

Operational Services

Administrative Procedure - Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection; Bus Driving Comments

Bus Driver Communication Devices

State law prohibits a school bus driver from operating a school bus while using a cellular radio telecommunication device. It requires each school bus to contain an operating two-way radio while the school bus driver is in possession of the school bus. The two-way radio must be turned on and adjusted in a manner that would alert the driver of an incoming communication request. 625 ILCS 5/12-813, amended by P.A. 96-818.

Bus drivers may still have cell phones although they are prohibited from using cell phones while operating a bus except: (1) in an emergency situation to communicate with an emergency response operator; a hospital; a physician's office or health clinic; an ambulance service; a fire department, fire district, or fire company; or a police department; (2) in the event of a "mechanical breakdown or other mechanical problem;" (3) if "a cellular radio telecommunication device ... has a digital two-way radio service capability owned and operated by the school district, when that device is being used as a digital two-way radio;" and (4) when the bus is parked. 625 ILCS 5/12-813.1(c).

Bus/Vehicle Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection

All school bus drivers, whether employed by the School District or private sector school bus company, shall:

1. Test the two-way radio and ensure that it is functioning properly before the bus is operated (625 ILCS 5/12-816, amended by P.A. 96-818); and
2. Perform a visual sweep for children or other passengers at the end of a route, work shift or workday by:
 - a. Activating interior lights of the school bus to assist the driver in searching in and under each seat (625 ILCS 5/12-816(c)), and
 - b. Walking to the rear of the school bus/vehicle checking in and under each seat. 625 ILCS 5/12-816(b).

If a mechanical post-trip inspection reminder system is installed, the driver shall comply with the requirements of that system. 625 ILCS 5/12-816(d).

Bus Driving Comments

Each school bus and multifunction school activity bus shall display a sign at the rear, with letters and numerals readily visible and readable, in the following form:

TO COMMENT ON MY DRIVING, CALL *[insert District area code and telephone number]*

Driving comments shall be accepted in the following manner:

1. Calls to comment on school bus driving shall be directed to the Superintendent or designee.
2. The Superintendent or designee shall conduct an internal investigation of the events that led to each complaint. Required for districts that own school buses by 625 ILCS 5/12-821(c)(1).
3. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the commenting party of the results of any investigation and the action, if any, taken to remedy the situation. Required for districts that own school buses by 625 ILCS 5/12-821(c)(2).