



## **School districts across Minnesota to celebrate school bus drivers Feb. 21-27**

*School Bus Driver Appreciation Week to bring attention to drivers' dedication and essential role during COVID-19 pandemic*

SAINT PAUL, Minn. – Feb. 17, 2021 – Thousands of hardworking school bus drivers across the state are going above and beyond their duties during the COVID-19 pandemic as essential school district employees. To recognize this important profession, Governor Tim Walz has proclaimed Feb. 21-27 as School Bus Driver Appreciation Week in the state of Minnesota. [Click here](#) to download the Governor's proclamation.

"I am proud to proclaim February 21-27 as School Bus Driver Appreciation Week in the State of Minnesota," said Governor Walz. "Our school bus drivers have stepped up in unprecedented ways to serve Minnesota's students during an incredibly challenging year, and I am forever grateful for their dedication to our students' education, safety, and wellbeing."

The Minnesota School Bus Operators Association and Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation first teamed up in 2017 to create School Bus Driver Appreciation Day in Minnesota to encourage school leaders, parents and students to celebrate the often-overlooked profession. This year's recognition has been expanded to a weeklong, virtual event. Content celebrating Minnesota's school bus drivers will be unveiled on dedicated [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages throughout the week. Content includes submitted videos from the [Office of Governor Tim Walz & Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan](#), the [Minnesota State Patrol](#), and the [Minnesota Department of Education](#).

"Minnesota school bus drivers are going above and beyond their typical duties to serve students and communities during this unprecedented school year," said MSBOA President Garrett Regan. "We are thankful that Governor Walz has declared February 21-27 as School Bus Driver Appreciation Week in Minnesota to help give school bus drivers the recognition they deserve."

Minnesota school bus drivers have taken on new essential roles during the COVID-19 pandemic to serve their communities, such as delivering meals and distance learning supplies to families, providing Wi-Fi connections, and transporting the children of first responders and healthcare workers to and from daycare. School bus drivers have also followed new, rigorous health and safety protocols to transport students to and from school safely during the pandemic.

“Not only do Minnesota school bus drivers play a crucial role in our school systems, but they have a positive impact on students,” said MAPT President John Thomas. “The pandemic has reinforced how caring and dedicated school bus drivers are. Many drivers have participated in activities like birthday parades and graduation ceremonies, showing how much they care about the students they serve.”

School districts across Minnesota will celebrate School Bus Driver Appreciation Week in special ways, such as by passing out student-made thank you cards and providing food and beverages to bus drivers. The I-35W bridge in Minneapolis will also be lit yellow in recognition of School Bus Driver Appreciation Week on the evening of Feb. 21 and into the morning of Feb. 22.

#### **About the Minnesota School Bus Operators Association**

The Minnesota School Bus Operators Association (MSBOA) represents Minnesota’s privately-owned school bus contractors who provide more than 60 percent of the school buses used to transport Minnesota children to and from school and school-related activities. Its members represent an average of more than 45 years of experience in the industry and are responsible for more than 400,000 students transported 233,000 miles per day.

#### **About the Minnesota Association for Pupil Transportation**

Founded in 1975, the Minnesota Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT) is a nonprofit association of school transportation professionals and industry leaders who promote safe and efficient student transportation within the state of Minnesota. MAPT encourages active participation by anyone interested in the safe and efficient transportation of Minnesota students and is a resource for all school districts throughout Minnesota.

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#### **Contact:**

Chris Duffy

612-599-7982

[duffy@goffpublic.com](mailto:duffy@goffpublic.com)