



**NEW YORK ASSOCIATION
FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION**

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NYAPT

Our future is riding with us!

NYAPT Statement on the 2022-23 Budget Bills March 24, 2022

The primary focus in the three state budget proposals relative to school transportation services is transitioning the statewide school bus fleet to electric power. While the New York Association for Pupil Transportation (NYAPT) supports the State's goal to transition our school transportation fleet to zero-emissions, it is not feasible or reasonable to expect every school district or school bus contractor to begin purchasing only all-electric school buses beginning in 2027. Insufficient funding, lack of school district infrastructure across the state, and operational questions preclude this ambitious transition.

A one-size-fits-all approach to transitioning school bus fleets to all-electric will not work. Historically, the industry has partnered with clean technology stakeholders to devise a workable plan to move the industry to cleaner emission school buses. We stand ready to move towards a zero-emissions school bus fleet in a safe, scalable, and prudent manner.

Most importantly, this transition must be done in such a way that it causes minimal disruption to the school transportation industry which is currently struggling with an unprecedented school bus driver shortage.

NYAPT offers the following in response to 2022-23 Budget Proposals with respect to school transportation services:

1. **Support** – Full funding of expense-based aid.
2. **Support** – Acceptance of late filed transportation contracts and waiver of penalties due to administrative oversight.
3. **Support** – \$400,000 funding for the School Bus Driver Instructor's program for the State Education Department
4. **Support** – Temporary suspension of the retiree earnings cap to help address school staff shortages to include school bus drivers.
5. **Support** – Electronic filing of transportation contracts with SED

6. **NYAPT supports** the transition to electric school buses under the following conditions:

- Sufficient state funding for infrastructure and bus purchases. Recommend separating school bus funding from public transit funding in the upcoming Environmental Bond Act.
- State transportation aid must be made available for expenses related to school bus purchases and infrastructure improvements to support electrification.
- A state-funded statewide study of school district infrastructure needs and cost projections.
- Phased-in approach to transitioning to electric school bus fleet.
- A waiver for school districts to delay transition to electric buses as outlined in the Assembly proposal.
- Formation of a statewide task force to include New York’s school transportation industry stakeholders to guide transition to electrification.
- Support of the school bus dealership model to provide service and technical support to bus operators as new technology is transitioned into bus fleets.
- Allow for diversified near-zero emissions fleet where a zero-emission electric bus is not practical due to safety, environmental and economic factors.
- Increase in school bus lease term from current five-year term to 10-year term with language reinforcing New York’s dealer franchise law – section 415 of the Vehicle & Traffic Law.

7. **NYAPT rejects** proposals to mandate all-electric bus purchases only, starting in 2027 (Executive Budget) or 2029 (Senate).

NYAPT stands ready to work with all stakeholders to make our bus fleets safer and cleaner. We propose to accomplish this goal in a measured and planned approach so as not to negatively impact the communities that we serve. Our industry has always implemented new policies with a “safety first” planning process. As we transition to electric school buses, we must take that approach and always keep the safety of our 2.3 million student passengers at the forefront.

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