

UNIT A - THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER: ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

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UNIT A - THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER: ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Transporting students to and from school is a necessary part of a sound education program. For a safe, efficient, and economical transportation program, competent school bus drivers and standard bus operation are necessary. At present, there are approximately 30,000 school buses in operation within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and about 40,000 licensed school bus drivers. For detailed Pennsylvania school bus statistics, visit the Driver and Vehicle Statistics link under the News, Facts and Stats Information Center of PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, www.dmv.state.pa.us

Before you get behind the wheel of a school bus, you need to understand your role as a bus driver and your responsibilities to your passengers, your school system, your community and your fellow workers. These topics are covered in the first part of this Unit. The second part describes the requirements for certified school bus drivers in Pennsylvania.

If you are a new school bus driver in PA, you will receive a minimum of 14 hours of classroom training and six hours of one-on-one in-bus instruction. If you are recertifying to maintain your license, you will receive a minimum of seven hours of classroom training and three hours of one-on-one in-bus instruction.

If you are not given the minimum number of training hours, do not sign the Training Report Form (DL-714). You may contact PennDOT's Special Driver Programs Unit at (717) 787-6453 or ra-pdschoolbushelp@state.pa.us, if you have any concerns associated with your school bus driver training.

Your employer may also provide you with additional training on the policies and procedures of the school district in which you will be working. Some of what you learn in this training might need to be adjusted to comply with your company's policies. For instance, in classroom training you might be instructed to notify a mechanic if you discover something wrong with your bus during a pre-trip inspection. Your company might require that mechanical complaints be reported to the dispatcher who notifies the mechanic. You should follow local policies and procedures as long as they don't violate state laws or regulations. Bring those to your employer's attention.

YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The school bus driver plays an important role in the educational system. The role includes a number of responsibilities the driver must willingly accept.

YOUR ROLE AS A DRIVER

Learning to operate a vehicle the size of a school bus is a difficult task involving knowledge of laws, regulations, visual and mechanical skills, judgments, decisions, and accurate responses. Your performance as a school bus operator is dependent on developing skills, acquiring necessary knowledge and maintaining a positive attitude.

Attitude

Learn how to keep a positive attitude and recognize your moods. If you are angry, do you drive more aggressively? Do you still greet the students with a smile? Your mood not only affects your driving, but those around you. Keep a positive attitude. You must be mentally prepared to make allowances for the poor attitude and driving of other motorists, and not allow the actions of other motorists to cause you to react emotionally and involve you in a crash.

School bus drivers must be mentally alert at all times. They must keep their concentration on what they are doing.

You Are Important

You, the professional school bus driver, are a very important person with a responsible part to play in the educational system. In many instances, you are the first representative of the school system to meet the children in the morning and the last to see them at night. You are in a position to have a large influence on a child's attitude toward school.

You Are Responsible

Your position as a school bus driver is to safely transport students from one place to another.

You are responsible for how you drive and for how you feel about your students, coworkers, and position. You need to have a positive attitude, if you want to be a safe and successful school bus operator who enjoys your work.

You should like working with and being with students. If you don't, you will find it hard to keep a positive attitude about your position as a school bus operator.

You Are a Member of the Safety Team

Safety starts with you. Perhaps no other area of educational operations demands more responsibility for student welfare than the transportation of students in buses on public highways, streets and roads. The driver is a very important member of the safety team, which includes students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and law enforcement officials. As a key member of this team, you must constantly strive to improve operational safety and efficiency.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A DRIVER

As a professional driver, you are expected to meet high standards of conduct. A school bus driver is more than a professional driver and is expected to meet standards of conduct higher than those of other professional drivers. Always conduct yourself in such a manner that your actions on and off duty will not be open to criticism. You are a role model for the students and a representative of the school district and your employer.

Student passengers and their parents place a great deal of confidence in you. You should act deserving of this confidence, including being:

- A dependable person who can be relied upon to carry out your duties;
- Emotionally stable to work effectively and patiently with students, parents, school officials, and the public;
- Mature enough to cope with unexpected and unusual situations;
- Interested in the welfare and needs of others;
- Willing to practice patience and understanding;
- Observant of all traffic laws, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) regulations, and local rules, regulations and policies, which includes conducting at least a minimum of two emergency evacuation drills on your bus every school year;
- Neat and clean, as a symbol of the entire school system;
- Careful to refrain from using profanity;
- Well rested, so you are free from fatigue, and;
- Free from the effects of alcohol and drugs, including prescription and over-the-counter medication.

