

# House Research Act Summary

**CHAPTER:** 271

**SESSION:** 2008 Regular Session

**TOPIC:** School bus driver requirements

**Date:** May 19, 2008

**Analyst:** Matt Burress (296-5045)

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please call 651-296-6753 (voice); or the Minnesota State Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY) for assistance. Summaries are also available on our website at: [www.house.mn/hrd](http://www.house.mn/hrd).

---

## Overview

This legislation creates new regulations and requirements for type III school bus drivers.

- 1 **Personal cellular phone call prohibition.** Modifies a prohibition on making personal calls with a cell phone when operating a school bus, to include type III school buses.
- 2 **School bus.** Modifies the definition of “school bus” to include type III buses in the chapter on driving while impaired, which bans drug or alcohol use when operating a school bus.
- 3 **Exception for type III school bus drivers.** Establishes new requirements for operating a type III school bus without a school bus endorsement on the person’s license. Type III school buses are passenger cars, station wagons, vans, and certain lighter weight buses, and can be school district, busing company, or employee-owned. They cannot be identified as a school bus on the outside.

Requirements added in the bill include:

- the vehicle operator is an employee of the owner or lessor of the vehicle;
- annual training by the driver’s employer, which includes certain specified items;
- a background check;

- a physical examination;
- the employer has a mandatory drug testing program;
- annual verification of the driver's license (which is already required under current law if regularly transporting students);
- prohibition on operating a type III school bus for certain DWI related convictions, a felony offense, certain drug related violations (if it is not a petty misdemeanor), violation of certain prohibitions relating to minors, or a fourth moving violation;
- reporting to employers any conviction for the above offenses;
- training of the students on riding school buses;
- annual certification that the requirements are being met, to be maintained by the school or business; and
- annual vehicle inspection by the State Patrol.

An employee of a school or school district who does not operate a type III school bus as part of the person's normal duties is exempt from the requirements of a background check, physical exam, drug testing, annual license verification, and employer notification on certain convictions (although the employee still could not drive a type III school bus if convicted of any of the listed offenses).

This provision is effective September 1, 2008.