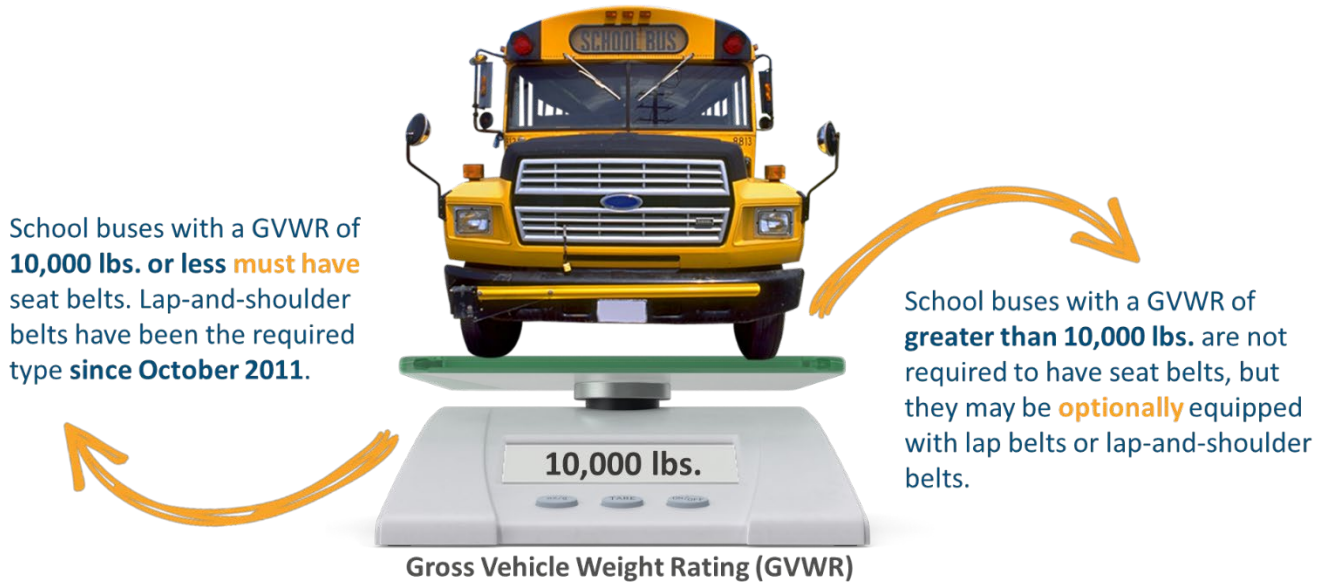
Handout • Types of School Buses

SCHOOL BUS CLASSIFICATION

Not every vehicle that looks like a bus is a school bus. Check the **vehicle certificate label**, which should be located inside the bus, above the front window or door. The type should state "school bus" (not simply "bus" or "MPV"—Multi-Purpose Vehicle).

- To be classified as a school bus, a vehicle must meet the many federal safety regulations that apply to these vehicles.
- A multi-function school activity bus (MFSAB) is a school bus that meets all federal requirements for a school bus, except it lacks traffic control devices, like alternating flashing lights and stop arms. While MFSABs are school buses, they may not be used for street pick-up/drop off of students. MFSABs are the only vehicles that qualify as Allowable Alternative Vehicles (AAVs, alternatives to school buses) for Head Start transportation.
- The mere fact that a vehicle is used by a school does not make it a school bus. When schools use non-school-bus vehicles for student transportation, like vans and SUVs, these are subject to all state laws that apply to child occupants who ride in passenger vehicles.

SEAT BELTS ON SCHOOL BUSES


School buses with a GVWR of **10,000 lbs. or less must have** seat belts. Lap-and-shoulder belts have been the required type **since October 2011**.

School buses with a GVWR of **greater than 10,000 lbs.** are not required to have seat belts, but they may be **optionally** equipped with lap belts or lap-and-shoulder belts.

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)

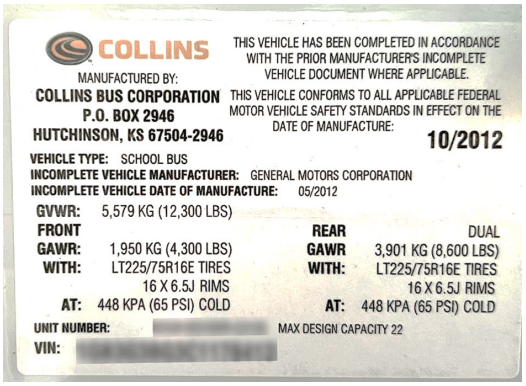
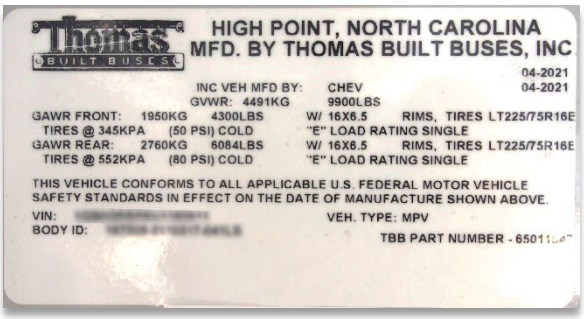
LATCH ON SCHOOL BUSES

Since 2003, school buses with a GVWR of **10,000 lbs. or less** **must have** a set of lower anchors for two of the bus's seating positions. Additional positions may optionally be equipped.

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)

School Buses with a GVWR of **greater than 10,000 lbs.** are not required to have lower anchors, but they may be **optionally** equipped with lower anchors and/or tether anchors.

BUS LABEL EXAMPLES

School Bus	Non-School Bus
	

PROGRESS CHECK

- Where is the vehicle certificate label found?
- What is the importance of the vehicle certificate label?
- At what GVWR must a bus be equipped with seat belts?
- What is the difference between a school bus and a multi-function school activity bus?