§2304. School bus seating; doors; standing prohibited

1. Seating. A school bus must meet the following seating requirements.

A. The manufacturer's specified seating capacity is determined by dividing the linear width of each seat by 13 and then rounding the quotient down to the nearest whole number. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

B. The maximum seating capacity must be the following percentages of the manufacturer's specified seating capacity:

(1) Grades 9 to 12, 85%;

(2) Grades kindergarten to 12, 95%;

(3) Grades kindergarten to 8, 100%; or

(4) If at least 15 inches of seat width per student, 100%. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

C. There may not be auxiliary seating accommodations such as temporary or jump seats. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

D. Seats must face the front of the bus and be divided by a center aisle at least 12 inches wide. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

E. Seating capacity must be displayed in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]
[PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

2. Doors. A school bus must be equipped with at least 2 doors as follows:

A. One door on the right side near the front for ordinary exits and entrances, which must be equipped with technology to prevent the door from closing on a person's limb or other body part if the school bus was manufactured in 2025 or later; and [PL 2023, c. 423, §1 (AMD).]

B. A 2nd door located in the center of the rear or if the engine makes that impossible, on the left side in the center or to the rear of center. The 2nd door must be free of obstruction, clearly marked as an emergency exit, and constructed to open from inside and outside. [PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]
[PL 2023, c. 423, §1 (AMD).]

3. Standing passengers. The operator of a school bus may not permit any passengers to stand when the bus is in motion on a public way.
[PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

4. Safety seat belts. The operator and passengers in school buses equipped with safety seat belts shall wear those belts when the vehicle is in motion.
[PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. B, §5 (AFF).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1993, c. 683, §A2 (NEW). PL 1993, c. 683, §B5 (AFF). PL 2023, c. 423, §1 (AMD).

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