



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TESTING

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You asked several questions about testing of school bus drivers. We answer them individually below.

### ***How much does it cost to test school bus drivers? Does it cost more than \$400?***

According to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), which administers the test, the cost of testing school bus drivers depends on the hourly pay of the test administrator and the amount of time it takes to administer the test.

Connecticut requires school bus drivers, and other drivers who transport children, to have a commercial driver's license (CDL) with an "S" endorsement. It takes about one hour, on average, to test an applicant for a Class B CDL with an "S" endorsement. (Class B CDL licenses are for drivers of vehicles weighing at least 26,000 pounds.) The driving test includes pre-trip tasks, static course maneuvers, student pick-up procedures, railroad crossing procedures, an on-the-road skills test, and post-trip tasks. According to DMV, the average pay of the DMV employees administering the test is approximately \$26 an hour. Therefore, the direct cost is approximately \$26. This does not include an employee's fringe benefits and other costs such as scheduling and transportation.

***What is the failure rate of those being tested?***

The failure rate for road tests is different for new school bus drivers and those renewing their license. According to DMV, the failure rate for new school bus drivers in calendar year 2010 was approximately 46%, with 730 failures out of a total 1,585 tests given.

DMV also administers a driver proficiency test required by [CGS §14-276a \(b\)](#). School bus operators must pass this test before renewing their license with school bus endorsement. In calendar year 2010, there were 342 failures out of a total of 1,552 applicants' tests, a failure rate of approximately 22%.

***Are the tests conducted by independent contractors? If so, how are they selected? Do any of neighboring states do this type of testing?***

According to DMV, Connecticut has not engaged third-party contractors to conduct school bus skills testing. DMV says that some jurisdictions have third-party testing, but have found this practice to be of questionable reliability.

We also checked with the National Association of Pupil Transportation (NAPT). According to NAPT, there is no third-party school bus driver testing in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, or Vermont. In Vermont, anyone transporting school children must attend an eight-hour clinic, presented by individuals trained and certified by the Vermont DMV. But department examiners conduct all knowledge and skill tests.

***Do the independent contractors charge the same price?***

Not applicable (see above).

PF: ek