AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 17:497, relative to the compensation schedule for school bus operators who transport public school students; to provide changes to the method by which compensation is calculated; to require compensation for certain purchases made and costs incurred by school bus operators; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:497 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§497. School bus operators; operational schedules compensation

A.(1) Beginning with the fall term of 1986, and continuing thereafter, there shall be paid to the operators thereof, as defined herein by this Section, for the operation of each school bus operated in the public school system of the state of Louisiana, a rate of compensation for such operation in accordance with the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of bus</th>
<th>First 6 Miles</th>
<th>Next 6 Miles</th>
<th>Over 12 Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39-feet or more</td>
<td>117.80</td>
<td>107.08</td>
<td>80.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(All figures are on a cents per mile basis.)

CODING: Words in struck through type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feet Range</th>
<th>(a) Pay Rate</th>
<th>(b) Pay Rate</th>
<th>(c) Pay Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 or more, but less than 15</td>
<td>53.54</td>
<td>48.17</td>
<td>37.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 feet or more, but less than 13</td>
<td>53.54</td>
<td>48.17</td>
<td>37.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 feet or more, but less than 11</td>
<td>48.17</td>
<td>37.47</td>
<td>26.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 feet or more, but less than 9</td>
<td>37.47</td>
<td>26.79</td>
<td>16.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 feet or more, but less than 7</td>
<td>26.79</td>
<td>16.09</td>
<td>7.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 feet</td>
<td>16.09</td>
<td>7.39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) For buses with a manufacturer's rated capacity of forty-eight passengers or fewer, the minimum operational pay rate is $1.4683 per mile of paid mileage.

(b) For buses with a manufacturer's rated capacity of greater than forty-eight passengers, the minimum operational pay rate is $1.756 per mile of paid mileage.

(2) For buses equipped with lift and mobility device securement systems, the manufacturer's rated capacity shall be determined by the rated capacity of a bus of equal length that is designed to transport only ambulatory passengers.
The compensation, as computed in accordance with the schedule contained in this Section, shall be paid for a minimum of the number of days of actual operation, but not less than one hundred eighty days, during the nine-month official school year adopted by the public school governing authority, and for the number of days of actual operation for any the summer semester, if applicable.

(b) Each public school governing authority shall establish supplemental payments for individual operators who are required by the governing authority to purchase any of the following equipment:

(i) Lift mechanisms, wheelchair or other mobility securement devices, occupant restraints, cleaning supplies, or other equipment required exclusively for transporting students with disabilities.

(ii) Air-conditioning equipment.

(3) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by rule shall establish the method to be used for computing bus length for purposes of this Section. The method established by the board shall be uniformly applicable to each city and parish school system and such method shall be used by a city or parish school board to the exclusion of all others.

B. The term "operator" as used in this Section shall mean any individual, parish, or city school board who or public school governing authority that owns and is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and replacement of a school bus operated in the public schools of the state, including state universities, colleges, and junior colleges.

C. The term "mileage one-way" "paid mileage" as used in this Section shall mean the distance the bus travels after picking up its first child student and until it reaches the final student discharge destination or school of said route or routes each morning and afternoon route officially designated by each school board the public school governing authority.

D.(1) Each school board public school governing authority shall designate the size of the bus to be used on each official regular school bus route. When an
operator deems it necessary to purchase a bus, either new or used for not more than five years from the date of manufacture, of the designated size to be used on an official regular school bus route, he shall obtain the approval for the purchase by the school board from the public school governing authority or its duly designated officer or agent. After purchasing a new or used bus not more than five years old, so an approved bus, no operator shall be penalized as a result of the change by the school board public school governing authority in the designated size of the bus or the length of the route within a five-year seven-year period following such purchase of a bus. However, the period shall be seven years for those operators who purchase a new bus after July 1, 1985.

(2) No city or parish school board public school governing authority shall approve the purchase by an operator of a used bus when the sole purpose of such purchase is to extend the protected period against penalty provided for in this Subsection.

(3) The distribution of state funds for school transportation to the city and parish school boards public school governing authorities shall include any costs incurred by school boards public school governing authorities in complying with these provisions.

E. Beginning with the first pay period commencing on or after January 1, 1965, any parish or city school system A public school governing authority exempt from the provisions of R.S. 17:496 shall participate in is subject to this Section in the same manner as other parish and city school systems public school governing authorities.

F.(1) When funds become available, and continuing thereafter, there shall be paid to the operators thereof, as defined herein, for the operation of each school bus operated in the public school system of the state of Louisiana, a rate of compensation for such operation in accordance with the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of bus</th>
<th>Cents per mile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

CODING: Words in struck through type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.
HB 215 Engrossed 2022 Regular Session

Abstract: Changes how operational pay is calculated for school bus operators; requires payment for certain expenses.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 215 Engrossed 2022 Regular Session White

39 feet or more 117.80
38 feet or more, but less than 39 feet 112.44
34 feet or more, but less than 38 feet 107.08
28 feet or more, but less than 34 feet 101.72
26 feet or more, but less than 28 feet 96.36
23 feet or more, but less than 26 feet 91.04
21 feet or more, but less than 23 feet 85.66
19 feet or more, but less than 21 feet 80.30
17 feet or more, but less than 19 feet 80.30
14 feet or more, but less than 17 feet 53.54
Less than 14 feet buses, station wagons, and carryalls 53.54

(2) The compensation, as computed in accordance with the schedules contained in this Section, shall be paid for a minimum of one hundred eighty days during the nine-month school year, and for the number of days of actual operation for any summer semester. However, until funds become available, payment shall be made as provided in Subsection A of this Section.

Section 2. Implementation of this Act shall begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.
Compensation for Driving Bus Routes

Present law provides a schedule of compensation rates to be paid to school bus operators for the transportation of public school students. Provides for varying compensation based on distance traveled and length of bus. Specifies that the compensation shall be paid for a minimum of 180 days during a nine-month school year and for the number of days of actual operation of a summer semester.

Proposed law changes operational pay rate to a minimum of $1.4683 per mile of paid mileage for school buses with capacities of 48 or fewer passengers and a minimum of $1.756 per mile of paid mileage for school buses with capacities greater than 48 passengers.

Proposed law requires operators be paid for the number of days of actual operation, for not less than 180 days during the school year calendar, as adopted by the public school governing authority. Retains present law provision relative to operational payment during a summer semester.

Proposed law defines "paid mileage" as the distance of a bus route beginning when the first student is picked up and ending when the bus reaches the final student discharge destination or school on both morning and afternoon routes.

Compensation for Certain Expenses

Proposed law requires a public school governing authority to establish supplemental payments for a school bus operator who is required to purchase certain equipment or supplies related to transporting students with disabilities or air conditioning equipment.

Proposed law provides implementation of proposed law shall begin with the 2022-2023 school year.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 17:497)