



# SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



*a service of the Ohio School Boards Association*

Issue 14-7

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## **1) Student Safety Training – grades K-12**

Now that school is well under way, all schools should have completed the required training for regularly transported students in grades Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The administrative code that specifies pupil instruction (O.A.C. 3301-83-09) also requires regularly transported pupils enrolled in grades four through twelve to be instructed in safety procedures on and around the school bus.

Safety procedures for walking and playing in and around our schools should be included in this training. Recently we suffered the tragic loss of a student who was playing and fell into the path of an oncoming vehicle. With this as a reminder, we can take the opportunity of the required training identified in the administrative code to expand the interaction with our students to remind them of general safety practices. Included in that should also be discussion of when not to wear earphones or ear buds as well as the importance of staying off of railroad right-of-way.

## **2) Drug and Alcohol – reasonable suspicion training class**

If you have employees that are subject to drug and alcohol tests, (such as your bus drivers), the district is required to have a supervisor/administrator trained in the FMCSA reasonable suspicion testing protocols. In fact, it is important for every district to have at least two administrators trained, so that you can be backed up if you need to send a driver for a test. OSBA and OASBO are jointly sponsoring a training session for this on December 4. The class will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the OSBA offices (8050 N. High Street, Columbus, OH).

This class is part of the SchoolComp Safety Seminar series – but you do not need to be a participant in the SchoolComp Group Rating or Retro Rating programs to attend. You can register on the Ohio Association of School Business Officials website at [www.oasbo-ohio.org](http://www.oasbo-ohio.org) or by calling (614) 431-9116.

## **3) Pupil Transportation Rules and Regulations Class**

Are you a new transportation administrator? Perhaps you are a veteran administrator, but would like a refresher on the rules and regulations. Join us for a one-day seminar that reviews the rules and regulations that govern pupil transportation in Ohio. We will review federal regulations, state law and administrative code and the role that local policy plays in a successful operation.

Register online at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/workshops](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/workshops) or contact Laurie Miller, senior events manager, at (614) 540-4000, (800) 589-OSBA or [Lmiller@ohioschoolboards.org](mailto:Lmiller@ohioschoolboards.org).

## **4) Efficiency Ratings**

Are you looking for a benchmark to determine how your transportation operation compares to other Ohio districts?

In 2007 a stakeholders group worked together to evaluate Ohio transportation services and to create tools that would be useful in management practice. One of those tools was the efficiency ratio report. ODE calculated this until 2012, and has their reports published online. We are now calculating efficiency ratios at OSBA and publishing this for your reference. You can find the reports

for 2013 and 2014 on our website at [www.ohioschoolboards.org/transportation-services](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/transportation-services). Select the data and calculators page to find these reports.

## **5) Two-way Radio Placement in your School bus**

Many school buses in Ohio are equipped with two-way radios. Typically these radios are installed by after-market vendors or by local school district staff. There is no mandated installation location for these radios, and it is not uncommon for them to be located in a different place in each district.

There are several considerations that should be taken when you have radios installed – for both safety and security purposes. The best place for a radio is on the left side of the driver, located under the dash or in the control panel. This places the radio within the driver’s normal range of motion, and keeps the radio below the level of the windshield.

Districts that have in the past installed radios over the windshield may want to consider relocating these radios lower in the bus for two different reasons: 1) a radio installed over the windshield is outside of the driver’s normal field of vision and range of motion, and can be a distraction when the driver reaches for the microphone or adjusts the radio, 2) in the interest of school bus security the driver is not able to reach for the microphone without being observed by other individuals on and around the bus – including would-be hijackers or terrorists.

## **6) Eligible Drivers of School Buses – when emergency strikes**

Last week at Capital Conference I was asked by a superintendent: “Who can drive a school bus in case of an emergency?” The short answer is: “Only an Ohio certified school bus driver, listed as active by ODE”.

School buses are classified as commercial motor vehicles. To operate an empty school bus anywhere in the country an individual must have a current commercial driver’s license (CDL) with a passenger endorsement. If there are students on the school bus, federal law also requires that the individual have a school bus endorsement as part of their CDL. In Ohio, there is an additional requirement that the individual have an Ohio preservice school bus driver certificate and be listed with ODE as an active school bus driver.

If any of the above qualifications are missing, the individual may not operate the school bus under any conditions. Separate from these requirements, it is important to note that school buses are significantly larger and heavier than passenger cars, have some unique operating controls not found in passenger cars, and require unique skills to operate that most passenger vehicle drivers have never had the opportunity to learn or practice.

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