



NYAPT

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

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Our future is riding with us!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK BRINGS NEW FOCUS ON ILLEGAL PASSING

NYAPT will launch a monthly SAFE STOP SURVEY campaign to document the extent of illegal passing of school buses in New York State.

The yellow school bus is more than a SYMBOL of safety. In reality, it is designed and built to be the safest vehicle on the road for transporting our children to and from school each day. Moreover, school buses are driven by women and men who are specifically trained to keep our children safe on their way to school each morning and back home each afternoon.

Specifically, those 26,000 pound bright yellow school buses are built with safety elements that include a 'skeleton' of steel ribs that protect the bus and its passengers, red lights to remind motorists that the bus is stopping, and seats that are designed like egg cartons to keep children safe when they are seated within the seat compartment.

School bus drivers achieve a federal Commercial Drivers' License (CDL) and are then trained specifically to transport children on school buses. They are tested, trained and retrained on a regular basis pursuant to state and federal laws. In accordance with those laws, they are also subjected to medical physicals, criminal background reviews, drug and alcohol testing and physical performance testing on a prescribed basis.

But all that excellence and preparation does not mitigate the fact that motorists on our roads fail to STOP for stopped school buses on a frighteningly frequent basis. In New York State, NYAPT estimates that there are more than 50,000 incidents of motorists passing stopped school buses every day! This presents terrifying risks for our children who are standing or walking alone outside their school bus **trusting** that adult motorists will do the right thing, the legal thing.

During School Bus Safety Week, NYAPT urges all motorists to remember that Section 1174 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic law requires them to stop for a school bus that has stopped and engaged its red flashing lights along with its STOP arms. Those red lights indicate that children will be boarding the bus or departing the bus and their safety depends on

motorists stopping to let them proceed. Failure to do so will result in substantial fines and five points on a driver's license.

To reinforce this message, during this School Bus Safety Week, NYAPT is launching a monthly **SAFE STOP SURVEY** among our members. On one day each month for the remainder of the school year we will engage school bus drivers in a sample group of school districts across the state in counting the number of times their school buses are passed on a designated day. That monthly count will include overall numbers of illegal passes as well as 'right side' passes where a vehicle passes the school bus on the passenger side.

We will release the results of the SAFE STOP SURVEY each month as a means of underscoring the risks and dangers of illegal passing and of educating the public on the legal and moral need to STOP for Stopped School Buses.

Remember it's National School Bus Safety Week and Remember to STOP FOR THE SCHOOL BUS!!

For further information, please contact NYAPT at 518-463-4937 or email our executive director at peter@nyapt.org.



First Place Bumper Sticker Contest Winner 2013

Emily Jiang, Jericho Public Schools

Via a grant funded by the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee through the Natl Highway Transportation Safety Administration