TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NOTE **No. T-08-04**

Department of Education
Jeanine Blomberg,
Commissioner

Finance and Operations

School Transportation Management

Contact:
Jamie S. Warrington

(850) 245-9795
SC 205-9795

National School Bus Safety Week

DATE: **September 24, 2007**

TO: **School District Transportation Directors**
Charter Schools

FROM: **Charlie Hood, Director**

SUBJECT: **National School Bus Safety Week, October 22-26, 2007**

Ensuring access to educational programs requires that school districts safely transport students to and from school each day. The Department of Education (DOE) and the Florida Association for Pupil Transportation (FAPT) recognize Florida's school bus drivers and transportation department personnel for their commitment and dedication to the task of ensuring safe transportation for over one million Florida students to school each day in school buses.

This year National School Bus Safety Week is **October 22-26, 2007**, and the theme is **"Be Aware ! – Cross With Care."** Although school buses continue to be the safest vehicle on the road to transport students, the danger zones around school buses continue to be of great concern for students, bus drivers, and other motorists. Transporters and educators should emphasize the need for motorists to stop when a school bus has its flashing red lights on and stop arms extended. These are the signals that indicate school children are boarding or departing from the bus, and it is one of the most critical times for the safety of children. School districts need to continue to offer training to bus drivers on student pickup and drop-off procedures, and to students on safe behavior in and around school buses.

The DOE and the FAPT also want to recognize the local Community Traffic Safety Teams, made up of representatives from many community agencies, which continue to work together throughout the year to improve the safety of students and the motoring public.

The Department and the FAPT also support the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MCIC), which is another student safety initiative established by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and other agencies to prevent abductions and aid recovery of missing children.

During National School Bus Safety Week, district and charter school personnel are encouraged to provide activities that recognize school bus drivers and all transportation professionals for their commitment to school bus safety. Florida maintains an excellent safety record in transporting public school children, and this special week is the perfect opportunity for communities to recognize and thank transportation professionals.

This year the Department will recognize National School Bus Safety Week by presenting a safety program to students at Bond Elementary School in Tallahassee. The honorary guest for the event is "Buster the Bus®," a robotic school bus that will present a safety awareness program to the students. Program topics will include safety while on the bus and outside the bus in the danger zones and proper crossing practices for students who must cross a street. Students will receive school bus safety items and the newly released brochure, "Are We There Yet?: Staying Safe Between Home And School," produced by the DOE offices of School Transportation and Safe Schools. This brochure provides valuable safety information for both students and their parents, and it can be accessed at the following links:
http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4510/coefo-08-02brochure1.pdf
http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4511/coefo-08-02brochure2.pdf

We encourage you to plan activities at the local level during National School Bus Safety Week to increase safety awareness and to show appreciation for the professionals dedicated to safely transporting Florida's public school children.

CFH:jw

cc: Superintendents