



## Operation Safe Stop

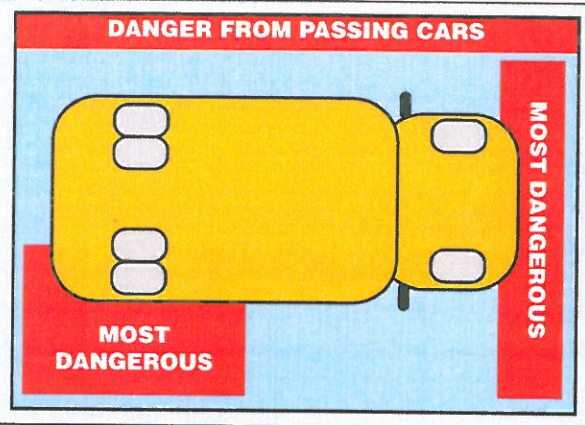
Each year, the Gateway School District uses over 67 school buses/vans to transport approximately 3,363 students to and from school each school day and travels nearly 835,000 miles a year.

As part National School Bus Safety Week, the district will participate in Operation Safe Stop, which is conducted in communities across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Gateway School District, along with local law enforcement and STA Bus Company will be participating in Operation Safe Stop the week of October 21-27. Principals and law enforcement have identified certain bus stops to visit, so don't be surprised if you see some friendly faces at the bus stop during the week.

### Bus Stop Safety Reminders for Parent & Students

#### Walk Smart in the School Bus Danger Zone

The Danger Zone is the space 10 feet all around the school bus. The bus driver cannot see children and small objects in the Danger Zone. Almost all school bus-related fatalities occur outside the school bus in the loading zone and most happen because motorists illegally pass a school bus.



## **What is Operation Safe Stop?**

Operation Safe Stop is a public awareness and enforcement effort to educate the motoring public that passing a stopped school bus, when children are loading or unloading, is both dangerous and illegal. Law enforcement agencies, school transportation providers, pupil transportation associations and PennDOT have combined their efforts to raise public awareness about the potential consequences, and reduce the occurrence of illegal school bus passes. Additionally, the District will use this time reinforce bus safety with our students.

## **Pennsylvania's School Bus Stopping Law**

Pennsylvania state law requires motorists to **stop at least 10 feet away** from school buses that have their red lights flashing and stop arm extended. Motorists must stop when they are behind the bus, meeting the bus or approaching an intersection where a bus is stopped. Motorists following or traveling alongside a school bus must also stop until the red lights have stopped flashing, the stop arm is withdrawn, and all children have reached safety. If physical barriers such as grassy medians, guide rails or concrete median barriers separate oncoming traffic from the bus, motorists in the opposing lanes may proceed without stopping.

## **Entering A School Bus**

Parents are only authorized to enter and ride a school bus when they are chaperoning a school sponsored trip and are approved by the corresponding school. If parents have problems they would like to discuss with school bus drivers, they are to call the schools and schedule an appointment. School bus drivers cannot hold conversations at bus stops since this can create dangerous conditions taking the driver's' attention away from the safety of the children and the traffic situation. This can also cause a delay in the drivers' schedule and tie up traffic, causing unnecessary problems. If the parents want to deliver a note to the school bus driver, they may give the note to their child to give to the driver.

## **Safety Reminders for Motor Vehicles**

1. When you meet or overtake a stopped school bus with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you **MUST STOP**.
2. When you approach an intersection where a stopped bus with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you **MUST STOP**.
3. You **MUST STOP** at least ten (10) feet away from the school bus.
4. You **MUST WAIT** until the red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm has been withdrawn before moving.
5. **DO NOT MOVE** until all the children have reached a place of safety.
6. You **MUST STOP** on roadways with painted lines.
7. Drivers on separate roadways do not have to stop on a highway with clearly defined dividing sections or physical barriers separating the roadways. This only applies when the school bus is on the opposite side of the road. **WHEN IN DOUBT, STOP**.