A school bus driver also has the following specific responsibilities:

Your Driving Technique

When you transport a bus load of children to school every day in a wide variety of highway and weather conditions, you are charged with a serious responsibility. The vital links to safety – proper driver attitude, knowledge and skills – are developed through your interest in safe driving. Your ability to cope with a constantly changing driving environment demands both pre-employment preparation and continual in-service activity. You must constantly reevaluate your driving technique. It is important that you honestly evaluate yourself to ensure you are physically and mentally prepared for driving your bus.

A safe and defensive school bus driver must exercise self-control, alertness, foresight, judgment, and skills in handling and maintaining control of the bus at all times. A good attitude about safe driving and safety procedures is the best guarantee of the safest trip possible.

Your Passengers

Try to establish a positive relationship with your passengers. Their conduct will depend a great deal on what you say and do. Greet your students in a personable and friendly manner whenever they board your bus, and if possible, learn their names. Your expression of interest in each child will help you to gain the confidence of your riders. Remember, an essential part of your job is to maintain discipline according to procedures established by your local school system. Since students desire recognition of their good traits and abilities, compliment good conduct, habits, and deeds.

If you explain existing rules at the beginning of the school year, you will usually have the cooperation of students. If students know drivers are fair and have their safety in mind, they usually accept the rules. Drivers should recognize each student's individuality. Drivers cannot maintain discipline and respect if they are too harsh or too lenient. Drivers who handle problems fairly and according to the rules get the respect of students, parents and administrators.

Under ordinary loading and unloading circumstances, communication between driver and passengers should be encouraged. You should help your passengers understand and follow what is considered normal and proper behavior on the school bus. Maintain a professional, yet friendly, relationship with all students. Refer to Unit B for additional information on Student Management and Discipline and to Unit C for additional information on Student Loading and Unloading.

Public Relations

Public relations are directly related to the opinion people have of drivers and the school system. This opinion is formed by the way you, a school bus driver, complete your daily responsibilities. Careful, courteous drivers make good impressions; careless, thoughtless drivers create harmful impressions. For example, the school bus driver who weaves in and out of traffic attracts unfavorable attention and more negative comment than one who observes proper lane usage. One discourteous, irresponsible act reflects poorly on all members of the student transportation team and, more significantly, can create a safety problem.

In many school districts, the school bus driver is the only contact parents have with school personnel other than teachers. Good or bad impressions of the school can be conveyed by the driver's attitude toward students and their parents. You will encounter students and parents with a wide range of attitudes toward you and the school system. You should strive to be flexible and treat everyone in a courteous and professional manner. Your reputation in the community, your courteous treatment of children and their parents, and your willingness to better prepare yourself for your position will help parents and children to have confidence in you.

You should consider all law enforcement officers in the community, as well as crossing guards and school patrols as part of the safety team. Their job, as well as yours, is to ensure safety on the highways you travel. You should strive to develop good working relations with them – their authority and experience may be invaluable to you.

Building desirable public relations is a continuous process and depends on the attitude you bring to work each day. You can add to your system's reputation by showing pride in your work. This sustains a good public opinion.

Good relations within your organization are essential. Public relations begins with fellow employees. An organization whose members have mutual friendliness, interest and respect meets a major requirement of good public relations.

Appropriate Dress

The way you dress and look affects many parts of your job. As a school bus driver, it is necessary to identify oneself as an adult, not a student. In order to accomplish this, the driver must dress in a manner designed to instill a degree of respect. If one dresses in a careless way, the driver cannot expect to receive the appropriate level of respect from the students on the bus needed to maintain good discipline.

Types of shoes should comply with school district safety recommendations. This typically eliminates wearing open-toed shoes, sandals, clogs, wooden-soled shoes of any type, or heels of more than two-inch height. The best driving shoe is one that has a flat sole, covers the entire foot and fastens securely. The type of shoe you wear could affect your ability to perform in a safe manner during an emergency situation.

