

Ohio School Boards Association

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Ohio schools and communities focus on school bus safety Oct. 21-25

Every day in Ohio 800,000 children ride more than 15,000 school buses between their homes and schools. School bus transportation plays a critical role in the education of Ohio's children, and National School Bus Safety Week, Oct. 21-25, serves as a reminder for students, parents, teachers and the community about the importance of keeping our children safe.

School bus drivers, parents and school staff work as a team to maximize safety while students are on the bus. However, students' safety is at a greater risk when they are outside the bus waiting at the bus stop.

"We train our bus drivers to be cautious, but we need help from the community when motorists are driving around school buses and in school zones," Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) Senior Transportation Consultant Pete Japikse said. "We need to prevent students from being struck and harmed when outside the bus."

Earlier this year, OSBA asked bus drivers to count how many times they were passed illegally at a bus stop in a single day. The results were staggering. More than 5,000 drivers reported over 1,500 violations on that day alone. Motorists ignored the buses' flashing red lights and stop sign as well as disregarding Ohio laws requiring them to stop.

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School bus safety 2/2/2/2/2/

Anytime a school bus is stopped, children leave the safety of the sidewalk while getting on or off their bus. Sometimes children have to cross the street. Bus drivers are trained to watch traffic and signal to students. However, when motorists deliberately drive around a stopped school bus, it can be difficult for bus drivers and students to safely react in time. We need every community's help in ensuring everyone understands Ohio's laws regarding stopped school buses.

The big yellow school bus is an institution in our country, with students, families and communities benefiting from its safe transportation service. Often, we take that benefit for granted, even while school and transportation staff continue to focus on maximizing safety and efficiency.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, students are about 70 times safer when taking a bus to school instead of traveling by car. This year's National School Bus Safety Week campaign is focused on reassuring students and parents that the school bus continues to be the safest mode of transportation between home and school.

Founded in 1955, the Ohio School Boards Association leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.