

SB 546: Required Bus Reporting

Frequently Asked Questions



SCHOOL SAFETY
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Office of School Safety and Security

Reporting Timeline & Requirements

Q: When will the reporting module open?

A: November 11, 2025.

Q: What is due by December 3rd?

A: Districts must acknowledge the reporting requirement in the bus reporting module by or before December 3, 2025. This confirms understanding of the legislative requirement.

Q: If our district already meets the 3-point seatbelt requirement, what do we need to do?

A: After reporting opens, acknowledge the requirement and report compliance. This will close the survey for your district.

Bus Seatbelt Legislation & Compliance

Q: Are districts still allowed to purchase buses without 3-point seatbelts until 2029?

A: Districts are encouraged to review all provisions of Section 547.701(e), Transportation Code, to include Section 2 of SB 546, regarding certain parameters of compliance effective September 1, 2029 to ensure purchases align with the district's long term goals.

Q: Does the legislation apply only to yellow school buses? What about charter or activity buses and vans?

A: SB 546 applies to any bus operated by or contracted for use by a school district for transporting schoolchildren. This includes charter and activity buses.

Q: Are there restrictions on make, model, or year for retrofitting buses?

A: Please consult your vendor for specific eligibility details.

Board Meeting & Documentation

Q: Do we need to present both retrofit and replacement costs to the board?

A: The board is responsible for determining whether the district's budget can support purchasing buses
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equipped with three-point seat belts, as required by Texas Transportation Code §547.701(e)(1). If the board confirms that funds are available for new buses with three-point seat belts, the district should retain a copy of that decision for reporting purposes.

If the board determines the budget does not allow for the purchase of buses with 3-point seat belts, the district should prepare a report to be presented to the board during a public meeting. The report will need to include:

1. The number of buses operated by or contracted for use by the district that:
 - a. are not equipped with seat belts;
 - b. are equipped with two-point seat belts;
 - c. are equipped with three-point seat belts; and
2. The estimated cost to the district to equip all buses with three-point seat belts

Q: Do we need to provide board meeting minutes after presenting seatbelt counts and cost estimates?

A: Yes.

Q: Are meeting notes required after the board votes on bus affordability?

A: Only if the board decides the district can afford to replace buses and will do so by September 1, 2029.

Q: Is this an annual board review or a one-time requirement?

A: This is a one-time requirement.

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Vendor Quotes & Grants

Q: Do we need quotes from specific vendors for buses?

A: You may obtain quotes from any vendor your district chooses.

Q: Is there a requirement to get more than one quote?

A: There is no requirement for multiple quotes. One is sufficient unless your district policy says otherwise.

Q: Are price quotes valid for 30 days? Will grants cover price increases next year?

A: We currently have no information about grant coverage or timing.

Q: Is there a list of vendors who install seatbelts on buses?

A: No official list is available. We suggest reaching out to your ESCs or other districts in your area.

Q: Will there be a pre-award date for the grant?

A: No specific details are available yet. Updates will be shared when available.

Sentinel System Access & Roles

Q: How do I get a login for Sentinel?

A: A Superintendent or Designee must add you as a user. Refer them to the Bus Reporting module in Sentinel for instructions.

Q: Where in Sentinel do I add the Transportation Director?

A: Navigate to: **Tools** → **Security** → **Users** → **[+Create User]**

Assign the **LEA-specific role** (initially grants access to 'Support' only).

Once activated, return to the bus reporting module and assign the user to as a bus reporter.

Q: Are there resources in Sentinel to contact for estimates?

A: No. Please reach out to your ESCs or other districts for vendor information.

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