Your Supervisor and Fellow Employees

Someone in your school district or company is assigned the responsibility of supervising you as an employee. The person is another member of the safety team and is vitally interested in the safety of your riders. Cooperation with your supervisor and fellow employees is essential to transportation safety.

The following are ways you can cooperate with them:

- Understand and support your written school policy;
- Communicate often with your immediate supervisor and accept his/her authority;
- Willingly accept your responsibilities and assignments;
- Don't repeat personal or confidential information;
- Always inform your supervisor of discipline problems, bus conditions, highway conditions, and changing pick-up/discharge conditions;
- Submit required forms and reports on time;
- Report any and all crashes or incidents, whether or not damage is apparent, including crashes with property, pedestrians, vehicles, animals, and passengers. Also report those crashes near, but not involving, your bus;
- Be helpful, assisting others in pre-trip inspections, and in school bus loading and unloading zones;
- Comply with your school district regulations regarding the number of chaperons that accompany students on various school activities;
- Never change a bus stop or route without permission from your supervisor;
- Maintain a positive attitude; and
- Help out with conditions such as routine overload, route adjustments, equipment repair, loading stop adjustments, and other areas of student safety.

The Transportation Director/Your Supervisor

You should consider your transportation director or supervisor as your adviser and partner in working with students on your bus, especially when working through discipline problems. The transportation director/supervisor should be informed of any significant problems that arise. In many larger schools, the day-to-day responsibilities of the transportation director are delegated to a transportation area coordinator or other supervisor.

The transportation director/supervisor is often responsible for:

1. Assigning drivers to buses;
2. Establishing bus routes, stops and turn-around locations;
3. Assigning passengers to buses;
4. Ensuring buses are in safe operating condition; and
5. Appointing monitors/aides as needed.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO BECOME A SCHOOL BUS DRIVER IN PENNSYLVANIA?

According to federal standards, each state must have regulations to ensure all school bus drivers are in good physical condition, of good character and skilled in the operation of their vehicles. They should have strong morals, an even temperament, the ability to adjust to the varying conditions of their job, and a positive attitude toward safety. To become a certified school bus driver in Pennsylvania, a person must meet several initial requirements and then successfully complete the training and testing requirements established by PennDOT.

INITIAL REQUIREMENTS – FIRST STEP

To become a certified school bus driver in Pennsylvania, you must first obtain an appropriate Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Knowledge Test Authorization/Learner's Permit. To apply for a CDL Knowledge Test Authorization/Learner's Permit:

- You must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- You must obtain a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania School Bus Driver's Physical Examination Form (DL-704), which is to be completed by either your health care provider or a physician appointed by the local school board. You must obtain this form from your employer. When completed, make sure your employer gets a copy for your personnel file. If you satisfactorily pass the physical examination, the examining health care provider will issue a Physical Examination Certificate (DL-742). You need to keep the DL-742. It is a credential that must be carried when driving a school bus. The Physical Examination Certificate is valid for one (1) year.
- You must self-certify the type of driving in which you expect to engage using a DL-11CD. Drivers engaged in "Non-excepted" transportation are also required to submit a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate to maintain licensure.
 - Driving types are
 - NI - Non-Excepted Interstate Transportation: Interstate drivers who are subject to the Federal Physical Qualifications and Examination regulations. A Medical Examiner's Certificate must accompany this form.
 - NA - Non-Excepted Intrastate Transportation: Intrastate drivers who are subject to the Federal Physical Qualifications and Examination regulations. A Medical Examiner's Certificate must accompany this form.
 - EI - Excepted Interstate Transportation: Interstate drivers who are not subject to the Federal Physical Qualifications and Examination regulations. Therefore, a Medical Examiner's Certificate is not required.
 - EA - Excepted Intrastate Transportation: Intrastate drivers who are not subject to the Federal Physical Qualifications and Examination regulations. Therefore, a Medical Examiner's Certificate is not required.

Additional information, including examples, is available in the Commercial Driver Information Center on our website at www.dmv.state.pa.us.

