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## SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



November 9, 2018:

1. **Bus stop safety**
2. **ODE activity on pupil transportation rules**
3. **CDL renewal – New documents required**
4. **Electronic stability control**
5. **New cost and efficiency data available**
6. **Capital conference**

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### **1. Bus stop safety**

In the past two weeks car crashes at bus stops have claimed the lives of five children. A motorist in Indiana struck and killed three children on October 30, a child was struck and killed in Mississippi while crossing the street on October 31, a child was found dead after a hit and run crash in Pennsylvania on November 1, and then later that same day five children and two adults were struck by a motorist while waiting at the bus stop.

All of these incidents are still under investigation, but distracted driving is believed to be a significant factor in them all.

Annually the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation conducts surveys to determine the magnitude of the problem of cars driving through the red lights on school buses. While Ohio has not participated in that survey for several years, the last data we did collect showed that more than 800 motorists per day drive through the flashing red lights on a school bus. Sadly, we have had fatalities in Ohio resulting from these drive-byes.

We are dependent upon motorists around the school bus to pay attention and observe the law requiring them to stop. Unfortunately we have to accept that motorists continue to violate the law and place children at risk. We need support and assistance from our legislature and law enforcement officials to increase enforcement of the school bus stopping law. This will take time to accomplish, even after the crisis is recognized and addressed. In the interim, we have to look closely to our own resources to find ways to protect children.

We have three tools that we can rely upon. First, we must use careful consideration in the placement of bus stops. In some districts that may mean assigning students to stops where they do not cross the road. This can easily result in longer routes with more bus turn-arounds. Second, we must stress the importance to our bus drivers of training their passengers to cross the road safely if they need to cross. This should include looking both ways, removing ear buds, and eliminating or other activity (like texting) that takes attention away from the road. Finally, our drivers must remain super vigilant, watching traffic in their mirrors and waiting for traffic to come to a complete stop before giving students the all clear sign to cross.

The risk to our children at bus stops is monumental and requires our immediate attention.

## **2. ODE activity on transportation rules**

The department of education continues to work on the pupil transportation rules.

One group of rules is currently being reviewed by the State Board of Education (SBOE) and is scheduled for a review by the full board in December. The department has listed these rules as 'non-controversial', however there are items included that will impact every school district. Items included are the addition of CDL skills to the preservice recertification cycle, changes in the timing procedure for nonpublic eligibility, changes in the emergency evacuation procedures, and elimination of language that provides funding for payment-in-lieu of transportation. If you have not seen these proposals, you can either contact the transportation office at ODE to request a copy or look at the SBOE minutes at the following web address: [rules proposal](#) .

Staff from the department are also working on a second group of rules that received considerable feedback in 2017. In a recent meeting with a stakeholder group the department acknowledged industry concerns with their proposal, and agreed to make further changes in their proposal. We will continue to wait for more information from the department on this group of rules.

## **3. CDL Renewal - new documents required**

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) has started sending letters to CDL holders to address a new renewal requirement. To renew your CDL you must provide documentation that proves either your U.S. Citizenship or Lawful Permanent Residency. This requirement has been enacted to comply with Federal CDL regulations.

If you are U.S. Citizen, you must provide one of the following documents (which must prove full legal name):

- Valid, unexpired U.S. Passport or Passport Card
- Certified copy of a birth certificate, issued by a U.S. state or territory
- Consular Report of Birth Abroad issued by the U.S. Department of State
- Certificate of Naturalization issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Certificate of Citizenship issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

If you are a Foreign National with Legal Presence in the United States you must provide an original and valid permanent resident card (I-551).

For more information refer to BMV Form 2441 or contact the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

#### **4. Electronic Stability Control (ESC)**

As vehicle technology continues to improve, we will soon see Electronic Stability Control on school buses. This is already required on all intrastate trucks in the U.S. and on school buses in Canada. ESC can be purchased as an option, and several of the bus manufacturers have begun to include it as a standard option on air brake buses.

If you are preparing to purchase new school buses, consider doing the research on ESC and including it as a requirement on your new buses.

#### **5. New cost and efficiency data is available**

For those districts enrolled in the VTS program, we now have the FY2018 (last school year) cost analysis reports completed. They are available on the Data and Calculators page of the VTS web resources. The average cost per student, as reported by Ohio's districts on the recent T2 report was \$961.30. The average cost per bus for last school year was \$52,262.

Also available is the efficiency rating schedule for the current school year. This is based upon the T1 reports that were just submitted. The report calculates the average number of riders per bus, as well as a target ridership for each district based upon an average of similar sized districts. The state median ridership per bus for the current year is 53 riders.

#### **6. Capital Conference starts this Sunday**

Next week OSBA is hosting the annual Capital Conference. We look forward to seeing you at the Columbus Convention Center for learning sessions, spotlight presentations, and the trade show. Over 7,500 attendees are preregistered for the event.

OSBA's offices will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, with all staff working at the convention center.

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