



**NEW YORK ASSOCIATION  
FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION**

**NYAPT**

Today, FMCSA and the Department of Education released this joint announcement to address the school bus driver shortage. Read the press release below. FMCSA is granting a temporary waiver through March 31, 2022 allowing states to waive the engine compartment component of the pre-trip inspection skills testing requirement for school bus drivers. We are waiting to hear if New York Department of Motor Vehicles will honor this federal waiver. More to come....

## **DOT, Dept. Of Education Announce Temporary Waiver to Help Increase the Number of School Bus Drivers Nationwide**

Tuesday, January 4, 2022

WASHINGTON – To help states and municipalities that are experiencing a shortage of school bus drivers recruit new hires, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), in coordination with the Department of Education, today announced it would give states the option of waiving the portion of the commercial driver’s license (CDL) skills test that requires school bus driver applicants to identify the “under the hood” engine components. All other components of the written and road test must be met.

“This federal waiver will help communities that are short on school bus drivers,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. “By allowing states to focus on the testing requirements that are critical to safety, we will get additional, qualified drivers behind the wheel to get kids to school safely.”

“This Administration is listening to the needs of school communities and remains committed to making sure schools are open safely for in-person learning full time,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “We’ve heard from educators and parents that labor shortages, particularly of bus drivers, are a roadblock to keeping kids in schools. Today’s announcement will give states the flexibility they need to help increase the pool of drivers, who are a key part of the school community, and get kids to school safely each day where students learn best. And American Rescue Plan funds can be used to hire these critical staff, including offering increased compensation or other incentives to recruit and retain staff.”

“Our nation depends on having enough qualified school bus drivers to support our children’s

education. Temporarily giving states the option to modify the school bus test, widens the pool of possible drivers to fill this critical role without compromising our vital safety standards,” said FMCSA Deputy Administrator Meera Joshi.

School transportation associations, states and elected officials have pointed to the need to identify “under the hood” components as an unnecessary hurdle for those interested in becoming a school bus driver.

Under the waiver announced today, states may, but are not required to, waive the requirement that school bus driver candidates identify the “under the hood” engine components. All other CDL skills testing requirements remain in place.

Drivers receiving a CDL under this temporary waiver are permitted to operate intrastate school buses only; they are not authorized to operate trucks, motorcoaches, or any other type of commercial motor vehicle requiring a CDL.

The FMCSA waiver, which became effective January 3, 2022, expires March 31, 2022.

A copy is available at: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency/waiver-certain-pre-trip-vehicle-inspection-skills-test-requirements-certain-school-bus>.

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