Senate Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education

Testimony for HB 49

Offered by Pete Japikse, Senior transportation consultant, Ohio School Boards Association

Chairman Hite and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to discuss the needs of Ohio's public schools with regard to pupil transportation support through HB 49.

I come to you today with 37 years of experience in Ohio school transportation. Twenty as a transportation administrator in districts in Southwestern Ohio, 12 as the director of pupil transportation for the Ohio Department of Education, and five as a transportation consultant serving Ohio's public schools on behalf of OSBA. During my career I have driven school buses, worked with school boards, interacted with drivers, parents and students, served as the president of the national association of state pupil transportation directors, and had the honor of working with members of this legislature.

School transportation is a valuable resource, serving students, parents, and the many communities served by Ohio's public school districts. We have 15,000 school buses that travel nearly 1 million miles per day, transporting over 800,000 students to and from their educational programs. The men and women driving these buses and supervising this service provide safe and reliable transportation for these students, enabling them to attend their educational programs. The students we serve include not only our public schools but also those attending nonpublic and private schools, community schools, and vocational schools. Accompanying the written copy of this testimony please find a summary of Ohio's transportation services for fiscal year 2016.

Without our buses providing transportation, Ohio would see more than 500,000 additional cars on the roads every day carrying these same children. Parents would spend an additional \$279 per year just for fuel for their cars. (The fuel cost for their child to ride a school bus is only \$78 per year.)

This is a valuable service that parents value and trust, and provides cost effective mass transportation for students, however it is not cost free. The average cost per student is \$900 per year. The average cost to operate a bus for a year is \$50,000. The cost to purchase a new school bus that meets all federal and state safety standards is more than \$80,000.

The buses that our children ride to school in Ohio are aging. Many of our districts rely on buses that are over 10 years old with more than 100,000 miles on their odometers. While these vehicles are heavy duty and continue to provide safe transportation for our children, the operating cost of these vehicles is high. The maintenance needs of an aging fleet can be

overwhelming. As the fleet ages, costs continue to climb. These costs limit the funds available for our schools and precludes their ability to purchase new school buses.

Under Ohio's transportation funding law, the actual operating costs experienced by our school districts are the basis for our funding calculations for the subsequent school year. Just as our schools are caught in a cycle of increasing costs, the same increase in costs affects our state budget funding cycle for school transportation.

The irony of this spending trap is that a new school bus gets twice the fuel economy of a 2005 model, and has drastically lower operating costs than a 10-year-old bus. Collectively, this can save between \$5-10,000 in annual operating costs per bus.

Included with this testimony are documents that detail recommendations for school transportation funding, language that improves transportation operations, and also suggestions for cleaning up out-of-date language in the revised code.

There are three legs to these funding recommendations. First is the return of school bus purchasing assistance for our school districts. Second are adjustments in the base funding formula for transportation. Third is a recommendation for adjustments to the transportation supplement to help those districts that are most challenged with providing transportation.

Bus Purchase Funding

After many years of helping schools purchase buses, including 100% funding for buses used for nonpublic and special education students, the state stopped all school bus purchasing assistance in 2009. Since that time districts have had the sole responsibility of purchasing their own buses. While some grants have been available through EPA and federal special education programs, our districts have not had the funding to maintain a regular vehicle replacement plan. This has led to the older vehicles that are operated today, which increase both district costs and the costs used to calculate transportation funding.

We recommend that a school bus purchase fund be established in each fiscal year of the next budget. Districts with route buses over 8 years of age and 96,000 miles should be encouraged to apply for this funding. Funding grants in the amount of \$45,000 (approximately 50% of the cost of a new bus) should be awarded to eligible districts on a priority basis, using vehicle age and mileage. To ensure that as many districts as possible benefit from the program, no district should be awarded more than one grant until all requests have been met.

Distributed in this manner, a 20 million fund would result in 400 buses being replaced per year. If we can maintain this funding for several budget cycles, this investment will result in a future reduction of operating costs for our districts and reduce reliance on the state budget for operating costs. From another perspective, we can continue to try fund the rising costs of transportation, or we can fund a method that will actually lower the future costs of transportation.

