehicle Code 12517.2. (Vehicle Code 12517.2; 13 CCR 1234)

The Superintendent or designee shall notify each driver of the expiration date of his/her driver's license, certificate, and medical certificate and shall ensure each document is renewed prior to expiration. (13 CCR 1234)

(cf. 4112.9/4212.9/4312.9 - Employee Notifications)

School bus and student activity bus drivers shall be subject to drug and alcohol testing in accordance with Board policy and the requirements of federal law.

(cf. 4112.42/4212.42/4312.42 - Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers)

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the DMV within five days whenever any driver refuses, fails to comply, or receives a positive test result on a drug or alcohol test; is dismissed for a cause related to student transportation safety; or is reinstated after being dismissed for a cause related to student transportation safety. (Vehicle Code 1808.8, 13376)

(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

Training

In addition to any other training required to obtain or renew the certificate authorizing operation of a school bus or student activity bus, drivers shall receive training which includes, but is not limited to:

1. First aid practices deemed necessary for school bus drivers, through a course of instruction that prepares drivers to pass the related DMV examination (Vehicle Code 12522)
2. The proper installation of mobile seating devices in the bus securement systems (Education Code 56195.8)

(cf. 3541.2 - Transportation for Students with Disabilities)

3. The proper actions to be taken in the event that a school bus is hijacked (Education Code 39831)

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To determine any other needs for professional development, the Superintendent or designee shall periodically review accident reports involving district drivers and may seek input from drivers, district and school administrators, students, and/or other stakeholders on desired topics for professional development.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Authority

Students transported in a school bus or student activity bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus. The driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the students while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway, or road. (5 CCR 14103)

(cf. 5131.1 - Bus Conduct)

The driver shall have the authority to discontinue the operation of a school bus or student activity bus whenever he/she determines that it is unsafe to continue.

(cf. 3516.5 - Emergency Schedules)

(cf. 3543 - Transportation Safety and Emergencies)

This regulation and AR 5131.1 - Bus Conduct shall be made available to parents/guardians, students, teachers, and other interested parties. (5 CCR 14103)

Responsibilities

The driver's primary responsibility is to safely transport students to and from school and school activities. He/she shall follow procedures contained in district plans and regulations pertaining to transportation safety.

The driver shall stop to load or unload students only at school bus stops designated by the Superintendent or designee, or authorized by the Superintendent or designee for school activity trips. (Vehicle Code 22112)

(cf. 3541 - Transportation Routes and Services)

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS (continued)

The driver shall activate the amber warning light system, flashing red signal lights, and stop arm signal and shall escort students in accordance with Vehicle Code 22112.

The driver shall not require any student to leave the bus en route between home and school or other destinations. (5 CCR 14103)

Personal Communication Devices

Personal communication devices can distract a driver's attention from both defensive driving and supervision of students. Likewise, such devices interfere with a school bus aide's attention and supervision of students. Since personal communication devices could distract both a driver and school bus aide during critical driving maneuvers and student supervision, they are not to be used any time while staff are onboard a school bus.

For the purpose of this administrative procedure, personal communication devices refer to, but are not limited to, electronic components which are designed for the purpose of communicating through paging telephonically, or through graphical display. Electronic equipment such as personal cellular telephones, hands-free listening/talking devices, both numeric vibration and audible pagers, personal two-way radios, portable stereos, cassette/CD players, "walkman," and headphone-type radios are not to be activated or utilized while in a school bus. Use of school district two-way radio communication devices or Global Positioning Systems (GPS) is the only authorized means of electronic communication on board school buses. Cellular telephones may be utilized in specific instances when issued by the district and when not operating a school bus.

During break periods when not operating a school bus with or without children on board and when not directly responsible for the supervision of children, drivers and school bus aides may activate personal communication devices for the purpose of retrieving personal messages.

The driver shall report the following to their supervisor or designee:

1. The condition of the bus at the completion of each work day (13 CCR 1215)
2. His/her duty status for each 24-hour period, including, but not limited to, the number of hours on and off duty (13 CCR 1213)
3. Any traffic accident involving the bus (13 CCR 1219)

In addition to notifying the Superintendent or designee, the driver shall immediately notify the CHP of any traffic accident and, if the bus is operated under contract, his/her employer. (13 CCR 1219)

4. Traffic violations

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS (continued)

5. Consistently late school dismissals which cause transportation delays
6. Overload runs
7. Recurring and serious student misbehavior
8. Parent/guardian and student complaints

Vehicle Idling

The driver of a school bus or student activity bus shall: (13 CCR 2480)

1. Turn off the bus engine upon stopping at a school or within 100 feet of a school and not restart the engine more than 30 seconds before beginning to depart
2. Not cause or allow the bus to idle at any location greater than 100 feet from a school for more than five consecutive minutes or for an aggregated period of more than five minutes in any one hour

(cf. 3514 - Environmental Safety)

However, vehicle idling may be allowed under limited conditions, including, but not limited to, occasions when idling is necessary to: (13 CCR 2480)

1. Stop for an official traffic control signal or device, for traffic conditions under which the driver has no control, or at the direction of law enforcement
2. Ascertain that the bus is in safe operating condition and properly equipped
3. Operate equipment designed to safely load, unload, or transport students with disabilities
4. Operate a heater, air conditioner, defroster, or other equipment as necessary to ensure the safety or health of passengers
5. Cool down a turbo-charged diesel engine before turning off the engine

Reports

The Superintendent or designee shall retain records of: (13 CCR 1234)

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1. Each driver's duty status and supporting documents provided pursuant to 13 CCR 1201 and 1213. Such records shall be retained for six months and made available to the CHP upon request.
2. The different types of vehicles and vehicle combinations each driver has demonstrated capability to operate.
3. Records of each driver's license, certificate, medical certificate, first aid certificate, and training as specified in 13 CCR 1234.
4. Daily vehicle inspection reports, electronic or hardcopy, prepared by drivers pursuant to 13 CCR 1215.

