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School districts across Minnesota to celebrate school bus drivers on February 27

February 27 is Minnesota's third annual School Bus Driver Appreciation Day

SAINT PAUL, Minn. – Thousands of hardworking school bus drivers safely transport more than 760,000 students to and from school each day across the state. To recognize this important profession, Governor Tim Walz has proclaimed Wednesday, February 27, as School Bus Driver Appreciation Day in the state of Minnesota.

School districts across Minnesota will celebrate the third annual School Bus Driver Appreciation Day 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 Day on the evening of February 26 and morning of February 27.

The Minnesota School Bus Operators Association (MSBOA) and Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT) teamed up to create School Bus Driver Appreciation Day in Minnesota to encourage school leaders, parents and students to celebrate the often-overlooked profession.

“From rural country roads to city streets and in all kinds of weather conditions, school bus drivers transport our communities’ most precious cargo – our children – to school each day,” said MSBOA President Garrett Regan. “School bus driving is an important but often unacknowledged profession, and we are thankful that Governor Walz has declared February 27 as School Bus Driver Appreciation Day in Minnesota so that we can give bus drivers the recognition they deserve.”

Exceptional school bus drivers from around the state will be recognized at a press conference in Golden Valley on February 27. The program will include a plea asking Minnesota drivers to obey school bus stop arms. School bus drivers across Minnesota are reporting increasing occurrences of stop arm violations each year, which puts student safety at serious risk

“Bus drivers keep our children safe and give parents the peace of mind that their children are in good hands when they travel between home and school each day,” said Lt. Tiffani Nielson, Minnesota State Patrol. “I encourage all Minnesota drivers to do their part to keep our students safe by stopping when a school bus activates its flashing lights and has its crossing arm fully extended.”

Additional reasons to celebrate School Bus Driver Appreciation Day include the impact school buses have on student safety and the environment. Thanks to rigorous safety standards for vehicles and drivers as well as student training efforts, students are nearly eight times safer riding to and from school in a school bus than in a vehicle. The school bus driving industry is the largest form of mass transit in Minnesota, and it has reduced its environmental impact through the use of alternative fuels and retrofits on diesel engines.

“School bus drivers are among the most highly-trained drivers on the road, and they are a crucial part of our education system,” said MAPT President Derrick Agate Sr. “We hope that Minnesotans help us recognize school bus drivers in their communities on February 27, and that more people consider this rewarding and in-demand profession.”

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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