Base Transportation Funding Formula

Ohio schools are required to transport not only students to their own public schools, but also nonpublic students, charter school students, STEM students, vocational school students, and special education students. The funding provided through the state budget provides less than 50% of the cost of this service, even for mandated services that the district has no control over. These mandated services for nonpublic and community school students is more costly for our districts due to the lack of enrollment boundaries and the public district's lack of influence over their school calendar and attendance times.

The basic formula in the budget calculates a district's funding for transportation on a cost per student and cost per mile basis, using last year's state average costs and this year's actual service volume. In the last budget cycle districts received the greater of 50% or their state share index of this amount. We recommend that this percentage be kept at 50% or their state share index as in the past two years. This is already a reduction from the previous budget which paid 60% or state share index.

We also recommend that the definition of qualifying students be amended to include all students. Currently only students that live more than one mile from school are included in the funding calculation. In many of our districts the local school board has deemed it necessary to transport all students regardless of distance. These children live on rural routes with no sidewalks and 55 mph speed limits, roads with no sidewalks, roads with high traffic and life safety risks, and in areas where it is not safe for children to walk. In the last school year, this included over 30,000 students. As a parent, we would want our children to have access to safe transportation. The state should support our schools in these considerations. As a local political subdivision, if they deem it appropriate to transport these children, we should fund that transportation just like any other child.

We recommend returning the efficiency measure to the budget, as it was in 2010. This measure was derived through an education stakeholder group with the goal of establishing a benchmark to measure how well school districts are using their school buses. Other states also use passenger capacity measures in their funding formula-however, the one that we derived is dynamic and compares districts to peer districts instead of using an arbitrary passenger load. The formula calculates the average ridership in our state, then uses that average as a base target value for schools. We do consider the ridership density of each district and adjust their target accordingly. This process provides a ridership target for each district that is scaled based upon their density.

For each district, actual ridership is compared to target ridership and expressed as a ratio. Districts that achieve a 1.0 are doing as well as their peers. Districts with a ratio over 1 are exceeding their peers. The formula as implemented in 2010 pays districts that exceed their goal up to 10% additional funding.

This additional funding for districts is an investment that encourages districts to use fewer buses with more students on board. The districts save costs by using fewer buses, and cost per student is reduced because there are more students in each bus. This reduction in cost then translates to the state budget in subsequent years to help reduce the base funding cost. In essence, it is an investment to reduce future costs.

We appreciate the challenges in a state budget with decreasing revenues available for funding. Many of the changes proposed here can be implemented to more accurately promote efficient and effective transportation, and still remain within a budgetary appropriation. For many years the formula in Ohio was calculated and then scaled back to remain within the adopted budget appropriation. Other changes are based upon interaction with Ohio's school administrators, and would result in a more accurate funding flow for districts, matching the service they are actually providing.

Transportation Supplementary Funding

Several budget cycles ago we started the practice of including a supplement in transportation funding. This supplement is intended to assist districts with the most challenges in providing transportation. From a logistics standpoint, the highest cost of transportation occurs when ridership density is very low. In these districts, the school bus has to travel more distance and time to pick up students. Typically, it is not possible to fill up a bus to capacity, resulting in a higher cost per student.

The supplement as currently calculated is based upon solely upon student density. The current budget defines density as ADM per square mile rather than riders per square mile. The true measure of transportation work is not based upon ADM, but rather the actual number of riders served. We recommend that the definition of density be changed back to riders per square mile, as it was originally introduced in 2010. This will focus the supplement for transportation services in districts that need it.

We recommend using the supplement quotient as it is proposed in the budget, but adding a wealth measure to the final calculation. For districts that are eligible as defined in the bill, they should receive the greater of 55% or their SSI of the funding as proposed in the bill. This will increase the supplemental transportation funding provided to districts with low wealth and the most need.

