**Regulation and Procedure 6415: Classified Employees - Duty to Drive a School Bus**

**Current Employees**

If they have not already done so, all teacher assistants, custodians, and child nutrition assistants who are employed by the Edenton-Chowan Public Schools as of the adoption date of Policy 6415 must, within 30 days of the adoption date, sign a bus driving agreement. In addition, within 180 days of the adoption of this policy, all teacher assistants, custodian, and child nutrition assistants must:

* Obtain a DOT Medical Card or a DOT waiver allowing the employee to drive a school bus in NC; and
* Make a good faith effort to register for and attend the first available bus certification class offered after employment.

Continued employment is contingent upon the employee completing all requirements and obtaining the appropriate license and certification within 180 days of the adoption date.

**New Employees**

Effective as of the adoption date of Policy 6415, Duty to Drive a School Bus, all new teacher assistants, custodians, and child nutrition assistants, whether a new hire or a re-hire for annual position must be licensed and certified to drive a school bus. These employees must:

* Sign a bus driving agreement as a condition of their employment;
* Prior to starting work, obtain a DOT Medical Card or a DOT waiver allowing the employee to drive a school bus in NC; and
* Make a good faith effort to register for and attend the first available bus certification class offered after employment.

Employment is contingent upon the employee completing all requirements and obtaining the appropriate license and certification within 180 days of their start date. For annual positions, there is no right or entitlement of the employee to be re-hired for a subsequent annual position; however, if an employee who is hired within the last 60 days of the school year is re-hired, the employee must still complete the appropriate license and certification within 180 days of his or her original hire date.

**Maintaining License and Certification**

All employees who are required to drive a school bus as a condition of employment must maintain a valid license and all required endorsements and certifications to drive a school bus.

**Assignment as a School Bus Driver**

All classified employees who sign a bus driving agreement and/or have a current job responsibility to drive a school bus must be available to drive a regular bus route as needed. Employees who currently are not needed to drive a regular bus route must be available as substitute bus drivers.

School principals are expected to use their own staff members as substitute bus drivers before calling an employee from another school. An employee from another school may be called only if that school does not have an available staff member to substitute.

Nothing in this regulation is intended to limit the ability of the superintendent or his designee to assign a teacher assistant to drive a regular bus route. Employees will be assigned as regular or substitute bus drivers in the discretion of the superintendent or designee in the manner required to meet the needs of the school system.

**Exemptions**

1. This policy will not apply to employees hired before January 1, 2019, who do not qualify for a DOT Medical Card that would allow them to drive a school bus in North Carolina.
2. All classified employees who are otherwise subject to the duty to drive a bus may receive a temporary exemption if these employees develop a medical condition that may temporarily interfere with their ability to drive a bus after they are licensed and certified to drive a bus.
   1. These exemptions will be for short durations based on a doctor’s note for a specific amount of time. These exemptions are not permanent and should typically be granted for no more than twelve (12) weeks.
   2. Upon conclusion of the temporary exemption, the employee must submit a completed medical report to the DMV Driver License Section and be cleared to drive in order to remain employed.

**AGREEMENT TO DRIVE A SCHOOL BUS (Procedure)**

I,  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , understand that as a teacher assistant, custodian, or child nutrition assistant of the Edenton-Chowan Public Schools, I have an obligation and duty to drive a school bus on a regular and/or substitute basis. I understand that driving a school bus is an essential function of my job.

I acknowledge that:

1)        I am at least 21 years of age and have at least 6 months driving experience.

2)        I have a valid North Carolina operator’s license and a good driving record.

3)        I meet all physical, vision, and hearing requirements for school bus drivers under North Carolina law.

I agree that as a condition of my employment:

1) I will obtain and maintain a DOT Medical Card or a DOT waiver that allows me to drive a school bus in NC.

2) I will take the school bus driver training conducted by the DMV School Bus & Traffic Safety Section.

3)         I will pass such tests as may be required by law and prescribed by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles and the State Board of Education for licensing and certification to drive a school bus.

I agree that I will be available to drive a regular bus route and/or be available as a substitute bus driver as determined by the superintendent or his designee. I understand that if I am unable or unwilling to drive a school bus, I may be disqualified from employment with the Edenton-Chowan Public Schools.

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Employee’s Signature                                                 Date

LEGAL REF: G.S. 115C-47, -245, -276

ADOPTED: