BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

Only employees who have the appropriate license for the vehicle operated and who have complied with the regulations of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Commissioner of Education may drive pupils to and from home on regularly scheduled routes. No other person may operate a school bus on a scheduled route for the purpose of transporting pupils to and from home.

None other than the above-mentioned persons may drive a school owned vehicle having a pupil capacity greater than 15 passengers. School vehicles having capacities of fewer than 15 passengers may be driven by employees hired as bus drivers as well as certified members of the instructional staff. The latter, however, may not drive on regularly scheduled routes. Certified staff members transporting students in school-owned vehicles must also comply with requirements of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Commissioner of Education.

To ensure the adequate and effective training of bus drivers, no person shall be allowed to operate a school bus without first receiving all of his/her training under the direct supervision of a Department-approved school bus driving instructor. While a trainee engages in pre-service training, which takes place prior to a driver transporting children, no direct supervision is mandated; however, all trainees must be approved by the Department instructor.

Upon completion of the established training procedures, the school districts shall verify compliance with the direct supervision requirement through the use of their recordkeeping systems. Where a district expresses a need to delay implementation of the direct supervisory training requirement the New York State Education Department shall review the district's request. To accommodate a district who has submitted a justified request the Education Department may grant a one year hardship period to any district.

The Board also recognizes the importance of the contact time and relationships between bus drivers and students. In regard to this, opportunities for in-service programs for staff concerning child abuse and neglecting danger signs will be extended to include the bus driving staff.

Ref:  Education Law §3624
      Vehicle and Traffic Law, Article 19-A
      8 NYCRR § 156.3, as amended

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