The final recommendation for the supplement is that language be added to the bill to identify this funding as restricted solely for pupil transportation. Current guidance to districts is that this funding is unrestricted and can be spent for any purpose. There are districts where the funding has not been used for the purpose intended by the legislature.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony and comments for your consideration. I am happy to address your questions, and would be pleased to provide supporting data and follow up as you request.

State school transportation data for 2015-2016 school year

		tate solitor transpo					
					Communi	ty school	
	Publi	c students	Nonpublic students		students		District Costs
	Greater than		Greater	Less than 1	Greater	Less than 1	
Regular education	1 mile	Less than 1 mile	than 1 mile	mile	than 1 mile	mile	
Bus riders	696,163	28,839	34,409	508	17,853	144	\$ 707,380,937.00
Payment in lieu	762	-	13,333	-	2,747	_	\$ 4,285,773.00
Other service types	26,476	603	7,624	-	4,734	-	\$ 18,416,952.00
Total	723,401	29,442	55,366	508	25,334	144	\$ 730,083,662.00

Special Education	Riders	District Costs
Bus riders	32,031	\$ 189,775,757.00
Other service types	5,424	\$ 37,364,137.00
Total	37 <i>,</i> 455	\$ 227,139,894.00

Pupil Transportation Cost Analysis Regular Education Services

District: State IRN: 999999

Fiscal Year: 2016 T1 and T2 data reported by ODE

		Public Riders		Nonpub Riders		Comm. Riders		Daily Miles			
, т	1 data1	Greater	Less	Greater	Less than 1	Greater	Less	Public	Nonpub	Comm	
		than 1	than 1	than 1	mile	than 1	than 1	Public	Nonpub	Sch	
Type 1	District Bus	644,422	27,427	29,671	433	13,347	129	704,773	64,834	23,926	
Type 1a	Other pub bus	109	0	74	0	0	0	0	. 0	0	
Type 2	Private Bus	51,632	1,412	4,664	75	4,506	15	57,608	13,370	7,891	
Type 3	Transit	26,252	601	7,548	. 0	4,591	0	1		a and and	
Type 4	Pymt in lieu	762		13,333		2,747			4415		
Type 5	District Van	92	2	23	0	6	0	1,871	686	359	
Type 6	Private Bus	132	0	53	0	137	0	2,560	267	326	
	Subtotals	723,401	29,442	55,366	508	25,334	144	766,812	79,157	32,502	
Totals by type		752,8	343	5	55,874		25,478		878,471		

ADM 1,566,987 % Of Adm Tsported 51%

(T1 and T2 data1)		Costs	Costs Riders \$/rider		Annual Miles \$/mile		ile	\$/vehicle	
Type 1	District Bus	622,613,103	715,429	870.27	142,835,940	\$	4.36	\$	48,354.54
Type 1a	Other pub bus	197,755	183	1,080.63					
Type 2	Private Bus	84,570,079	62,304	1,357.38	14,196,420	\$	5.96	\$	63,874.68
Type 3	Transit	16,517,850	38,992	423.62					
Type 4	Pymt in lieu	4,285,773	16,842	254.47					
Type 5	District Van	409,878	123	3,332.34	524,880	\$	0.78	\$	691.19
Type 6	Private Van	1,489,224	322	4,624.92	567,540	\$	2.62	\$	822.78
Total		730,083,662	834,195						

Type 1 Itemized Cost -Regular Education (from T2)							
	Count	Reported Cost	Cost/mile	Cost / bus			
Supervisor	840.2	25,758,824	0.1803	2,001			
Secretary Clerk	605.6	11,410,893	0.0799	886			
Reg Drivers	11949	224,495,663		17,435			
Sub Drivers	3556.5	17,611,536		1,368			
Bus Attendant	no data						
Mechanic	919.2	32,254,660	0.2258	2,505			
Mechanic Helper	263	2,457,371	0.0172	191			
Retirement	11,15	56,407,235		4,381			
Worker's Comp		2,230,734		173			
Employee Insurance	19	104,029,011		8,079			
Physical / Drug & Alcohol		1,559,075		121			
Cert & License		599,495		47			
Training		1,761,503		137			
				0			
Maint & Repair		39,510,587	0.2766	3,069			
Tires		5,898,920	0.0413	458			
Fuel		49,292,826	0.3451	3,828			
Bus Insure	8	8,512,480	0.0596	661			
Maint Supply		12,878,739	0.0902	1,000			
Facility Rent		602,106	0.0042	47			
Utilities		5,246,982	0.0367	408			
Bus Lease		9,218,695	0.0645	716			
Other	45	8,187,442	0.0573	636			
Operational subtotal			1.4788				
Total		619,924,777		48,146			
Vehicle amortization		0	0.0000	0			
Fully allocated cost		619,924,777	1.4788	48,146			

