

Higher Standards

Be Confident with Who is Driving Your Child to School

Read about Arkansas' efforts to ensure all students are safe on the school bus.

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ADE Stories That Matter – August 3



Requirements for Arkansas' bus drivers:

- Arkansas State Police background check (initial requirement)
- DHS Child Maltreatment check
- CDL driving test/license
- Twenty four hours of training before getting behind the wheel
- Fees totaling around \$100 (Some districts pay these fees to recruit drivers.)
- Current physical (every 2 years)
- Driver's license check twice a year
- Three hours of annual district training
- Random drug tests

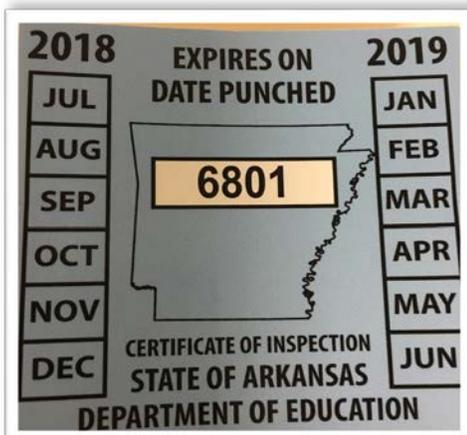
Parents around the state can rest easy knowing the Arkansas Department of Education is going above and beyond to make sure all students are safe on the school buses. Along with sending trainers and inspectors around the state, **ADE checks with driver control on a weekly basis** to see if any Arkansas bus drivers have been issued a DUI or DWI. According to Jerry Owens, senior transportation manager at ADE, the number of bus drivers who lose their license is minimal.

Each year ADE visits schools to carefully check each bus driver's record and conduct a thorough bus inspection. Schools will have the opportunity to immediately correct the problem or **the bus will be parked and unused until inspection is passed**. Once buses are cleared for use, the bus will get a sticker showing it is ready to transport students.

Before a bus can be used for any purpose, **the driver must perform a pre-trip inspection**. This inspection checks more than 20 points on the bus, even requiring the driver to check under the hood. Many buses are checked multiple times a day because of this requirement.

Numbers that Matter:

During the 2017-2018 school year there will be 350,000 students riding approximately 7,130 buses with 9,200 drivers estimated. In Arkansas, school buses are illegally passed around 706 times a day.



Look for this sticker on a school bus to know it has passed full inspection for the 2017-2018 school year.

“It is a very thorough process from the background checks to the training and inspections that take place. Putting students first is the core belief of everything we do here.”

Jerry Owens, Senior Transportation Manager