



SETTING THE STANDARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

STS EXPRESS

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SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISORS OF NEW JERSEY WILL BE RETURNING TO ATLANTIC CITY IN 2012

The Annual STS Conference and Vendor Show is returning to Atlantic City after a two year hiatus. The 2012 Conference will be held on Monday, March 26th and Tuesday, March 27th at the Golden Nugget, formerly the Trump Marina. Pat Lerch, Southern Area Director, and Ingrid Reitano, Past President, unveiled plans for the Conference at the STS General Membership meeting on December 2nd. As in the past, the Conference will include breakouts and general sessions, a Mechanic's Workshop, and a Vendor Trade Show.

During their announcement, Pat and Ingrid emphasized the importance of scheduling two days full of quality educational programs. Sessions dealing with legal issues, special education, student management, DOE updates and more are planned. Monday evening there will be an opportunity to socialize and enjoy a special meal and some entertainment. New members are invited to a one hour welcoming reception just before the Banquet.

The full conference fee of \$300 for members and \$365 for non-members includes five workshops, three general sessions, the Vendor Show, and meals except for Tuesday lunch.

For the past two years, since the State imposed travel restrictions, the traditional multi-day conference has been replaced with a one day conference. While successful, these one day conferences left attendees wanting more – more information on more topics and more time to network. For many, traveling to and from

the location on the same day posed a problem, making it impossible for some to attend.

The Golden Nugget, which is just a mile from the Boardwalk and the Atlantic City Convention Center, will soon complete major renovations. Rooms and suites are currently being remodeled to feature the latest in modern contemporary décor and comfort. For a peek at the Golden Nugget go to:

<http://www.goldennugget.com/AtlanticCity/>

The Conference Flyer and Registration Form are available for download on the STS Website.

COMING IN JANUARY

A Special Edition of the STS EXPRESS will have answers to all your questions about the new Rutgers Certification Courses.

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STS General Membership Meeting

On December 2nd, STS of NJ sponsored the first General Membership Meeting of the 2011-2012 school year at the Old York Country Club in Columbus, NJ. These general meetings, as well as the area meetings that take place around the state, help achieve the organization's purpose of increasing its members' knowledge of the school transportation field. Below and on the following pages you will find summaries of the information that was presented at the meeting.

State Update

Ms. Dot Shelmet, as Acting Director, Office of Student Transportation and Shared Services, is the organization's most valuable source of information for State goings-on. STS is fortunate that Ms. Shelmet is willing, despite a busy schedule, to attend meetings to share information and listen to feedback from members on various issues.

Ms. Shelmet covered the following topics:

- There are no major problems to report with this year's DRTRS.
- Next year's DRTRS will be transmitted via NJ SMART (see article on page 4.)
- Ms. Shelmet asked districts to help spread the word about the Move Over Law (see article on page 3.)
- In response to a request from the Governor's office, she passed along a reminder that N.J.S.A. 18A:39-4 requires the forfeiture of the 5% contract deposit when a contractor fails to execute the terms of a contract.

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission

Mr. Paul Giordano, Manager, NJMVC Bus Unit faced a lively discussion that President Glenn Barry worked to keep positive.

- The School Bus and Commercial Bus Units have been combined. Staff in these units are being cross-trained.
- Having Regional Coordinators should make it easier to get inspection answers from the MVC.
- Paul stated that many of the problems accounting for a 70% failure rate should be caught before inspectors show up at terminals.
- Proposed changes to school bus regulations are



Paul Giordano, Manager of MVC Bus Unit

working their way through the system. Five meetings with stakeholders were held around the state. The amendments could possibly appear in the NJ Register in January or February of 2012. To view them at <http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/About/rulemaking.htm> click on 8/01/11 Proposed Rule Amendments - School Bus Equipment and Inspection; scroll down to Download proposal School Bus equipment and inspection; Click on proposal number PRN 2011-162.

Questions regarding future installs of closed crankcase ventilation systems on 15 year school buses can be directed to the DEP at 609 - 292-7953.

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(right to left) F. Winkelspecht, H. VanMater, Alana Lum, K. Koenig, P. Massey, M. Dudley Bown, M. Moyer, J. Tomkiewicz, B. Fillman at December 2nd General Meeting

MOVE OVER LAW

The “Move Over” Law requires drivers approaching stationery emergency vehicles, tow trucks, and other highway safety vehicles displaying certain flashing lights to move over one lane, or if it is unsafe to move over, to slow down below the posted speed limit.

Almost three years after New Jersey became the 44th state to pass a move over law, there’s evidence that the law is not widely known or understood. For example, South Brunswick Police Sergeant James Ryan told the Home News Tribune of East Brunswick that a preliminary survey conducted in November on Route 1 showed 58% noncompliance with the law. Some NJ.com users commenting on Sergeant Ryan’s story said they were learning of the law for the first time.



This banner can be added to your website to increase public awareness. Ms. Setaro, founder of M.A.R.C. attracts lots of attention driving a vehicle with this banner on it.

And the mother of a State Trooper who was hit and killed by a motorist, and who now speaks to school and civic groups about the law, says about 70% of the audiences she addresses do not know about the law. There is now a push to increase awareness of the law. The first week of December, the South Brunswick Police Department stopped more than 600 drivers who failed to comply with the law after passing a decoy car. Each driver was given a warning and a palm card to explain the law. The New Jersey Department of Transportation has posted “Slow Down – Move Over - It’s the Law” and “Respect and Protect First Responders” messages on its Dynamic Message System displays along highways statewide. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey began posting the Move Over message on all its overhead electronic signs, and Move Over inserts will be put into license renewal envelopes. The Move Over Law was the subject of the Central Area’s fall meeting.