Vehicles (from T1 data1)				
Regular Spare				
Type 1	12876	4191		
Type 2	1324	270		
Type 5	593	0		
Type 6	1810	0		

Nonroutine Miles	18,163,590
Nonroutine: Routine	1/10
Square Miles	#N/A
Rider Density	#N/A
Spare : Route buses	11/35
Mech : Vehicles	2/29
Reg Ed Riders / bus	55.6
Miles / bus / year	12,281

Efficiency Values (all riders,Reg + Spec)
Target #N/A

Actual #N/A Ratio #N/A

Request #	Line #	Code #	Proposed change	Rationale
	28535	3317.0212 (A)(1)	Delete "resident"	This was added in last budget. It prevents districts who transport open
1				enrollment students from being able to file for transportation cost when
				they provide service.
2	28537	3317.0212 (A)(1)	Delete "and who live more than one	This provides funding for all students transported. Districts transport nearly
2			mile from the school they attend"	30,000 less than one mile for safety reasons.
	28543	3317.0212 (A)(2)	add "counted in the morning or	Some districts report higher ridership in the afternoon. ODE does not allow
3			afternoon"	for this higher number to be reported. This language will allow district to
				report their maximum ridership, which is what they have to provide.
	28546	3317.0212 (A)(3)	change "ADM" to "qualifying riders"	This corrects the definition of rider density to just the students who are
4				actually riding. This is the density measure which impacts transportation,
				much more than ADM.
	28556	3317.0212 (B)	change due date from fifteenth of	Clean up existing language. The practice in place now by ODE is to require
5			October to November 1.	reports by November 1. This timing is appropriate to allow time to process
				data collected in the first week of October.
	28600	3317.0212 (E)(3)(a)	restore funding percentage to 50%	This level of funding is critical for districts to continue to provide
			٦	transportation service for all students entitled to transportation. The
6				proposed reduction in this rate does not help poorer districts, but just takes
				money away from over 300 districts, including service for nonpublic,
				community school, STEM school and special education students.
	28603	3317.0212 (E)(3)(b)	restore funding percentage to 50%	This level of funding is critical for districts to continue to provide
				transportation service for all students entitled to transportation. The
7				proposed reduction in this rate does not help poorer districts, but reduces
			•	funding for over 300 districts, also impacting service for nonpublic,
				community school, STEM school and special education students.
	28616	3317.0212 (G)(1)	provide supplemental transportation	In the FY 14 budget there was a formula for supplemental transportation
			funding	funding that considered each district's wealth and their ridership density.
				Districts below the median on both of these measures qualified for
8				supplemental transportation funding. The current measure only considers
٥				population density, and does not take wealth into consideration. We
				recommend using the formula as proposed, but adjusting the final
	:			calculation to paying the greater of 55% or State share index to eligible
			-	districts. This will provide more funding for districts with lower wealth.
			designate supplemental	We recommend that the transportation supplemental funding calculated
8a			transportation funding as restricted	above be restricted to use for transportation purposes. Currently guidance
			funds	to districts indicates this funding is unrestricted.

