



Public Schools of North Carolina

State Board of Education
Phillip J. Kirk, Jr., Chairman

Department of Public Instruction
Michael E. Ward, State Superintendent

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us>

November 19, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Directors

FROM: Derek Graham, Section Chief
Transportation Services

RE: Bus Routing Across Bridges – School Bus Weights and Route Hazard Warnings

Previously, North Carolina Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have received information regarding school bus routes involving bridges. The purpose of this memo is to update relevant information and to remind you of appropriate resources to use in establishing such routes, to make sure that buses are not routed across bridges that are rated below the loaded weight of the bus.

School Bus Weights

Accompanying this memo is a spreadsheet of current school bus weights. The Gross Vehicle Weight Rating of each school bus considers 150 lb. passengers sitting three per seat on the bus. Clearly, while this established the maximum weight of the loaded vehicle, it does not reflect the actual weight of actual school bus passengers. The spreadsheet reflects more realistic weights for North Carolina school buses.

New school buses now have the actual bus weight (full of fuel and fluids) posted on the data plate. Older buses do not. A 1997 memo from the NC Department of Transportation listed weights of several different sizes and makes of buses, but we do not have exact model years. This information is repeated in the attached weight chart, until more complete, actual weights are available. Also included in the chart are the weights of some actual buses weighed by Forsyth and Alamance counties.

Average weights of passengers in the draft chart are those of 50th percentile boys, increased by 5, 10 or 15 pounds to account for the weight of book bags.

Additional information is welcomed as the next version of this chart is prepared. Any buses that you weigh should be full of fuel at the time of weighing.

School Bus Route Hazards

The route hazard capability in TIMS allows you to designate warning messages for any road segment in the geocode. Bridges are one kind of road segment that may need a hazard warning – especially a bridge that is rated such that only small buses may traverse it. For information on how to code segments so that bus driver run directions can be displayed, contact the TIMS project office.

c: C.O. Wiggins, NCDOT

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