

05 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

071 COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Chapter 83: SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PROGRAM

Summary: These regulations establish criteria for determining eligibility for, and procedures for access to, the School Transportation Operations Program software subsidy.

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this rule is to determine who is eligible for access to the School Transportation Operations Program subsidy and provide a process for eligible schools to access the ~~software~~ subsidy provided by the Department of Education.

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

1. School bus is defined by 29-A M.R.S. §2301(5).
2. School bus operator, also known as school bus driver, is defined by 29-A M.R.S. §2303.

SECTION 3. ELIGIBILITY FOR USE OF THE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PROGRAM SOFTWARE

1. The program is available to public schools, including public charter schools, and private schools approved for the receipt of public funds (“private schools”).

SECTION 4. ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PROGRAM SOFTWARE

1. **Application and Approval**
 - A. Program application requests occur throughout the year.
 - B. A program application is initiated when a SAU or a private school submits a request to the Department.
 - C. Annual state approval shall continue each year the SAU or private school uses the software system. Annual use shall be based on reports generated by the program system that confirm SAU or private school use.

2. Technical Start-up

- A. System technology start-up conducted at the district or private school level with guidance from the program technology representative must be completed before the program can be initiated. This process may be completed virtually.
- B. A representative from the program technology must attend the Maine Association of Pupil Transport annual conference.
- C. Information technology staff at the public or private school shall work with the program technology representative to complete technical start-up of the operations software system.

SECTION 5. STATE PAYMENT FOR APPROVED USERS

1. The School Transportation Operations Program software is provided at a subsidized cost according to the EPS formula allocation ~~no cost~~ to public schools and private schools that meet the minimum qualifications and procedures. The subsidy will be based on the lowest bid received during the RFP process.
2. Schools that opt out of the lowest bid vendor will have the option to contract with a vendor of their choosing and will be responsible for paying the difference in cost.

SECTION 6. RECORDS RETENTION

1. SAUs and private schools who access the School Transportation Operations Program software shall retain fleet operations records and present these documents to the Department for review, upon request, along with a statement of compliance for annual use.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 29-A M.R.S. §2311 and 20-A M.R.S. §5401(17)

EFFECTIVE DATE:

September 16, 2017 – filing 2017-141