

THE “SCHOOL BUS” THE SAFEST WAY TO & FROM SCHOOL

Everyday in the United States approximately 450,000 Yellow School Buses transport 24 million children to and from school and school related activities, (this equal to transporting the entire populations of Florida, Massachusetts & Oregon combined), twice per day.

School Buses travel approximately 4 billion miles per year, on daily fixed route, and school related activities.

School Buses are the largest mass transit programs in the United States, providing approximately 10 billion student trips per year. In comparison Transit Buses provide only 5.2 billion passenger trips per year.

Unfortunately each year approximately 800 school aged children are killed in motor vehicle accidents during normal school travel hours, (6:00am to 8:59am & 2:00pm to 4:59pm each weekday from Sept. 1st through June 15th). However of these 800 deaths, only 2% are School Bus related, while the other 98% occur in other vehicles... or pedestrians, bicycles or motorcycles.

Safety is of the utmost importance to everyone involved in the School Bus transportation industry, from federal & state regulation officials, to School Bus manufacturers, to the local school district transportation staff.

Some of the key safety requirements for School Buses are:

1. **Compartmentalized seating – with padded, high backed energy absorbing seats, interiors designed to reduce injury caused by sharp edges or body panels that might tear loose in a collision.**
2. **Brake systems designed to allow the School Bus to stop in a shorter distance than other large vehicles.**
3. **Warning Lights & swing out Stop Arms, which indicate to motorists when a bus is loading or unloading passengers.**
4. **Mirrors that allow drivers to see all critical areas in front of and along both sides of the bus.**
5. **Rollover protection to reduce the risk of roof collapse, and allow for the operation of emergency exits, even when the roof is subjected to extreme forces.**
6. **Caged fuel tanks to protect against fuel spills.**

Additionally the State of Arkansas requires all Yellow School Buses to be inspected 3 times per year, once by a State School Bus Inspector, and twice per year by the local school districts transportation employees.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

It is the skill and performance of the highly trained professional School Bus driver that often prevents accidents.

School Bus Drivers:

- 1. Are required to hold a Commercial Drivers License (C.D.L.), issued by the state they reside in.**
- 2. Must annually attend several hours of in-service training as instructed by State and/or local school district training personnel.**
- 3. Drivers must undergo a pre-employment drug & alcohol screening, as well as Law Enforcement background check.**
- 4. After employment all drivers are subject to random drug & alcohol screening, and a semi-annual check of their vehicle driving records.**
- 5. All bus drivers for Gentry Public School district are required to be certified in C.P.R and basic First Aid, (Effective with the beginning of the 2007-2008 school Year).**

(All facts & statistics are excerpts from literature available from the School Bus Information Counsel)