

Existing law (R.S. 17:491) defines "school bus operator" (for purposes of certain laws including those relative to probation and tenure of bus operators) to mean any employee of any city or parish school board whose duty it is to transport students in any city or parish school bus or activity bus to and from any school of suitable grade approved by the state Dept. of Education or to and from any school-related activity.

Requires that such employee shall be certified to have participated in any school bus drivers instructional program or in-service training provided by the state Dept. of Education as provided by law, shall be at least 21 years old, and shall be certified to have passed any physical examination required by the department. Specifies that it shall be unlawful for anyone not so certified to transport school students to and from any such school.

Provides that employees of parish and city school boards who drive buses to colleges or universities, at the discretion of the employing school board, may be exempted for the specified age requirement but shall not be under age 18 (R.S. 17:160).

New law makes technical corrections to existing law.

Relative to probation and tenure of bus operators:

Existing law (R.S. 17:492) provides that each school bus operator shall serve a probationary term of three years reckoned from the date of his first employment in the parish in which the operator is serving his probation. Provides that during the probationary term the parish school board may dismiss or discharge any operator upon the written recommendation of the parish superintendent of schools accompanied by valid reasons therefor.

Specifies that any school bus operator found unsatisfactory by the parish school board at the expiration of the probationary term shall be notified in writing by the board that he has been discharged or dismissed. Provides that in the absence of such notification the probationary school bus operator shall automatically become a regular and permanent operator in the employ of the school board of the parish in which he has successfully served his probationary term.

Requires that in order to acquire tenure under existing law, each school bus operator must personally operate and drive the school bus he is employed to operate and that no one shall acquire tenure in the operation of more than one school bus.

New law limits the applicability of existing law to persons hired prior to July 1, 2012.

New law additionally provides that existing law provisions relative to an operator becoming a regular and permanent operator are not applicable to any school bus operator whose date of first employment with the school system is July 1, 2012, or thereafter. Relative to such an operator, new law provides that after the expiration of the probationary term provided by existing law, the operator may be removed from his position as provided by the personnel policy of the employing school board.

Effective upon signature of governor (June 11, 2012).

(Amends R.S. 17:491 and 492)