

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY INSPECTIONS

The purpose of the school bus inspection is twofold. First, it is to determine that the equipment as purchased meets the minimum uniform standards set for school buses. Secondly, it is to see that the equipment is being maintained in such condition as to keep it safely and economically operable.

In order to carry out this twofold purpose, the inspection must be a continuous process, not merely an annual or semi-annual affair. In addition to the local inspection, all buses must be inspected and approved annually at specified stations approved by the Department of Public Safety. The State Board of Education will designate official inspectors who are eligible to conduct inspections for school transportation equipment. The annual inspection is required to include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Brakes
2. Steering
3. Front and rear wheel suspension
4. Exhaust systems
5. Wheels and tires
6. Windshield wipers
7. Horn or warning device
8. Proper adjustment of turn signals
9. Windshield
10. Glass and lighting equipment
11. Stop signal arms
12. Emergency exits and equipment

The most vital part of the inspection process is that carried on at the local level. This is a continuous, daily pre-trip inspection and report.

The daily inspection will include examination of tires, radiator, oil level, engine operation, brakes, lights, signaling devices, and definite check to see if exhaust system is free of leaks and tail pipe extends even with the back bumper. After each daily inspection, the school vehicle driver shall be required to complete and sign a check sheet showing all defects and deficiencies that may affect the safety of the vehicle's operation or result in a mechanical break down. These sheets are to be filed daily with the supervisor of school bus transportation. The daily safety check reports shall be kept on file 90 days and shall be kept available for inspection by authorized persons.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY INSPECTIONS (Cont.)

This system of school bus inspection will result in two benefits. First, regular inspections will forestall mechanical failures and thus avoid delays in transportation of students as well as costly repairs. Secondly, it will reduce the accidents that can result from mechanical failures.

In consideration of these facts, no school bus driver or any person in any way responsible for the operation of the school transportation system can afford to be without the protection of a systematic school bus inspection report.

REFERENCE: 70 O.S. §9-101.1