

Sec. 547.701. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUSES AND OTHER BUSES USED TO TRANSPORT SCHOOLCHILDREN.

(a) A school bus shall be equipped with:

(1) a convex mirror or other device that reflects to the school bus operator a clear view of the area immediately in front of the vehicle that would otherwise be hidden from view; and

(2) signal lamps that:

(A) are mounted as high and as widely spaced laterally as practicable;

(B) display four alternately flashing red lights, two located on the front at the same level and two located on the rear at the same level; and

(C) emit a light visible at a distance of 500 feet in normal sunlight.

(b) A school bus may be equipped with:

(1) rooftop warning lamps:

(A) that conform to and are placed on the bus in accordance with specifications adopted under Section 34.002, Education Code; and

(B) that are operated under rules adopted by the school district; and

(2) movable stop arms:

(A) that conform to regulations adopted under Section 34.002, Education Code; and

(B) that may be operated only when the bus is stopped to load or unload students.

(c) When a school bus is being stopped or is stopped on a highway to permit students to board or exit the bus, the operator of the bus shall activate all flashing warning signal lights and other equipment on the bus designed to warn other drivers that the bus is stopping to load or unload children.

(c-1) A person may not operate a light or other equipment described by Subsection (c) except when a school bus is being stopped or is stopped on a highway to:

(1) permit a student to board or exit the bus; or

(2) distribute to a student or the parent or guardian of a student:

(A) food; or

(B) technological equipment for use by the student for educational purposes.

(d) The exterior of a school bus may not bear advertising or another paid announcement directed at the public if the advertising or announcement distracts from the effectiveness of required safety warning equipment. The department shall adopt rules to implement this subsection. A school bus that violates this section or rules adopted under this section shall be placed out of service until it complies.

(e) In this subsection, "bus" includes a school bus, school activity bus, multifunction school activity bus, or school-chartered bus. Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, a bus operated by or contracted for use by a school district for the transportation of schoolchildren shall be equipped with a three-point seat belt for each passenger, including the operator. This subsection does not apply to:

(1) a bus operated by or contracted for use by a school district if the board of trustees for the school district determines that the district's budget does not permit the district to purchase a bus that is equipped with the seat belts required by this subsection; or

(2) a bus for which the warranty would become void if the bus were equipped to comply with this subsection.

(f) Not later than the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the board of trustees of a school district that makes a determination under Subsection (e)(1) shall submit to the Texas Education Agency and present in a public meeting of the board a report that includes:

(1) the number of buses operated by or contracted for use by the district that:

(A) are not equipped with seat belts;

(B) are equipped with two-point seat belts;

and

(C) are equipped with three-point seat belts;
and

(2) the estimated cost to the district to equip with three-point seat belts each bus operated by or contracted for use by the district that is not equipped with three-point seat belts as required by Subsection (e).

(g) Not later than January 1, 2027, the Texas Education Agency shall:

(1) collect the information submitted under Subsection (f);

(2) calculate the total amount of financial assistance needed for all school districts to come into full compliance with Subsection (e); and

(3) summarize and make available to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each member of the legislature the information described by Subdivisions (1) and (2).

(g-1) This subsection and Subsections (f) and (g) expire January 1, 2028.

(h) A school district may accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source to implement the requirements of Subsection (e).

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.
Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1438, Sec. 12, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 183, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 259 (H.B. [323](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 259 (H.B. [323](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1328 (H.B. [3646](#)), Sec. 90(c), eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 451 (S.B. [1610](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 908 (S.B. [693](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 908 (S.B. [693](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 564 (S.B. [445](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 772 (S.B. [546](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.