



Department
of Education

Ted Strickland, Governor
Deborah S. Delisle, Superintendent of Public Instruction

TO: Ohio Preservice Instructors
Ohio Pupil Transportation Administrators
On-Board-instructors

FR: Pete Japikse, Pupil Transportation Director

RE: Preservice School Bus Driving Evaluation for On-Board-Instructors

Date: December 6, 2010

Our primary goal in providing pupil transportation services for Ohio's school students is to provide safe and effective transportation. In order to maintain this goal, constant review of current procedures and driver preparation programs is essential, and forms the backbone of our very successful Preservice Driver Training Program.

This school year Ohio has experienced some of the same challenges as other states in our country with regard to student safety at the bus stop. The risk to our students outside the bus, at their bus stops, and loading and unloading from the bus continues to be an issue. Not only are our students more distracted than ever before, but so are the motorists traveling around our school buses.

To maximize our influence on students while unloading and loading from their school buses, it is imperative for us to increase emphasis on our school bus driver training and skills assessment in this part of their responsibility. The key to doing so is to enlist the support and assistance of our On-Board-Instructors.

In Ohio, we place great importance on the work of our On-Board-Instructors. These dedicated professionals are the key to our success in implementing the best practices and techniques that are part of our preservice program. Last year we implemented a new program wherein each OBI must ride with their preservice instructor to demonstrate their driving and pretrip skills. Our goal was to clearly establish that our OBI's are indeed the 'best of the best', and had a solid grasp on the skills that they are teaching our bus drivers. In January of 2011 we will make another adjustment to this process. Effective January 1, 2011, the scoring standard on driving evaluations for on-board-instructors will be changed to 3 points for each error on the loading and unloading sections of the driving evaluation. A new scoring form has been published to reflect this change. The passing standard on the driving evaluation will remain at 80 points. The scoring standard for all other school bus drivers will continue unchanged.

In addition to this skill assessment change, we ask that supervisors and On-Board-Instructors increase their training focus with Ohio's school bus drivers on loading and unloading. Only with all of us working together can we influence the future safety of our students.