- You must also complete the Commercial Learner's Permit Application (DL-31CD) and submit it along with the DL-704 with a check or money order payable to "PennDOT," for any applicable fee required with this form. The cost is prorated and can be calculated on the form. Note that the DL-31CD and DL-11CD are available on PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, www.dmv.state.pa.us under Forms and Publications.
- Remember to submit the DL-704, DL-11CD and Medical Examiner's Certificate if applicable, and DL-31CD together with the fee.

Once these forms are completed and submitted, a Knowledge Test Authorization (KTA) and School Bus Learner's Permit can be obtained either through mail or same-day service available at PennDOT's Riverfront Office Center, Driver/Vehicle Customer Service in Harrisburg, or a Driver License Center. If the forms listed above and the fee are forwarded through the mail, the KTA and School Bus Learner's Permit will be returned in approximately 14 days from receipt of the documents.

Also visit PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website for online driver and vehicle services.

KNOWLEDGE TEST AUTHORIZATION (KTA) AND SCHOOL BUS LEARNER'S PERMIT - SECOND STEP

Upon receipt of these forms, PennDOT reviews your documents for correctness, license suspension and determination of medical competency. To see if you meet the physical requirements of the School Bus Driver Regulations (Title 67, Chapter 71 of the Pennsylvania Code), visit www.pacode.com.

A CDL Knowledge Test Authorization and School Bus Learner's Permit are issued.

If you do not meet the physical qualifications required of school bus drivers, your application will be denied.

The School Bus Learner's Permit is the only document that allows you to operate a school bus. **You may not use the KTA for driving purposes.**

The KTA and School Bus Learner's Permit are valid for one (1) year. During this one-year period, you will be required to complete all knowledge and skills testing. The knowledge examination will consist of:

- Vision Test;
- Knowledge Tests, including, but not limited to general knowledge, Passenger Endorsement (P), School Bus Endorsement (S), and if you are going to operate a bus with air brakes, removal of the air brake restriction, if applicable. If you already have a CDL, you may just be pursuing the "P" and "S" endorsements.

TRAINING AND SKILLS TESTING REQUIREMENTS – THIRD STEP

Pennsylvania law requires certain commercial learner's permit holders to wait at least 15 days before taking the examination to upgrade their driving privilege. You will need to check the bottom of your learner's permit for your driver test eligibility date. This date identifies the earliest date you are eligible to take your driving test. Keep in mind that you **MUST** pass all applicable knowledge tests before taking your skills test.

The School Bus Driver Training Course

The Pennsylvania school bus driver training course is administered by local school districts, contractors or Intermediate Units (IU) under the supervision of PennDOT and is outlined in Section 71.5 of Title 67. This course is available to all public, private and parochial school bus driver applicants.

To obtain a Pennsylvania School Bus endorsement (S), you must complete a minimum of 20 hours of instruction including at least 14 hours of classroom instruction and six (6) hours of one-on-one vehicle familiarity and driving instruction (in-bus training). ALL training must be completed by a certified school bus driver instructor. Also note that the in-bus portion of the training must be one-on-one training with a certified instructor.

This requirement (commonly known as the New Driver Training Course) can be completed in two ways:

- Complete the full 20 hours of instruction before attempting to pass the skills examination administered by PennDOT or a state-certified Third Party Tester. This method is recommended by PennDOT.

- Complete 10 hours of instruction (seven [7] hours of classroom training and three [3] hours of one-on-one in-bus training) and attempt to pass the skills examination administered by PennDOT or a state-certified Third Party Tester. If successful, you have 120 days from the date the endorsement card is issued to complete the remaining 10 hours of instruction (seven [7] additional hours of classroom training and three [3] additional hours of one-on-one in-bus training). Note: check with your employer as to which completion method they require; some specifically prohibit the ‘splitting’ of training.

After completing the full 20 hours of instruction or the first 10 hours of instruction, you are issued a Certificate of Completion Card (DL-713). You will need to keep this card as it is required to test. State law (Title 75, Section 1607) requires that a person hold the learner’s permit to add or upgrade the commercial class for 15 days before they are eligible to take the skills test administered by PennDOT or a state-certified Third Party Tester, so check the bottom of your learner’s permit for your driver test eligibility date.

