



SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



A service of the Ohio School Boards Association

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Did you know: Each school bus in Ohio manufactured after 2008 is required to have a noise suppression switch, which is only intended to deactivate factory installed devices that produce noise. This switch shall NOT deactivate safety systems such as windshield wipers, lighting systems, or two-way communication systems. (Ref. 4501-5-02 (LL))

1) OSBA Transportation E-Newsletter debut

This is the first issue of the OSBA transportation E-newsletter. These will be sent electronically as articles of interest arise. This service is provided by the Ohio School Boards Association pupil transportation office.

Archive copies of these communications as well as other items of interest are available on our website. Access to the website is restricted to member districts – but if you are receiving this email – you are one of those! To access the website for the first time, log on using your email address and select “first time logging in” to establish your password.

Once you have gained access to the website – select the Products and Services option on the menu, scroll down and select Transportation Services.

2) FY13 Cost analysis for all districts available on OSBA website

Are you interested in what your operating costs were for last year? Or how you compare to other districts or the state average? Go to the FY13 cost analysis report at www.ohioschoolboards.org to find all of these cost analysis calculations. Download the excel spreadsheet in the transportation calculators section and select your district from the drop down list to see how you did last year.

These calculations are based on the T1 and T2 reports that you submitted last school year.

3) FY14 (current year) rider efficiency report now available

In 2007 we worked with a large stakeholder’s group to study the transportation funding formula and create some tools that would be useful in management practice. One of these was the efficiency ratio report. ODE calculated this until 2012 when it stopped the practice.

We have now calculated the efficiency ratio report following the practice that was started in 2008 with one exception – this new report includes all regular education students transported, not just those living more than 1 mile from school.

The report calculates a customized target ridership for each district and compares your actual ridership to this target. A ratio of 1 indicates that you are operating at par with your similar peers – higher than 1 indicates you are doing a good job, and lower than 1 indicates you have the opportunity to make changes to do better. The bottom line is by using fewer buses for more students you can increase your ratio. At the same time you will reduce your overall operating expense!

Find your rating now by looking at this report on the transportation calculators page on the OSBA web.

4) T1S payment news – keep that data you collected!

Ohio's public schools are required to provide transportation for nonpublic schools, charter schools, STEM schools and vocational schools on days that you are closed. This longstanding requirement is based on an attorney general's opinion dating back to 1983 requiring service on asynchronous calendar days.

For many years the state provided some reimbursement to public schools for the miles driven on these days. This reimbursement was based on data reported to ODE on the T1S report. ODE is no longer making that payment to districts. OSBA, OASBO, and BASA are working with members of the legislature to attempt to restore that funding stream.

Recently ODE sent out a notice advising districts that the T1S report was no longer required. We encourage you to continue to collect the mileage data from your asynchronous calendar days--both so that you can quantify your expenses and also so that you can submit that data in the event the funding flow is restored.

5) Get ready for the T2

Your transportation funding is totally dependent upon two ODE reports – the T1 and the T2. The T1 report was submitted last fall, and includes your pupil and mileage counts – it reports how much service you are providing. The T2 report is due on August 1 – and reports how much you spent during the past school year to provide transportation. Only eligible expenses may be reported – which includes routine service (home to school and school to home) transportation for your students.

Another very important section of the T2 report includes your special education transportation data. You must report the total number of special education students you transported and the number of days they were eligible for transportation. If you neglect this data, you will not be funded for any of your special education transportation.

As a precaution – take a look at your last couple of year's reports and compare them to your current report before submitting to ODE. If you would like assistance with this, please contact us at OSBA. For a nominal fee we will look through your completed T2 report with you and compare it to previous years to help you avoid critical errors.

6) Construction Standards updates take effect May 15, 2014

Ohio maintains comprehensive school bus construction standards that all manufacturers must meet in addition to the federal school bus construction standards. Periodically these standards are reviewed and updated. We now have a new standard in place. Effective May 15, 2014 all new buses will have to comply with this standard.

The state will eventually have these posted online at <http://codes.ohio.gov/>. In the interim you can access the new standards on the OSBA transportation webpage.

School buses are always required to meet the standards in place at the time of their manufacture. Consequently, each district needs to have access to older copies of the construction standards that apply to older buses. Standards dating back to 1998 have been archived on the OSBA website for your convenience.

7) Epi-pen bill takes effect immediately

HB 296 was enacted recently and takes effect immediately. This bill may result in local decision-making that impacts on pupil transportation. We encourage you to review the bill and any articles about it as soon as possible.

The bill allows school districts to maintain emergency epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens), providing certain provisions are met. Those provisions include (among others) having a prescriber-issued protocol with definitive orders and dosages, designated locations where EpiPens will be stored, and appropriate training for the specified individuals who may administer the EpiPens.

Storage on a school bus is not currently an option – there are no provisions in Ohio's school bus construction standards for a locked medical storage box. Further, there are temperature control implications for any medications that may be stored on a schoolbus. It is not

likely that we will see school buses designated as storage locations for EpiPens, however at the same time it is also likely that one or more students currently riding buses have valid prescriptions for EpiPens and are carrying them with their personal belongings. To this end, EpiPen administration training for our school bus drivers is an appropriate part of their professional development.

8) Master of Transportation Administrator

Thirty-six (36) of Ohio's transportation administrators have completed the first year of the OSBA Master of Transportation Administrator program. This year's focus was on compliance and regulatory issues, and included 5 classes and a district based project related to the year's course of study. Course evaluations for this program have all been positive, and we look forward to continuing into year two of the program with these dedicated professionals.

If you are interested in participating, we welcome you. You may start in any year of the program, as we will repeat the first year's classes again in three years. The focus for the coming year will be operations management. Classes will begin in October, and will be scheduled throughout the school year. If you are interested, please refer to the complete program description on the OSBA transportation webpage. The class schedule will be published by August 1 so that you can plan your upcoming year. This is a great opportunity for you to work with your peers in Ohio pupil transportation on professional development.

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