Pupil transportation budget requests

Request #	Line #	Code #	Proposed change	Rationale
	new language -		New language proposed to promote	This language is based upon the efficiency measure that was used in a
9	proposal	·	efficient use of school buses	previous transportation budget bill, and which was based upon stakeholder
9	attached			input. It rewards districts for efficient use of their school buses, which
				ultimately results in lower transportation cost statewide.
	new language -	3317.07	Add bus purchase subsidy. Language	Assisting districts to replace older buses with new buses will reduce
	proposal		includes priority replacement for the	operating cost and increase passenger safety. The reduction of operating
	attached		oldest and highest mileage buses used	cost will reduce the demand on the state budget for operational funding as
			on daily routes, and prevents districts	costs are reduced.
	Ì		from assigning newer buses to	
			substitute status to increase their	
10		:	potential for bus purchase funding.	
			Funding is allocated at 45,000	
			(representing approximately 50% of	
			the current cost of a new bus). This	
			helps the funding to go further to help	
			more districts purchase new vehicles.	
	support House	3327.08	We support the House change to	Bid bonds add to the cost of new buses, and do not protect the buyers.
11	proposal		except school bus purchases from bid	There is no record of a bid bond ever being cashed in.
			bonds	
	new language	3327.10 (A) and (B)	change minimum age of a school bus	This is a safety measure to eliminate the use of high risk young age drivers
12			driver from at least eighteen to "at	on school buses.
			least twenty-one" years of age	

	. B. No. LSC 132 0001-2	Page 920
	had not been levied and had not been used in the computation	28524
	required by division (B) of section 3317.021 of the Revised Code.	28525
	The department shall pay the district that amount in the ensuing	28526
	fiscal year in lieu of the amounts computed under this chapter.	28527
	If a school district received a grant from the catastrophic	28528
	expenditures account pursuant to division (C) of section 3316.20	28529
	of the Revised Code on the basis of the same circumstances for	28530
	which a recomputation is made under this section, the amount of	28531
	the recomputation shall be reduced and transferred in accordance	28532
	with division (C) of section 3316.20 of the Revised Code.	28533
$\overline{}$	Sec. 3317.0212. (A) As used in this section:	28534
(1)	(1) "Qualifying riders" means resident students enrolled in	28535
	regular education in grades kindergarten to twelve who are	28536
	provided school bus service by a school district and who live more	28537
(3)	than one mile from the school they attend, including students with	28538
	dual enrollment in a joint vocational school district or a	28539
	cooperative education school district, and students enrolled in a	28540
	community school, STEM school, or nonpublic school.	28541
	(2) "Qualifying ridership" means the average number of	28542
<u> 3</u>)	qualifying riders who are provided school bus service by a school	28543
_	district during the first full week of October.	28544
4)	(3) "Rider density" means the total ADM per square mile of a	28545
٠	school district.	28546
	(4) "School bus service" means a school district's	28547
	transportation of qualifying riders in any of the following types	28548
	of vehicles:	28549
	(a) School buses owned or leased by the district;	28550
	(b) School buses operated by a private contractor hired by	28551
	the district;	28552
	(c) School buses operated by another school district or	28553

. B. No. LSC 132 0001-2 entity with which the district has contracted, either as part of a 28554 28555 consortium for the provision of transportation or otherwise. 28556 (B) Not later than the fifteenth day of October each year, each city, local, and exempted village school district shall 28557 report to the department of education its qualifying ridership and 28558 28559 any other information requested by the department. Subsequent adjustments to the reported numbers shall be made only in 28560 28561 accordance with rules adopted by the department. (C) The department shall calculate the statewide 28562 28563 transportation cost per student as follows: (1) Determine each city, local, and exempted village school 28564 28565 district's transportation cost per student by dividing the district's total costs for school bus service in the previous 28566 fiscal year by its qualifying ridership in the previous fiscal 28567 28568 28569 (2) After excluding districts that do not provide school bus 28570 service and the ten districts with the highest transportation costs per student and the ten districts with the lowest 28571 transportation costs per student, divide the aggregate cost for 28572 school bus service for the remaining districts in the previous 28573 28574 fiscal year by the aggregate qualifying ridership of those districts in the previous fiscal year. 28575 (D) The department shall calculate the statewide 28576 28577 transportation cost per mile as follows: (1) Determine each city, local, and exempted village school 28578 district's transportation cost per mile by dividing the district's 28579 28580 total costs for school bus service in the previous fiscal year by its total number of miles driven for school bus service in the 28581 28582 previous fiscal year.