Your permit is valid for one (1) year, so your skills examination must be completed within 12 months from the date on your permit issuance. Also keep in mind that your New Driver Training is also only valid for one (1) year. If you do not pass your skills examination within one (1) year of the completion of the training, you must complete the training again.

When taking the skills examination, bring the following documents to the test site:

- A valid driver’s license (if you are a licensed driver);
- A valid Pennsylvania CDL learner’s permit;
- A valid Physical Examination Certificate (DL-742);
- A valid Certificate of Completion Card (DL-713);
- The current vehicle registration card for the bus being driven;
- A valid insurance card or proof of financial responsibility for the bus being driven; and
- A valid CDL of the person accompanying you that covers the class of license, endorsements (e.g., ‘P’), and commercial restrictions for which you are being tested.

You must be accompanied by a commercial driver who is at least 21 years of age and has all proper applicable endorsements to legally drive the bus to the testing point and back in case you fail the driving examination. All applicable knowledge tests must be successfully completed before taking the skills test regardless of your eligibility date.

The skills examination will be administered in three parts. Refer to Pennsylvania’s CDL Manual (Publication 223). The CDL Manual is available under Forms and Publications of PennDOT’s Driver and Vehicle Services website, www.dmv.state.pa.us.

http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/drivers_manual/commercial_manual.shtml

- The safety inspection shall be the first part of the skills examination. Inability to correctly perform the air brake check will result in automatic failure of this portion, if applicable.
- The basic skills test is the second part of the skills examination. The test will be comprised of a selection of the following exercises:
 1. Simulated or discussed student discharge (scored as part of the skills test);
 2. Simulated or discussed railroad crossing (scored as part of the skills test);
 3. Forward Stop;

4. Straight line backing;
 5. Alley dock;
 6. Parallel Park (driver side);
 7. Parallel Park (conventional);
 8. Right Turn; and
 9. Backward serpentine.
- The on-road driving test is the third part of the skills examination. An automatic failure will occur if you commit any traffic offense, run over a curb or sidewalk or cause a crash. (An accumulation of minor infractions will also cause a failure.)

You are permitted to take the driving examination three (3) times on a valid CDL learner's permit. The examination may be taken only once during a given day. If you fail a portion of the test, you may return on another day and retake only the portion you failed. Note that you do not have to retake the sections you already passed. If you fail the driving examination three (3) times, you must reapply for a CDL learner's permit, pay the appropriate fee, and complete all training requirements again. If you fail to successfully pass the skills test within 12 months of your training completion date, you will be required to repeat all 20 hours of training.

When you successfully complete the test, your passing test results will be credited to your driving record. Once your record reflects that all minimum requirements have been met, you will receive a CDL displaying the "S" endorsement and a School Bus Endorsement card from PennDOT. If the full 20 hours of the training has been completed, the school bus endorsement card is valid for one (1) year. The School Bus Endorsement card is reissued annually by PennDOT, if the requirement for the annual physical examination is met. If you successfully pass the driving examination after completing only 10 hours of instruction, you must complete the additional ten (10) hours of instruction (seven [7] hours of classroom and three [3] hours of one-on-one in-bus instruction) within 120 days of the endorsement card issue date, or PennDOT will cancel your School Bus Endorsement card.

PLEASE NOTE: School bus drivers are required to carry three credentials when operating a school bus in Pennsylvania: a valid CDL displaying the "S" endorsement, a valid School Bus Endorsement card, and a valid physician's certificate. If you are going to operate a bus with air brakes, you must have the air brakes restriction removed (passing applicable knowledge and skills tests).

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

You must be fit to operate a school bus with regard to the health and safety of the students being transported. To establish fitness you must:

- Comply with Pennsylvania Department of Health and any local school district regulations and policies regarding communicable diseases;
- Have a clean criminal history record as evidenced by Pennsylvania State Police criminal history check.
- Have a clean child abuse history record;
- Have no record of motor vehicle crashes or traffic violations determined to be excessive in number by your employer;
- Complete FBI clearance checks (fingerprinting); and,
- Be drug-and alcohol-free when driving, and you must not consume any alcoholic beverages within eight (8) hours prior to operating a school bus and never consume illegal substances.

Local requirements may be more stringent than those listed above.

Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers

All CDL drivers operating commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) (i.e. transporting more than 16 passengers) on public roadways must be DOT drug and alcohol tested. This means any school bus driver required to possess a CDL, whether a full or part time driver must also be included in an employer's drug and alcohol testing program.

The regulations require a five panel testing for the following classes of controlled substances: marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, and phencyclidine (PCP). Drug testing is accomplished by a urine sample while alcohol testing is accomplished by breath analysis or other screening test approved by NHTSA.

There are many different methods used in establishing a policy on drug and alcohol testing. As a new driver, you are responsible to know and understand the drug and alcohol testing policies for your company or school district. Employers are required by federal law to do testing as indicated in the following:

- 1. Pre-Employment Testing:** A new driver must be drug tested with a negative test result before an employer can permit him/her to operate a CMV on a public roadway.
- 2. Random Testing:** CDL drivers are subject to unannounced random drug and alcohol testing throughout the year. Random alcohol testing must be conducted just before, during or just after a driver's performance of safety sensitive duties. Once notified of a random test, drivers must immediately report to the designated testing location.
- 3. Post-Accident Testing:** This federally-mandated testing is required for any crash involving:
 - A fatality; or
 - Bodily injury requiring immediate medical treatment away from the scene AND the employee/driver has been issued a citation; or
 - Vehicle damage sufficient to require any of the involved vehicles to be towed AND the employee/driver has been issued a citation.

Note: Pennsylvania state law (Section 3756 of Title 75) requires testing after any reportable crash in a school bus.

- 4. Reasonable Suspicion:** Testing is done when a trained supervisor observes specific, contemporaneous, articulable objective facts indicating current drug or alcohol use.
- 5. Return to Duty:** After a positive drug and/or alcohol test or refusing to take a test, the employee/applicant shall be referred to a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP). Following the initial assessment, the SAP will recommend a treatment unique to that individual. If your employer does not have a "Zero Tolerance Policy" and allows an employee to return to duty following a positive test and subsequent evaluation and treatment, the SAP will recommend a return-to-duty test when the employee has successfully completed treatment and is no longer a concern to safety.
- 6. Follow-Up Testing:** After completing a return to duty test, follow-up testing will be performed for a period of one to five years with a minimum of six unannounced tests conducted during the first year. The number and frequency of tests beyond the minimums is set by the SAP based on his/her evaluation of the employee. Follow-up testing is separate and in addition to any other testing.

Positive Test or Refusing to Take a Test

A drug or alcohol test is considered positive if the individual is found to have a quantifiable presence of a prohibited substance in the body above the minimum thresholds defined in 49 CFR Part 40. Any applicant or employee who tested positive or refused to take a drug or alcohol test must have a negative return-to-duty test and be evaluated and released by a SAP before returning to safety-sensitive work. There is no requirement the company pays for this treatment or schedules the SAP appointment.

DRIVER RECERTIFICATION

State law requires you to renew your school bus endorsement every four (4) years, completing a minimum of 10 hours of instruction and the “S” endorsement knowledge and skills examinations. Recertification must occur in a school bus representative of the class of school bus the driver is licensed to operate, so test in the Class school bus listed on your license. The recertification skills exam is outlined in Chapter 71.4 of Title 67. Visit www.pacode.com.

The instruction must be provided by a certified instructor and must include seven (7) hours of classroom training and three (3) hours of one-on-one in-bus training. This ten 10-hour course (commonly known as the driver recertification course) may be completed at any time during the 12 months immediately preceding the recertification date on your School Bus Endorsement card. PennDOT notifies you of this requirement through a notice mailed one year before your endorsement expires. **DO NOT LOSE YOUR RECERTIFICATION NOTICE; YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PRESENT IT TO THE EXAMINER WHEN TAKING THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TESTS.**

Upon successful completion of the training and testing requirements, a new School Bus Endorsement card is issued to you 45 days prior to the expiration of your current “S” endorsement. If you fail the skills examination three (3) times, your current School Bus Endorsement card must be surrendered to the examiner. You must then reapply for the “S” endorsement learner’s permit and complete all training requirements for new drivers outlined in the previous sections. Any training taken as a requirement for recertification cannot be counted toward new learner’s permit training requirements. If the recertification requirements are not completed before the recertification date of the School Bus Endorsement, you have one (1) year from that date to complete the training and testing requirements, but you cannot drive except to complete in-bus training and the skills test. If the requirements are not completed within this additional year, you must reapply for an “S” endorsement permit and repeat all training and testing procedures.

