



NYAPT

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

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Our future is riding with us!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION:

THOUGHTS WITH THE FAMILIES IN CHATTANOOGA TN

The men and women who are responsible for the safe transportation of more than 2.3 million New York children to and from school each day take very seriously our mission of safety.

We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life in Chattanooga Tennessee and our hearts are with the Moms and Dads and families of those children who died in the accident on November 21, 2016. We extend our care and condolences to the schoolmates and school family at Woodmore Elementary School at this very difficult time.

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation wants to take a moment to re-assure parents in our state about the safety of the Yellow School Bus and our record of safe transportation here in New York. The yellow school bus is far and away the safest means for getting our children to and from school. National research data shows the school bus to be nearly eight times safer than any other form of transportation, including being driven in a parent's vehicle.

Our school buses are manufactured with safety in mind. Each of our 50,000 school buses is inspected daily by drivers as well as technicians to ensure their road-worthiness. The buses meet exacting standards set out in the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. These are complemented by additional equipment requirements included in the state's Vehicle and Traffic Law. Each of those school buses is also inspected twice annually by a State Transportation Department inspector and taken out of service if it does not meet specifications.

Our school bus drivers meet high standards and expectations and their training exceeds the federal standards that are set out by the federal government. Our drivers are randomly tested for drug and alcohol usage and are subjected to annual physicals and biennial physical performance tests that determine their capacity to carry out routine safety functions on the school bus. Drivers participate in a 30-hour basic course for school bus drivers as part of their qualification to drive the bus and must attend at least two 2-hour refresher training courses each year. Those courses contain information determined by the State Education Department. In addition, each driver is fingerprinted and undergoes a criminal background check to ensure that they are eligible to drive our children. Their driving record and such information is kept current in files maintained by school bus operators and audited regularly by the State Department of Motor Vehicles.

In New York State we are proud of the work and dedication of high quality school transportation professionals who oversee and manage operations, train drivers and attendants, establish safe routes and dispatch buses and drivers daily, maintain and repair the buses and inspect the buses and routes on a regular basis to ensure safety. We are also heartened by the dedication not only of those professionals but of our state agency partners who work side-by-side to improve and enrich our school bus safety measures and efforts.

The Chattanooga accident deeply affects every one of us and our hearts are heavy for all involved. Such an incident asks us to review every part of our operation and to look for ways to be even better.

We encourage parents to get to know their School Transportation team and learn more about what they do to ensure your child's safety.

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation wants our children and their parents and families to know that and to feel assured of their safety each and every day.

For further information, please contact Peter Mannella, Executive Director, at 518-463-4937 or via email at peter@nyapt.org