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

Drivers' Daily Procedures

Drivers shall keep windows and interiors of their buses clean at all times. Additional time will be established for pre-trip inspection, post-trip bus cleaning, and completion of administrative documents. Each driver will be allowed this time for each bus they drive during a day.

All pertinent information regarding routes and schedules will be provided to the driver. Route sheets will be kept in drivers' mailboxes when not in use. Except in cases of emergency, drivers will not make changes in routes without prior approval. When situations arise which are not covered by written instruction in the daily running of the route, drivers are to use their own best judgment as to the safest and wisest course to follow.

All drivers are responsible for verifying the accuracy and completeness of their bus route sheets. Changes, unusual procedures, or any other important information that may assist another driver taking the route shall be entered on the route sheet with the authorization of a supervisor or the Director of Transportation.

In addition to the procedures set forth herein, special instructions may be issued both verbally and in written notices posted on the bulletin board or displayed on electronic monitors in the Transportation Department.

It is necessary that all drivers read the bulletin board or electronic monitors at the beginning of each day and at other times while on duty. Drivers shall check their mailboxes when reporting for duty and prior to leaving the premises after completion of work. In the event a written or electronic communication is unclear, the driver shall contact the Transportation Office immediately for clarification and interpretation.

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When situations arise which are not covered by instructions, or which involve serious complications or potential hazards, the driver shall contact the Transportation Office immediately for assistance.

In case of accident or other emergency during working hours, notify the Transportation Department by telephone, radio, or any other expeditious means. After working hours and on holidays, contact shall be made utilizing the Emergency Telephone Number card issued to each driver.

Driver Assignments

Bus driver assignments shall be determined by the Director of Transportation and may be based on: (1) seniority; (2) results of bidding; (3) driver's certificate restrictions, ability to operate specific equipment, and/or ability to control students; (4) driver availability, and; (5) needs of the district.

Seniority List "A" shall be utilized for assignment and bidding purposes. Placement on Seniority List "A" shall be determined by:

1. Date of achieving permanency as a driver
2. Date of hire as a probationary driver as first tiebreaker
3. Date of hire as a substitute driver as second tiebreaker
4. Date of application for hire as third tiebreaker

Seniority List "B" will be utilized in the event of layoff and for bumping rights. Seniority List "B" is the official seniority list developed under the provisions of Section 45308 of the Education Code, representing date of hire prior to July 1, 1971, or total hours worked in paid status, plus higher classes, after July 1, 1971.

The Director of Transportation is authorized to assign or reassign drivers to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and economy, and to adjust times for seniority purposes.

Computation of Driver and Bus Aide Pay

The Director of Transportation, or designee, is responsible for certifying the total number of hours of paid time for each driver per pay period. The bus driver and school bus aide hourly timesheet (Form P-27), or computer-generated timesheet, is due in the Payroll Office on the date designated

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by the Payroll Department. Drivers shall be responsible for the proper completion, accuracy, and timely submission of their timesheet to the Director of Transportation or designee.

The total time assigned to a regular route is the sum of the time allowed to drive each assigned run, plus designated non-driving time.

The computerized time clock shall be used by all drivers and bus aides to record each segment of their entire workday. Drivers and bus aides will be responsible for verification of hours worked each pay period.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

39800.5 *Qualifications of driver of 15-passenger van*

39830-39842 *School buses*

40080-40090.5 *Training required to obtain or renew bus driver certificate*

45125.1 *Criminal background checks for contractors*

56195.8 *Training in installation of mobile seating devices*

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

39640-39642 *Vehicle idling, penalties*

PENAL CODE

241.3 *Assault against school bus driver*

243.3 *Battery against school bus driver*

VEHICLE CODE

415 *Definition of motor vehicle*

545 *Definition of school bus*

546 *Definition of student activity bus*

1808.8 *Dismissal for safety-related cause*

2570-2574 *Contracts with private school bus contractors*

12516-12517.4 *Certification requirements*

12522 *First aid training for school bus drivers*

13370-13371 *Suspension or revocation of bus driver certificate*

13376 *Driver certificates; revocation or suspension; sex offense prosecution*

22112 *School bus signals; roadway crossings*

23123-23125 *Prohibitions against use of wireless telephone and text communications while driving; exceptions*

25257-25257.7 *School bus equipment*

34501.6 *School buses; reduced visibility*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

14103 *Authority of the driver*

14104 *School bus driver instructor*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 13

1200-1202.2 *Motor carrier safety*

1212-1228 *School bus driver requirements*

1234 *Reports regarding school buses and bus drivers*

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS (continued)

2480 Vehicle idling

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 49

40.1-40.413 Transportation drug and alcohol testing programs

382.101-382.605 Controlled substance and alcohol use and testing

571.222 Federal motor vehicle safety standard #222

Management Resources:

DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES PUBLICATIONS

California Commercial Driver Handbook

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION PUBLICATIONS

School Bus Driver In-Service Safety Series, October 2011

WEB SITES

California Air Resources Board: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>

California Department of Education, Office of School Transportation: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/tm>

California Highway Patrol: <http://www.chp.ca.gov>

California Department of Motor Vehicles: <http://www.dmv.ca.gov>

California Department of Justice: <http://oag.ca.gov>

National Transportation Safety Board: <http://www.ntsb.gov>

U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>