After PennDOT receives your recertification paperwork, a new School Bus Endorsement card will be mailed to you. If your old School Bus Endorsement card expired before, or shortly after, the completion of recertification training, you are not permitted to operate a school bus until receiving the new School Bus Endorsement from PennDOT. Remember, you must have the School Bus Endorsement card with you to operate a school bus.

When taking the examination for recertification, you must bring the following documents to the testing site:

- Your valid commercial driver’s license;
- Your school bus recertification notice;
- Your valid Physical Examination Certificate;
- The current vehicle registration card for the bus being driven; and
- A valid insurance card or proof of financial responsibility for the bus being driven.

COMPLETION OF REPORT FORM

You, the school bus driver, will be asked to sign the School Bus Driver's Training Report Form (DL-714), verifying the minimum training requirements have been met.

PLEASE NOTE: Your signature on the Training Report Form certifies, under penalty of law, that the information contained on the form is true and correct.

WARNING: Falsification to authorities is a misdemeanor of the third degree and is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,500 and/or imprisonment up to one year.

IF YOU ARE NOT GIVEN THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF TRAINING HOURS OR YOUR IN-BUS TRAINING WASN'T ONE-ON-ONE, DO NOT SIGN THE TRAINING REPORT FORM. You may contact PennDOT's Special Driver Programs Unit at (717) 787-6453 or ra-pdschoolbushelp@state.pa.us, if you have any concerns associated with your school bus driver training.

The safety of school children is the main concern of PennDOT. Compliance with every aspect of the School Bus Driver Training Program is essential to the safety of school children.

ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

To maintain a valid School Bus Endorsement, you must pass an annual physical examination given by either your physician or a physician appointed or approved by the local school board. A Pennsylvania School Bus Driver's Physical Examination Form (DL-704) must contain the signature of the physician before sending it to PennDOT. Refer to Section 71.3 of Title 67 for details on this examination. Visit www.pacode.com.

A letter is mailed to you approximately 90 days prior to the expiration of your school bus physical. The purpose of this letter is to remind you that your physical is about to expire. Your School Bus Endorsement card will not be renewed unless PennDOT has a current physical on file. You must pass the minimum requirements listed on the physical examination form. Additional medical information may be required to further determine physical competency. If PennDOT determines you are not physically competent to operate a school bus, your School Bus Endorsement will be cancelled. You may request a re-examination.

Upon passing the physical examination, the examining physician will issue a Physical Examination Certificate valid for one (1) year. This certificate must be carried whenever operating a school bus.

In addition to the annual School Bus Driver's Physical Examination (DL-704), commercial drivers engaged in "Non-expected" transportation are also required to submit a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate in order to maintain commercial licensure.

Additional information is available in the Commercial Driver Information Center on our website at www.dmv.state.pa.us.

CHANGE OF INFORMATION ON LICENSE

A new camera card or photo license will be issued whenever you are adding or deleting an endorsement, removing a restriction or upgrading your class of license.

If you are changing your name or address on your CDL and "S" endorsement, you must complete form DL-80CD (Commercial Driver's License Application to Replace/Correct) and forward it to PennDOT with the appropriate fee. The DL-80CD is located under the Forms and Publications link on PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, www.dmv.state.pa.us.

DOCUMENTS CARRIED WHILE OPERATING A SCHOOL BUS

The following current and valid documents must be carried by you at all times while operating a school bus:

- CDL, with Passenger and School Bus Endorsements;
- Pennsylvania School Bus Endorsement Card;
- Physical Examination Certificate (DL 742);
- Vehicle registration card for the bus being driven;
- A valid insurance card or proof of financial responsibility for the bus being driven; and
- DOT physical, if applicable (i.e., contractors who cross state lines). This physical is known as the Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver's Fitness Determination and is available at www.fmcsa.dot.gov.

COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE

For a comprehensive resource on virtually all aspects of becoming a school bus operator, visit the School Bus Information Center on PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, www.dmv.state.pa.us.