

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS		FILE	EEAEA
Policy for: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER EXAMINATION AND TRAINING		Revision 2	
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May 17, 2022	Matthew Spengler		

School bus drivers are responsible for the well-being of students while transporting them to and from school, and to extracurricular events. As such, school bus drivers are a critical component of a student’s educational experience.

Applicability:

This policy applies equally to all individuals licensed as school bus or van drivers, including drivers employed by the Needham Public Schools and drivers working under any contract to provide pupil transportation within the Town of Needham.

Driver Requirements:

All persons assigned to transport students under the jurisdiction of the Needham School Committee are subject to stringent licensing, training and performance expectations.

- Drivers will be appropriately licensed for the vehicle they operate, in accordance with Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) standards. School bus drivers must possess a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) with a Passenger (P) Endorsement and a School Bus (S) Endorsement, as well as a School Bus Driver Certificate issued by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU). Van drivers require a Class D license with a valid 7D Certificate.
- Drivers are expected to maintain their license in good standing. Drivers who allow their license to lapse, to become suspended or be revoked, will be prohibited from operating a school transportation vehicle in Needham. Drivers will furnish a copy of their driving credentials to the Superintendent or designee upon initial hire, annual license renewal, and upon demand.
- Drivers are expected to maintain a good driving record. Any current or prospective driver who has been convicted of a criminal driving offense, will not be permitted drive students in the Town of Needham.
- Drivers will participate in drug and alcohol testing, in accordance with School Committee Policy #EEAEA-1.
- Drivers will complete a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check annually, and a fingerprint background check upon initial hire.

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- Drivers will participate in in-service training programs as required by law, regulation, or the Needham Public Schools.
- Drivers will obey all applicable laws related to motor vehicle operation and the transportation of students, including the use of seat belts and child restraints.
- Drivers will conform to the School Committee’s policy governing motor vehicle idling on school grounds (#EEAJ.)
- Drivers will conduct an inspection of their vehicles each day as required by law.
- Drivers will exhibit professional, courteous and respectful behavior at all times.
- Drivers will strive to exhibit good judgment and will prioritize student safety and the protection of school property.
- Drivers will observe the confidentiality of student information and will not discuss students with anyone other than a parent/guardian, the child’s teacher and/or appropriate school official.
- Drivers will not engage in any activity that might interfere with the safe operation of a vehicle, including but not limited to: smoking; operating a vehicle under the influence of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances; refueling an occupied vehicle; and using a cellphone or electronic device while driving.
- Drivers will use school vehicles for official school business only. The use of such vehicle for personal purposes, such as attending to personal affairs, social engagements, or commuting, is prohibited.
- Drivers who incur parking or other fines/citations while operating or using a school vehicle will be held personally responsible for payment of such fines/citations, unless payment of such fine/citation is approved by the Superintendent or contract provider.
- Drivers who are issued citations for any offense while operating or using a school vehicle, or who are arrested for or charged with a motor vehicle offense while operating or using a school vehicle, must notify the Superintendent or designee(s) as soon after the incident as practicable, but not later than 24 hours following the offense, arrest or charge.

The Needham School Committee delegates to the Superintendent of Schools responsibility for the development of guidelines for school bus drivers. These guidelines will become part of the contract between the Needham School Committee and its transportation contractors, who will be responsible for their enforcement.

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Drivers found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures, including but not limited to: immediate suspension from duty and dismissal. The Needham School Committee reserves unto itself the absolute right to disqualify from its service as a school bus driver any person it so designates, whether that person is employed by the Needham Public Schools or any of its transportation contractors.

Contractors will furnish the School Committee with a list drivers assigned to the Needham Public Schools, prior to the start of each school year. The contractor also will notify school officials of any change in bus drivers, immediately, or as soon as is practicable.

LEGAL REFERENCES:

- M.G.L. c. 90 sec. 16B
- M.G.L. c. 90 sec. 7B
- M.G.L. c. 90 sec. 7D
- M.G.L. c. 90 sec. 7AA
- M.G.L. c. 90 sec. 8A ½
- M.G.L. c. 90 sec. 13A
- 540 CMR 7.00
- 540 CMR 21.00