

Proposed Waivers – School Business Services

Student Transportation

The valid period for school bus operator training and dexterity test results, as required by rule 6A-3.0141, Florida Administrative Code, is extended until September 30, 2020, for a school bus operator who held a valid school bus operator license and who met school bus operator training and dexterity test requirements on March 13, 2020.

Justification

School district staff are currently not able to provide school bus operator training and dexterity tests for bus drivers for which the time period for meeting these requirements will expire in the next few months.

The date by which school bus operators and attendants, who were employed and transporting students on or before August 20, 2019, are required to have certified CPR and first aid training pursuant to rule 6A-3.0121, Florida Administrative Code, is extended from November 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

Justification

The pandemic has interrupted school district training schedules and some school districts are not able to provide this training to all bus drivers by November 1, 2020.

The valid period of school bus safety inspector certification is extended to September 30, 2020, for a school bus safety inspector who held a valid school bus inspector certification on March 13, 2020, pursuant to the State of Florida School Bus Safety Inspection Manual, 2017 Edition, as incorporated in rule 6A-3.0171(8)(d), Florida Administrative Code.

Justification

Some school bus safety inspectors are currently not able to renew their certification because they do not have access to district test proctors who administer the FDOE online recertification test. Furthermore, In the event a school bus inspector's certification lapses, the inspector is required to pass an online test, attend a two-day training session, and successfully complete a hands-on school bus inspection.

The requirement in rule 6A-3.0171(8)(c), Florida Administrative Code, to perform school bus safety inspections at least every 30 school days, is revised to 90 days, effective March 13 through September 30, 2020.

Justification

There is uncertainty as to whether "school days" include days in which children are scheduled to continue learning from home. School districts should not be required to inspect school buses when school buses are not transporting students and students are learning from home. District mechanics can use this time to perform larger maintenance items on school buses.

See following page...

FAPT leadership has requested that these items be added to the list of proposed waivers above:

The recertification of any Hazardous Walking areas that were due to expire after March 13, 2020 will need to be postponed for an additional six months. The requirements of 1006.23, FS mandate that state funding for the transportation of students subjected to hazardous walking will cease upon the correction of the hazardous condition of upon the projected completion date.

Justification

It may not be practicable for local governmental entities to work together with school district officials to re-inspect and certify those areas that have been determined to be hazardous and whose correction date may have passed since March 13, 2020. School district should not be financially penalized by losing any funding associated with students transported in these areas.

Funds for student transportation should be based on the average ABO computed for 2018-19 school year due to the impact of procedures and practices of distancing of students and lower ridership per bus to encourage student health and safety.

Justification

Florida Statute 1011.68, (2) requires the use of the Average Bus Occupancy as a multiplier in the funding formula and this will penalize districts who may attempt to reduce ridership per bus at any one time for health reasons.

The 8-hours of annual in-service training required in 6A-3.0141(7)(c), FAC) prior to the start of school annually should be extended to be beginning of the second semester of school.

Justification

Many of our bus operators may not have the ability to access on-line training from home and live training may not be practicable for health and safety of our employees. Allowing an additional 6 months to complete this training is not unreasonable.

The deadline in 6A-3.0171, FAC for conducting school bus evacuation drills and safety training of all students needs to be extended from the first six weeks of school for an additional 90 days.

Justification

Many students may not ride a bus at the start of school for health considerations but they will become riders as the school year settles down and parents no longer transport. This gives principals or designated school staff a greater opportunity to make this instruction a priority for all students.