In 2008, the Mullica Police Department noted on the Township website that more Police officers are killed every year in traffic related incidents than any other cause of death, including gunshot wounds.

The Move Over Awareness Campaign, also known as M.A.R.C., was conceived by Donna Setaro, the mother of NJ State Trooper Marc Castellano. Trooper Castellano was killed by a motorist on the side of the Route 195 exit ramp while performing his job. She has been spreading the word about the Move Over law at high schools to young drivers, hoping they will pass the information on to their parents. Dot Shelmet requested help from the STS members in setting the program up in their districts. To invite Ms. Setaro to address your group, contact the New Jersey State Police, School and Traffic Safety Unit at 609-882-2000 ext. 2844.

Ms. Setaro will be a guest speaker at the STS Conference in March.

NJ SMART TO REPLACE THE DOENET FOR TRANSMITTING THE DRTRS

Dot Shelmet reported that starting next fall the DRTRS will be transmitted via the New Jersey Standards Measurement and Resources for Teachers (NJ SMART.) NJ SMART is a system already in use by New Jersey public schools for data reporting and performance management. The changeover is necessary because the current operating system is being phased out, but it comes with some definite advantages. For example, NJ SMART assigns student identification numbers, and it will not be necessary to reenter the ID numbers when preparing the DRTRS. To assure accurate reporting while the kinks are worked out of the new system, the 2012 DRTRS will be transmitted through both the DOEnet and NJ SMART.

There will be multiple training opportunities, including online Webinars and classes at various training sites. Ms. Shelmet also said the NJ SMART trainers are interested in going to the Conference and regional meetings.

BYLAW REVISIONS

A number of changes to the STS Bylaws were introduced by Pat Lerch at the December 2nd General Membership Meeting. Each proposed change was read out loud, discussion from the floor was invited, and President Glenn Barry called for a vote on the issue. Following is a summary of the changes that were approved by the membership.

- Better definitions of contractor and mechanic memberships.
- A statement that one year of service on a committee is preferred but not required before becoming an officer was added.
- The Vice President will now oversee the Financial Committee, Budget and the STS Website.
- The Education Committee was added as a Standing Committee.
- The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee is the Past President.
- Dues for new members will be pro-rated as per the procedures manual.
- Membership belongs to the entity that pays for it, not the individual.
- The membership application process was revised. The first year's dues must accompany the application.

These provisions became effective immediately after being approved.

Several issues were held over for further discussion:

- Increasing the number of regions from three to six.
- Increasing the number of Directors from nine to twelve and decreasing the terms of office from three to two years.



Under the new Bylaws, Vice President Ray Keuhner will oversee the Finance Committee, the Budget, and the STS Website.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER WORKSHOPS

Sandy Hanson, Chair of the School Bus Driver Workshops, is planning to offer the annual school bus driver workshops in March 2012. Watch the STS Website for Announcements and registration forms.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

www.njleg.state.nj.us – NJ Legislative Website

www.nsc.org – National Safety Council

www.nj.gov/mvc/Inspections/SchoolBus.htm - School Bus Inspections

LOADING AND UNLOADING STUDENTS

The Kansas State Department of Education maintains a site <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=346>) with information on more than three decades of nation-wide statistics on student fatalities that occurred around school bus loading and unloading zones. Details of the 2010-2011 National School Bus Loading and Unloading Survey were obtained by *School Transportation News* and published in their December 2, 2011 issue.

These statistics can be downloaded and shared with your drivers along with the following suggestions.

Suggestions for Creating Safe Student Loading and Unloading

- Create a schematic drawing that displays the approved traffic flow for dropping off and picking up. Distribute to bus drivers, parents, and post on district website.
- Have a trained security officer or at least a staff member assigned to direct traffic during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up.
- Periodically remind parents about pick-up and drop-off procedures.
- Separate school buses from other types of traffic. You can do this by designating different areas for the two types of traffic. Another way to create a separation would be restricting all other vehicular movement on school grounds until all the buses have left.
- Drivers should not be allowed to back their buses in loading zones or anywhere else on school property. An exception might be made if there is an adult at the back of the bus directing the driver.
- A driving speed of 5 mph on school property gives drivers time to respond to pedestrians.
- Avoid using signs in the bus window. They can block the driver's view.
- Train students, parents, and school staff.

The NJ STS Website is your best source for up-to-date New Jersey school transportation news. Check the website frequently for news and information. <http://njsts.org/>

Rodeo Alert!

What: The 41st New Jersey
Bus Driver Safety Competition
When: May 5th, 2012
Where: Six Flags Great Adventure

In addition to competing, drivers can learn about wheel chair securement and NJ Move On. More details to follow.

Proposed Legislation Would Require Background Checks for School Bus Aids

The "School Bus Safety and Child Protection Act" would close a loophole in current law by extending the requirement for criminal background checks to include school bus aids. It seems reasonable that the aids would be subjected to the same scrutiny as the drivers.

The bill would also tighten rules on school bus monitoring. Tampering with an on-board monitoring device would be a fourth degree crime, and school districts would be required to randomly review the recordings of their on-board cameras during the school year.

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