**05 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**071 COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**

**Chapter 83: SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PROGRAM**

**Summary**: These regulations establish criteria for determining eligibility for, and procedures for access to, the School Transportation Operations Program software subsidy.

**Section 1. Purpose**

1. The purpose of this rule is to determine who is eligible for access to the School Transportation Operations Program and provide a process for eligible schools to access the subsidy provided by the Department of Education.

**Section 2. Definitions**

1. School bus is defined by 29-A M.R.S. §2301(5).
2. School bus operator, also known as school bus driver, is defined by 29-A M.R.S. §2303.

**Section 3. eligibility for Use of the School Transportation Operations Program software**

1. The program is available to public schools, including public charter schools, and private schools approved for the receipt of public funds pursuant to 20-A M.R.S §2951 (“private schools”).

**Section 4. access to the school transportation operations program software**

1. **Approval**
2. Program initiation shall be the responsibility of the SAU. Each SAU shall notify the DOE when and if they would like to either begin a contract, alter a contract, or end a contract.
3. The DOE will establish a contract with the list of vendors approved for the program software.
4. Annual use shall be based on reports generated by the program system that confirm SAU or private school use. These reports are delivered to the DOE by the vendor and are included in the master agreement.
5. **Technical Start-up**
6. System technology start-up conducted at the district or private school level with guidance from the vendor representative must be completed before the program can be initiated. This process may be completed virtually.
7. Information technology staff at the public or private school shall work with the vendor representative to complete technical start-up of the operations software system.

**Section 5. State Payment for Approved Users**

1. The School Transportation Operations Program software is provided at a subsidized cost to public schools and private schools that meet the minimum qualifications and procedures. The subsidy will be provided based on the master agreement.
2. Schools that opt out of the master agreement vendor(s) will have the option to contract with a vendor of their choosing and will be responsible for paying entirety of the cost.

**Section 6. Records Retention**

1. SAUs and private schools who access the School Transportation Operations Program software shall retain fleet operations records and present these documents to the Department for review, upon request, along with a statement of compliance for annual use.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 29-A M.R.S. §2311 and 20-A M.R.S. §5401(17)

EFFECTIVE DATE:

September 16, 2017 – filing 2017-141

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