

February 2019

**Issue:** Effective March 1, 2019, government is making it mandatory for school bus Drivers and spare bus drivers to take MELT training. This will cause a shortage of bus drivers and put strain on school boards' abilities to get students to school.

### Key messages- Board of Director Use

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- School boards in Alberta are already running transportation deficits, and this mandatory training program will only serve to put further strain on school board budgets.
- We all believe the safety of students is of paramount importance.
- Parents deserve to feel secure in the understanding that their children will be transported to and from school in vehicles operated by trained professionals.
- That is why school boards already secure comprehensive driver training and supervision to ensure the safety of students while on school buses.
- However, the MELT program may bring hardship to school boards across Alberta unless government provides funding for this program.
- School boards may be forced to use funds allocated for the classroom to compensate for this additional requirement.

- Mandatory MELT training may cause a school bus driver shortage in some areas, which could ultimately result in children being unable to get to school to receive an education.
- Parents also deserve to feel secure in the understanding that their children will be transported to school in a timely manner.
- School boards are urging government to provide the funding that covers the full cost of the MELT program.

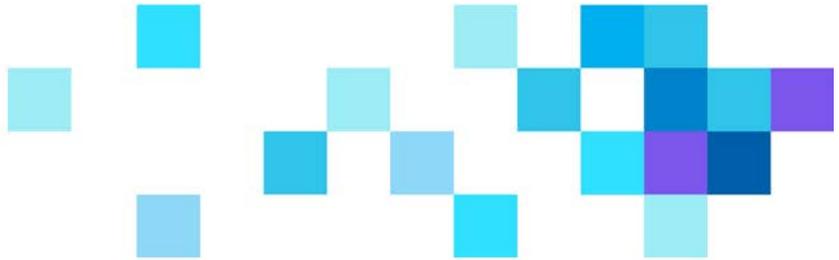
## Background

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Starting March 1, 2019, drivers seeking a [Class 1 \(tractor trailer\) or Class 2 \(bus\) licence](#) will be required to complete mandatory entry-level training in order to apply for their licence.

- Training will include a government-mandated number of training hours in-class, in-yard and in-vehicle.
- Standardized curriculums must be taught at all licenced Alberta driving schools.
- Knowledge and road tests for Class 1 and Class 2 drivers will be expanded to include the new curriculum.

Any driver who obtains a Class 1 or 2 licence between October 10, 2018 and March 1, 2019, will be required to retake the new enhanced knowledge and road test when it becomes available in March 2019, but will have until March 2020 to complete the training. This is to ensure all new drivers meet the new



standards. Drivers will have two attempts to pass, the first one at the government's expense.

The Government of Alberta will pay for the first enhanced knowledge test and enhanced road test. All other costs, including the vehicle rental, must be paid by the client.

Anyone who fails either enhanced test will have one more chance to retake the test (at their own expense).

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