

## **6630: DRIVER TRAINING AND RESPONSIBILITY**

School bus operators shall observe all state statutes and administrative rules governing traffic safety and school bus operation. The district shall, at the beginning of each school year, verify that each school bus driver has been provided a copy of the School Bus Driver Handbook (SPI), any additional laws and/or rules which apply to school bus drivers, and the district's written rules for student conduct on buses.

Prior to transporting students, each school bus driver must have a school bus driver's authorization issued by the superintendent of public instruction; a commercial driver's license appropriate for the size vehicle they will drive, including a passenger endorsement; and a school bus endorsement (with the air brake restriction removed if they drive a bus with air brakes). A school bus driver shall also hold a valid and current first aid card (unless the driver has a temporary school bus driver authorization). A school bus driver is required to maintain and carry a valid Department of Transportation (DOT) medical examiner's certificate and to demonstrate annually their continued ability to pass the Superintendent of Public Instruction school bus driver physical certification requirement. The school district retains the right to request more frequent medical examinations or demonstration of the physical ability requirements of WAC 392-144-102 (5).

Prior to employment and at least once each school year, school bus drivers must submit to his or her supervisor a photocopy of the following: a valid commercial driver's license indicating the appropriate endorsements, a DOT medical examiner's certificate, and a current first aid card. On an annual basis, each school bus driver shall provide verification that he or she continues to meet the requirements of WAC 392-144-102 (5) and verification that his or her driving or criminal record does not indicate any disqualifying conditions as listed in WAC 392-144-103 including: not having had a driving license privilege disqualified, suspended or revoked in the preceding three years, that he or she has not had three or more speeding tickets ten miles per hour or more over the speed limit in the preceding five years, and that he or she has not been convicted or undergone a deferred prosecution for any misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor or felony where the conduct or alleged conduct is related to the occupation of a school bus driver. Employees are responsible for reporting any potentially disqualifying offenses to the school district or their supervisor within 20 days.

The district is required to conduct a pre-employment drug screening test pursuant to CFR 49.382. The school district shall verify a negative result of such test prior to allowing the driver to operate a school bus on public roads, regardless of whether there are students on the bus. The district shall comply with the other drug testing requirements under Federal law, which include random, reasonable suspicion, and post-accident testing. Failure to submit to a drug test shall result in termination.

Any district employee, other than a school bus driver, who transports students for school activities in a district or private vehicle, must have a valid driver's license issued by the state department of licensing (or their state of residence), and proof of insurance. Such drivers may only operate vehicles with a manufacturer's rated seating capacity of ten or less. Such drivers are required to be authorized school bus drivers if they drive students on scheduled routes between home and school.

In addition, for any employees whose job assignment or supplemental contract requires the regularly scheduled transportation of students in vehicles with a manufacturer's rated seating capacity of ten or fewer, the district shall obtain a certified abstract of the driving record of this employee before the employee transports students. This requirement is not necessary for persons transporting students in an emergency affecting health and/or safety.

When a teacher, coach or other certificated staff member is assigned to accompany students on a bus, such person shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students in his/her charge and shall ensure that student behavior **complies with district policy**. The bus driver shall have final authority and responsibility.

When the district utilizes charter buses or excursion carriers, the driver shall not have unsupervised access to children and children shall be supervised by a responsible employee of the district. Every contract between the school district and a charter bus or excursion

carrier shall contain a carrier profile from the Washington utilities and transportation commission indicating a satisfactory safety rating.

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Legal References: RCW 28A.160.210	School bus drivers, training and qualifications — Rules
46.25	Uniform Commercial Drivers Act
391-144	School bus driver qualifications
392-145-015	General operating regulations
392-145-020 through 030	Rules for school bus drivers; Rules for students riding school buses

Management Resources: *Policy News*, October 2006 OSPI Updates Bus Driver Rules

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