



# THE GOLDEN SLATE

The official newsletter of the California  
Agricultural Teachers' Association

## Driving Students? Know Your Responsibilities Under SB 88

*By Matt Patton, CATA Executive Director*

### *What is SB 88?*

California Senate Bill 88 requires teachers who drive students for more than 40 hours in a school year to meet the same qualifications as professional student transport drivers.

### *Who is Responsible?*

Compliance is the responsibility of the local educational agency (LEA), including school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools.

### *Exemptions Before 40 Hours*

Teachers are exempt from SB 88 requirements if:

- The school has made a reasonable effort to find a qualified driver who meets all SB 88 standards, and
- The school informs the student's parent/guardian if the staff member transporting their child does not meet SB 88 requirements (unless that would violate student privacy).

### *When Does Full Compliance Begin?*

Once a teacher exceeds 40 hours of student driving in a school year, the exemption ends. They must then comply with all SB 88 driver safety rules.

### *Driver Qualifications After 40 Hours*

Teachers must:

- Be at least 18 years old with a valid California driver's license
- Pass fingerprinted criminal background checks
- Maintain a clean driving record (no serious violations or suspensions in the past 3 years)
- Show no irrational behavior impairing safe driving
- Have no serious Vehicle Code convictions

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- Submit DMV records and enroll in Employer Pull-notice Tracking
- Pass a medical exam within the last 2 years by a DOT-approved provider
- Complete initial and refresher training on first aid, defensive driving, accommodating disabilities, adverse weather driving, and vehicle inspections
- Comply with drug and alcohol testing requirements (marijuana use is not an automatic disqualifier per California law)

Vehicles must:

- Undergo regular inspections
- Be equipped with a first aid kit and fire extinguisher

### *Additional Duties*

SB 88 drivers are mandated reporters for suspected child abuse or neglect and must report incidents to authorities.

### *Special 200-Mile Exemption*

SB 88 does not apply when teachers or staff transport students more than 200 miles from the school site for field trips, extracurricular activities, or athletic events.

In these cases:

- The 40-hour exemption limit and driver qualifications do not apply
- No parent notification or search for a qualified driver is required

SB 88 is now in effect statewide. If you drive students, know the rules, stay compliant, and work with your school to protect your students and yourself.

For more information, visit the California Department of Education's student transportation page: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/tn/im/pupiltransportation.asp> or contact your local educational agency for guidance.

