ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 290-2-4
TRANSPORTATION

THE ENTIRE CHAPTER 290-020-040, TRANSPORTATION, HAS BEEN RENUMBERED TO CHAPTER 290-2-4, TRANSPORTATION, AS SPECIFIED ON THE CERTIFICATION FILED SEPTEMBER 13, 1996.

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290-2-4-.01 Basic Principles For Pupil Transportation.

The State Department of Education has a definite responsibility for safe operation of school buses. The following are specific responsibilities for promoting safety in school transportation.

(1) The establishment of minimum safety specifications for school bus equipment.

(2) Provision of training for school bus drivers.

(3) Provision of leadership and training for local school officials on operating safe transportation programs.

(4) Consultation with local officials on routing to utilize equipment each attendance area effectively.

(5) Provision of safety inspections for equipment and safety instruction for mechanics.

(6) Provision of guidance to state and local safety officials on elimination of road hazards, bus traffic patterns, and accident investigations.

Author:

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-3-11, 16-13-51, 16-27-1 and 16-27-3 through 5, 32-5-8.

History: Amended: February 26, 1970, July 30, 1975, March 23, 1977, July 11, 1978. **Amended:** Filed May 12, 1995; effective June 16, 1995. cf. Handbook for School Transportation Bulletin 1981, No. 9; Alabama School Bus Inspection Handbook; the Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses, and Alabama School Bus Drivers' Record and Report Book, 43rd Edition, 1982. A copy of these publications may be obtained without cost from the State Department of Education, Transportation Section, Montgomery, AL 36130.

290-2-4-.02 School Bus Specifications.

(1) Before any manufacturer or distributor may offer for sale any school bus chassis or bodies to be used for transporting students to public schools of Alabama said chassis or bodies shall meet all federal standards of construction for school buses and Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses. A copy of Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses (an annual publication, state year desired) may be obtained without cost from the State Department of Education, Transportation Section, Montgomery, Alabama 36130.

(2) The State School Bus Equipment Inspector, State Department of Education, shall make periodic inspection of school bus chassis and bodies delivered to school boards to determine if state standards and specifications have been met.

(3) Operation of any school buses built before 1978 on a regular school bus route is prohibited effective July 1, 1996. No Alabama school bus inspection permit will be issued to allow pre-1978 school buses to transport students effective June 30, 1997. The operation of any pre-1978 school buses for the transportation of any student is prohibited effective July 1, 1997.
Author: Dr. William Berryman
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-3-11, 16-4-4, 32-5-8.
History: Amended: February 26, 1970, July 30, 1975, July 6, 1983, July 19, 1984, August 9, 1984. **Amended:** Filed October 16, 1995; effective November 21, 1995. **Amended:** Filed September 13, 1996; effective October 18, 1996. cf. Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses.

290-2-4-.03 Purchase Of Used Transportation Equipment.

Used school buses purchased for use in the public schools in Alabama shall meet all state requirements for school buses that were in effect on the date the vehicle was manufactured. The state requirements are listed in the Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses (year of manufacture).
Author: Dr. Kenneth Wilson

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-4-4, 41-16-50 et. seq.
History: Amended: February 26, 1970, July 30, 1975, March 23, 1977, July 11, 1978. **Amended:** Filed May 12, 1995; effective June 16, 1995. cf.(Handbook for School Transportation Bulletin 1981, no. 9); Alabama School Bus Inspection Handbook; the Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses, and Alabama School Bus Drivers' Record and Report Book, 43rd Edition, 1982. A copy of these publications may be obtained without cost from the State Department of Education, Transportation Section, Montgomery, Alabama 36130.

290-2-4-.04 School Bus Driver Training And Certification And School Bus Inspection Program.

(1) The State Department of Education shall certify school bus drivers and conduct school bus safety inspections in accordance with state and federal law. As a part of these functions, the State Department of Education shall:

(a) Provide qualified instructors for driver training,

(b) Design written examinations,

(c) Provide representatives for performance tests, and

(d) Provide qualified inspectors for school bus equipment inspections.

(2) The State Superintendent of Education shall have the authority to revoke or suspend any bus driver's certificate for just cause. The State Superintendent of Education shall utilize the procedures for revoking teachers' certificates found in Ala. Admin. Code ch. 290-030-020 when exercising this authority.
Author: Kenneth Wilson.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-27-1, 16-27-3 through 5.
History: Amended February 26, 1970, July 30, 1975, July 11, 1978. **Amended:** Filed March 11, 1994; effective April 15, 1994. **Amended:** Filed May 12, 1995; effective June 16, 1995. cf. Alabama Minimum Specifications for School Buses.

290-2-4-.05 Local Transportation Supervisors.

Each local transportation supervisor or manager shall be trained in school bus driving techniques by the State Department of Education and hold a valid Alabama school bus driver's certification and a valid Commercial Driver's License with proper endorsements issued by the Department of Public Safety.

Author: William J. Rutherford.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §16-27-1.
History: New Rule: July 11, 1978. **Amended:** Filed March 11, 1994; effective April 15, 1994.

290-2-4-.06 Local Mechanic Certification.

A written test and a safety test shall be administered by State Department of Education personnel to local mechanics who perform safety inspections on school buses.

(1) The requirements for certification as a school bus mechanic shall be as follows:

(a) Completion of a certified auto mechanic's apprenticeship; **OR**

(b) Written proof of a least five year's experience as an auto or truck mechanic; **OR**

(c) Written proof of three consecutive year's experience as a mechanic's helper in a school bus shop maintaining buses for pupil transportation.

(2) Any individual who meets one of the above qualifications or a combination of the qualifications approved by the director of State transportation and is hired as a school bus mechanic must within six months pass the school bus written test and safety test administered by State transportation personnel and each year thereafter must demonstrate to the State Inspector that he [or she] still maintains the skill, as well as the mental and physical capabilities, to perform all the tasks necessary to assure the safe maintenance of school buses.

(3) The testing is not purposed to test mechanic skills but to test the individual mechanic's knowledge and performance in braking system, exhaust system, steering mechanism, and signal system, etc. As a minimum requirement, each participating school system shall have one certified mechanic for each twenty-five school buses. A school bus shop foreman serving as a full-time bus shop employee in a school system may be counted as a certified mechanic if the foreman also performs the duties and meets the requirements of a certified mechanic.

Author: William J. Rutherford.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §16-27-5.
History: New Rule: March 23, 1977. **Amended:** Filed May 12, 1995; effective June 16, 1995. **Amended:** Filed September 14, 2007; effective October 19, 2007. **Amended:** Filed November 22, 2010; effective December 27, 2010. **Amended:** Published September 30, 2022; effective November 14, 2022.

290-2-4-.07 School Bus Accident Report.

School bus accident reports shall be forwarded to the Transportation Section, Alabama State Department of Education, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-3901.
Author: William J. Rutherford.
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-4-4, 16-27-1.
History: Repromulgated August 19, 1982. cf. Alabama School Bus Driver's Record and Report Book, 43rd Edition, 1982.

290-2-4-.08 Physical Examination For School Bus Drivers.

No person shall be allowed to operate a school bus transporting students to or from school or school-related events unless the person is physically qualified to drive a school bus, in accordance with the provisions of Section 16-27-4.1 of the Code of Ala. 1975.

(1) A driver operating a school bus transporting students to or from school or school-related events must pass a physical examination, at their expense, and provide the Alabama School Bus Driver Physical Examination Report ("Report") to the employing board of education.

(a) A driver employed on May 14, 2012, must pass the initial physical examination and provide the Report to the employing local board of education before August 14, 2012, and every two years thereafter.

(b) A person holding an Alabama School Bus Driver Certificate who is not employed by a local board of education on May 14, 2012, must pass the initial physical examination and provide the Report to the employing local board of education before being allowed to operate a school bus and every two years thereafter.

(c) A person obtaining an Alabama School Bus Driver Certificate after May 14, 2012, must pass the initial physical examination and provide the Report to the employing board of education before being allowed to operate a school bus and every two years thereafter.

(2) The results of a school bus driver physical examination shall be documented on the Alabama School Bus Driver Physical Examination Report ("Report") provided by the State Department of Education and the Report shall be filed with the superintendent of the employing local board of education.

(3) A school bus driver holding a current, valid medical card issued by a DOT-certified medical examiner may comply with this regulation by completing the appropriate section of the Report and submitting the Report and a copy of their DOT Medical Card to the employing local board of education.

(4) A school bus driver holding a valid Alabama School Bus Driver Certificate may be grandfathered in for any condition noted on the Report, if the Report includes the following:

(a) A written statement from the physician that the any condition the school bus driver has will not adversely affect his or her ability to control and safely operate a school bus, and,

(b) A signed written waiver.

(5) A local board of education shall certify to the State Department of Education in the Annual Comprehensive Plan for Transportation that all school bus drivers and substitute school bus drivers operating a school bus transporting students to or from school or school-related events are in compliance with the applicable physical examination requirements.

(6) The State Department of Education shall revoke the Alabama School Bus Driver Certificate of a driver who does is not in compliance with the applicable physical examination requirements.

(7) A local board of education may require a school bus driver to undergo additional physical examinations in accordance with federal or state law.

Author: Mr. Joe Lightsey
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §16-27-4.1.
History: New Rule: Filed September 14, 2012; effective October 19, 2012.