

North Carolina School Bus Inspector Certification Program

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Introduction

The NC Department of Public Instruction Transportation Services Section has established a certification program for school bus personnel performing 30 day vehicle inspections. All inspections are completed in accordance with specifications set forth in the latest version of the NC BUS FLEET manual and NC State Board of Education policy # TCS-H-011.

The objective of this program is to;

- Support of the educational process of School Bus Inspectors
- Strive for the maximum operational efficiencies
- Provide for maintenance integrity and consistency
- Provide safe & reliable transportation services for students
- Create an environment in which our employees can reach their fullest potential
- Inspire the confidence, trust, and respect of the general public.

The NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) recognizes in order to realize the Transportation Services mission as a public service agency and meet the aforementioned goals, quality training must be provided for school bus personnel. NCDPI Transportation Services is committed to ensuring school bus personnel be trained and certified to provide quality inspections for all state maintained equipment.

(Activity buses are included each time "School Bus" is mentioned.)

This program shall meet the requirements of NC State Board of Education policy # TCS-H-011 stating "*LEAs shall require each 30-day inspection mandated under G.S. 115C-248 to be conducted by an individual who has completed the training and certification requirements administered by the Department of Public Instruction. Effective August 1, 2011.*"

Inspector certification shall be in effect until June 30th of the fifth calendar year from the certification date stated on the inspector certificate. A school bus inspector can not perform 30 day inspections until inspector certificate is received by Transportation Director and properly displayed.

The school bus inspector must renew every five (5) years thereafter to maintain certification (see Renewal section for details). The qualifications, training, and testing requirements for certification are as follows.

A. Requirements for School Bus Inspector Certification

- 1) Inspector applicant must first be thoroughly familiar with the NC FLEET MANUAL- 30 DAY INSPECTION SECTION.
- 2) Upon completion of the four hour class the inspector applicant may attempt the 50 question NC school bus inspector test. If passing score of 80 is achieved an inspector certificate will be issued from NCDPI.
- 3) **If failure to pass on 1st try**, Inspector applicant must complete a training regimen as directed by LEA Transportation Director (process must be documented and recorded in employee's personnel file). Inspector applicant will take the 50 question NC school bus inspector test. If passing score of 80 is achieved an inspector certificate will be issued from NCDPI.
- 4) **If failure to pass on 2nd try**, Inspector applicant must re-attend a four hour NC school bus inspector training session within 90 days before attempting the 50 question NC school bus inspector test. If passing score of 80 is achieved an inspector certificate will be issued from NCDPI.
- 5) **If failure to pass on 3rd try**, the Inspector applicant may repeat step 4 after a 3 month waiting period.

B. Renewal of Inspection Certification

- 1) Bus Inspector must renew inspection certification before June 30th of the 5th calendar year from original certification date.
- 2) For eligibility to take renewal test, Bus Inspector must attend a minimum of 20 hours of in-service training every 5 years and provide documentation of in-service training that shall be kept in employee's personnel file. (see below list for qualifying training sessions).
- 3) The Bus inspector must pass 50 question NC school bus inspector test. If passing score of 80 is achieved the bus inspector will be issued an inspection certificate from NCDPI. The recertification test is open-book.
- 4) If failure occurs, retake 4 hour class & test.

NOTE: An inspector is considered to be in "recertification mode" unless certification has been expired for one year or more. While certification is expired, he/she may not perform 30-day inspections. In order to become recertified, the candidate must fulfill the 20-hour training requirement and pass the open-book recertification test.

C. Hands-on Spot Testing

- 1) Bus inspector is subject to random unannounced hands-on testing by NCDPI personnel. Spot testing will consist of performing a correct 30 day inspection and brake stroke measurement demonstration.
- 2) If bus inspector unsatisfactorily completes 30 day inspection and brake stroke measurement demonstration, the bus inspector will be required to attend the next available four hour NC Bus Inspector training session. The Transportation Director will be responsible to keep track of any additional training as required by NCDPI.
- 3) If bus inspector fails to comply with #D1 and/or #D2, NCDPI will revoke bus inspector certification until requirement # A3 is satisfied.