(2) After excluding districts that do not provide school bus

service and the ten districts with the highest transportation

Page 921

28583

28584

	. B. No. LSC 132 0001-2	Page 922	. B. No. LSC 132 0001-2	Page 923
	costs per mile and the ten districts with the lowest	28585	following quotient:	28615
	transportation costs per mile, divide the aggregate cost for	28586	f(35, in fiscal year 2016, or 50, in fiscal year 2017) - the	28616
	school bus service for the remaining districts in the previous	28587	district's rider density+) / 100	28617
	fiscal year by the aggregate miles driven for school bus service	28588	If the result of the calculation for a district under	28618
	in those districts in the previous fiscal year.	28589	division (G)(1) of this section is less than zero, the district's	28619
	(E) The department shall calculate each city, local, and	28590	transportation supplement percentage shall be zero.	28620
	exempted village school district's transportation payment as	28591	(2) The department shall pay each district a transportation	28621
	follows:	28592	supplement calculated according to the following formula:	28622
	(1) Multiply the statewide transportation cost per student by	r 28593	The district's transportation supplement percentage X the amount	28623
	the district's qualifying ridership for the current fiscal year.	28594	calculated for the district under division (E)(2) of this section	n 28624
		28595	x 0.55	28625
	(2) Multiply the statewide transportation cost per mile by the district's total number of miles driven for school bus service			
	in the current fiscal year.	28597	Sec. 3317.0218. The department of education shall annually	28626
	•		compute capacity aid funds to school districts, as follows:	28627
	(3) Multiply the greater of the amounts calculated under	28598	(A) For each school district, multiply the district's	28628
	divisions (E)(1) and (2) of this section by the following:	28599	three-year average valuation by 0.001;	28629
	(a) For fiscal year 2018, the greater of fifty thirty-seven	28600	(B) Determine the median amount of all of the amounts	28630
	and one-half per cent or the district's state share index, as	28601	calculated under division (A) of this section;	28631
	defined in section 3317.02 of the Revised Code:	28602		28632
	(b) For fiscal year 2019, the greater of twenty-five per cent	28603	(C) Calculate each school district's capacity ratio, which equals the greater of zero or the amount calculated as follows:	28633
	or the district's state share index.	28604	(The amount determined under division (B) of this section / the	28634
	(F) In addition to funds paid under division (E) of this	28605	amount calculated for the district under division (A) of this	28635
	section, each city, local, and exempted village district shall	28606	section) - 1	28636
	receive in accordance with rules adopted by the state board of	28607	, and the second se	28637
	education a payment for students transported by means other than	28608	If the result of a calculation for a school district under	28637
	school bus service and whose transportation is not funded under	28609	division (C) of this section is greater than 2.5, the district's	28639
	division (C) of section 3317.024 of the Revised Code. The rules	28610	capacity ratio shall be 2.5.	
	shall include provisions for school district reporting of such	28611	(D) Calculate the capacity aid per pupil amount, which equals	
	students.	28612	the following quotient:	28641
	(G)(1) For purposes of division (G) of this section, a school	1 28613	(The amount determined under division (B) of this section) / (the	
1	district's "transportation supplement percentage" means the	28614	average of the formula ADMs of all of the districts for which the	
	• • • •		amount calculated under division (A) of this section is less than	n 28644

Q

(7)



Transportation Efficiency adjustment

- (1) The department annually shall establish a target number of riders per assigned bus for each city, local, and exempted village school district. The department shall use the most recently available data in establishing the target number. The target number shall be based on the statewide median number of riders per assigned bus as adjusted to reflect the district's rider density in comparison to the rider density of all other districts. The department shall post on the department's web site each district's target number of riders per assigned bus and a description of how the target number was determined.
- (2) The department shall determine each school district's efficiency index by dividing the district's median number of riders per assigned bus by its target number of riders per assigned bus.
- (3) The department shall determine each city, local, and exempted village school district's efficiency adjustment as follows:
- (a) If the district's efficiency index is equal to or greater than 1.5, the efficiency adjustment shall be calculated according to the following formula:

0.10 X transportation base payment

(b) If the district's efficiency index is less than 1.5 but equal to or greater than 1.0, the efficiency adjustment shall be calculated according to the following formula:

[(efficiency index – 1) / 0.5] X transportation base payment

(c) If the district's efficiency index is less than 1.0, the efficiency adjustment shall be zero.

