



**NEW YORK ASSOCIATION
FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION**

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NYAPT

Our future is riding with us!

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The New York Association for Pupil Transportation Supports National School Bus Safety Week, October 18th – 22nd

NYAPT Reminds Drivers to Stop for Stopped School Buses to Keep our Students Safe

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation (NYAPT) today announced that the organization is supporting National School Bus Safety Week and is reminding drivers to be extra careful when they see the flashing red lights of a yellow school bus.

The theme for National School Bus Safety Week 2021 is *Be Safe – Know the Danger Zone*. The danger zone is the area that surrounds the bus and extends out as much as 15-feet from each side of the school bus. NYAPT is reminding students, who ride a yellow school bus, to listen to their school bus driver and follow their directions when crossing in front of the school bus. Students should do their best to make sure they are at least the 15-feet from the school bus so the bus driver can see them.

NYAPT is also reminding drivers that they must stop when they see the red lights flashing on a school bus. Recent school bus driver surveys show that more than 50,000 drivers a day in New York illegally pass stopped school buses and as a result are a direct threat to student safety.

“The illegal passing of stopped school buses continues to be a threat to the safe transportation of our student passengers and is simply unacceptable,” said NYAPT President Ted Nugent, Transportation Director at Coxsackie-Athens School District. “Drivers need to be very careful and make sure they are focused on the importance of stopping for a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing because in the end...a child’s life depends on it.”

New York State Vehicle and Traffic law requires all vehicles to come to a full stop when approaching a school bus stopped with its red lights flashing. Those lights mean that a child is either boarding or disembarking a school bus. New York state law prohibits the passing of a school bus that is stopped with red lights flashing regardless of your direction of travel and even on a multi-lane or divided highway.

Penalties for a first-time offense include a fine from \$250 to \$400, five points on your license and the possibility of 30 days in jail. A second conviction within three years will result in a \$600 to \$750 fine and up to 180 days in jail; while three or more convictions will result in a fine from \$750 to \$1,000, mandatory revocation of your driver’s license and up to 180 days in jail.

In addition, school bus stop arm camera programs are in place in many areas across the State that automatically levy fines to the owner of any vehicle that illegally passes a stopped school bus. Fines are \$250 for a first violation and up to \$300 for additional violations.

NYAPT is also reminding parents and caregivers to be patient with their school bus drivers and school transportation providers due to the increased strain on our school transportation systems caused by the lingering effects of the pandemic and school bus driver shortages.

NYAPT asks that people take time during National School Bus Safety Week to thank their school bus drivers and other school transportation professionals for providing students with a safe ride to and from school during these unprecedented times.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, students are 70 times safer riding a school bus to school versus a private car -- see www.nhtsa.gov.

ABOUT: The *New York Association for Pupil Transportation* (NYAPT) is a statewide organization dedicated to the support, development, and representation of school transportation professionals who are responsible for the safe and efficient transportation of more than 2.3 million school children each day in New York State. NYAPT's over 600 members comprise school transportation supervisors and professionals from hundreds of school districts across the state.

NYAPT Executive Director, David Christopher, is available for media interviews by request.

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