D. Four Hour Bus Inspector Training & Testing Session

- 1) The Bus Inspector Trainer shall be responsible for hosting a four hour training session as needed or requested.
- 2) Training shall consist of:
 - a) Power Points developed by the NC School Bus Inspector Certification Committee.
 - b) 30 minute training video developed by the NC School Bus Inspector Certification Committee
 - c) Review of the NC Fleet Manual bus inspection section
 - d) Review of proper method to fill out 30 day form
 - e) Hands-on demonstration of proper brake stroke measurement
 - f) Hands-on demonstration of proper 30 day inspection.
- 3) Training sessions will be scheduled regionally. The Bus inspector trainer shall notify NCDPI of any scheduled classes. NCDPI will post dates and locations on the ncbussafety.org webpage. Bus Inspectors can attend sessions anywhere in the state.
- 4) The Bus inspector Trainer shall be responsible for securing a roster at each four hour session. The Bus Inspector Trainer shall maintain a file of class rosters. After each training session, a copy of the roster must be forwarded to NCDPI.

E. Transfer of NC Bus Inspector Certification

- 1) A school bus inspector may transfer the Inspector Certification to any LEA in North Carolina if employment is secured at the new LEA location.
- 2) The Transportation Director who gains the transferred employee will be responsible to see that NCDPI is notified of the location change.
- 3) The Transportation Director who gains the transferred employee will be responsible to see that an inspector certificate is displayed at the LEA bus garage location before the employee begins performing 30 day inspections.

F. Administration of the NC bus inspector certification program

- 1) NCDPI will be the managing authority of the Bus Inspector Certification program.
- 2) NCDPI will administer the 50 question test per request.
- 3) NCDPI will issue Inspection Certificates.
- 4) NCDPI will maintain a database of all bus inspectors. NCDPI will release a certification expiration list before March 31st of each year. It will be the responsibility of LEA Transportation Director to review the list and inform employees of forthcoming certification expirations.
- 5) NCDPI will maintain a website with complete list of Bus Inspector Trainers and schedule of four hour classes.
- 6) BUS INSPECTOR TRAINER- Shall be appointed by the LEA transportation director.
The Bus Inspector Trainer;
 - a. responsible for scheduling and teaching the four hour class as requested and allow inspectors from other LEA's to attend as seating allows.
 - b. shall have a minimum of five years experience inspecting N.C. school buses and be thoroughly knowledgeable of the 30 day inspection process.
 - c. attend a train-the trainer session hosted by NCDPI and pass 50 question test before performing training duties.
 - d. responsible for contacting NCDPI to post class schedule on ncbussafety.org website.
 - e. responsible for contacting NCDPI to schedule 50 question test at conclusion of 4 hour class session.
 - f. responsible for maintaining a file containing all class rosters.
 - g. responsible for notifying Transportation Director at any time training duties can no longer be performed.
- 7) LEA Transportation Director (or equivalent) is ultimately responsible for requiring employees performing 30 day inspections to adhere to NC State Board of Education policy # TCS-H-011.
- 8) The bus inspector certificate will be issued by NCDPI to the LEA transportation director (or equivalent) and shall be prominently displayed in the garage or office area of the LEA transportation department. The bus inspector certificate shall be individually framed behind a rigid transparent protective covering or displayed with other certificates as a group behind a rigid transparent protective covering.

G. Qualifying In-Service Training Sessions for North Carolina Bus Inspection Program (satisfies 20 hour requirement)

- 1) Any appropriate training course sponsored by NCPTA.
- 2) Any appropriate training course sponsored by NCDPI
- 3) Any appropriate training course sponsored by LEA testing manager
- 4) Other training courses may qualify with prior approval from NCDPI