3317.07 Bus Purchase Subsidy

Traditional public school districts that provide school bus transportation may apply for bus purchase subsidy for the purposes of replacing buses that are: 1) used for daily route service, 2) over 8 model years old, and 3) have over 96,000 miles on their odometers. To qualify for the subsidy, the districts may not have any unassigned buses in their fleets that are less than 8 years old or 96,000 miles on the odometer. The amount of the subsidy shall be set at 45,000 per approved bus, and shall be considered as restricted funds which may only be used for bus purchase.

The department of education shall formulate rules to prioritize the award of purchase subsidy to districts that apply under this section, except that no district shall be awarded more than one bus subsidy until all districts that have applied have received at least one bus subsidy.



3327.08 Purchase of school buses and other transportation equipment.

Boards of education of city school districts, local school districts, exempted village school districts, cooperative education school districts, and joint vocational school districts and governing boards of educational service centers may purchase on individual contract school buses and other equipment used in transporting children to and from school and to other functions as authorized by the boards, or the boards, at their discretion, may purchase the buses and equipment through any system of centralized purchasing established by the state department of education for that purpose, provided that state subsidy payments shall be based on the amount of the lowest price available to the boards by either method of purchase. No board shall be deprived of any form of state assistance in the purchase of buses and equipment by reason of purchases of buses and equipment on an individual contract. The purchase of school buses shall be made only after competitive bidding in accordance with section 3313.46 of the Revised Code, except that bid bonds are not required unless requested by the purchasing agency. All bids shall state that the buses, prior to delivery, will comply with the safety rules of the department of public safety adopted pursuant to section 4511.76 of the Revised Code and all other pertinent provisions of law.

Effective Date: 10-21-1997.

3327.10 Qualifications of drivers.

- (A) No person shall be employed as driver of a school bus or motor van, owned and operated by any school district or educational service center or privately owned and operated under contract with any school district or service center in this state, who has not received a certificate from either the educational service center governing board that has entered into an agreement with the school district under section 3313.843 or 3313.845 of the Revised Code or the superintendent of the school district, certifying that such person is at least eighteen years of age and is of good moral character and is qualified physically and otherwise for such position. The service center governing board or the superintendent, as the case may be, shall provide for an annual physical examination that conforms with rules adopted by the state board of education of each driver to ascertain the driver's physical fitness for such employment. Any certificate may be revoked by the authority granting the same on proof that the holder has been guilty of failing to comply with division (D)(1) of this section, or upon a conviction or a guilty plea for a violation, or any other action, that results in a loss or suspension of driving rights. Failure to comply with such division may be cause for disciplinary action or termination of employment under division (C) of section 3319.081, or section 124.34 of the Revised Code.
- (B) No person shall be employed as driver of a school bus or motor van not subject to the rules of the department of education pursuant to division (A) of this section who has not received a certificate from the school administrator or contractor certifying that such person is at least eighteen years of age, is of good moral character, and is qualified physically and otherwise for such position. Each driver shall have an annual physical examination which conforms to the state highway patrol rules, ascertaining the driver's physical fitness for such employment. The examination shall be performed by one of the following:
- (1) A person licensed under Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code or by another state to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery;
- (2) A physician assistant;
- (3) A certified nurse practitioner;
- (4) A clinical nurse specialist;
- (5) A certified nurse-midwife.

Any written documentation of the physical examination shall be completed by the individual who performed the examination.

Any certificate may be revoked by the authority granting the same on proof that the holder has been guilty of failing to comply with division (D)(2) of this section.

