

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

In the matter of the amendment of) NOTICE OF AMENDMENT
ARM 10.64.301 pertaining to school)
bus requirements)

TO: All Concerned Persons

1. On April 14, 2017, the Board of Public Education published MAR Notice No. 10-64-279 pertaining to the public hearing on the proposed amendment of the above-stated rule at page 391 of the 2017 Montana Administrative Register, Issue Number 7.

2. The Board of Public Education has amended the above-stated rule as proposed.

3. The following comments were received:

COMMENT NO. 1: Greg D. Beach, Vice President of Beach Transportation, submitted a written comment stating that Beach Transportation agreed with the majority of the proposed new standards. However they were concerned about the increase from 10 to 15 hours for the annual training requirement. He requested the board postpone implementation of this requirement until the board had an opportunity to fully review the financial impacts and any evidence that the training requirement needed to be changed because of an increase in accidents.

RESPONSE: The Board of Public Education thanks Mr. Beach for his support of the standards and comment regarding training hours. The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) has training materials available upon request at no cost to assist schools and bus contractors in providing the additional training. The board adopts the training requirement as proposed.

COMMENT NO. 2: Denise Williams, Executive Director of the Montana Association of School Business Officials, submitted a written comment requesting that grammatical changes be made to the standards, including general evacuation procedures, and requesting that all students be required to participate in the evacuation drills.

RESPONSE: The Board of Public Education thanks Ms. Williams for her comments and states that the standards were thoroughly reviewed by OPI staff and board member, Ms. Tammy Lacey. Many grammatical changes were made. With regard to the bus evacuation procedures, the current standards do contain general evacuation procedures and all students are required to participate.

COMMENT NO. 3: Bob Vogel, Director of Government Relations for the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA), testified at the hearing, stating that

the MTSBA was a proponent of the rule change. He thanked the OPI and board for their work on the new standards and noted that both state and federal requirements were considered when crafting the standards. Mr. Vogel also commented that the passage of HB 355 by the 2017 Montana Legislature, creating a new category for buses, would require additional updates to the standards.

RESPONSE: The Board of Public Education thanks Mr. Vogel for his comment, appreciates MTSBA's support, and states that the OPI is working on revising the standards to address the changes made by HB 355.

/s/ Peter Donovan
Peter Donovan
Rule Reviewer

/s/ Sharon Carroll
Sharon Carroll, Chair
Board of Public Education

Certified to the Secretary of State October 2, 2017.