



NYAPT

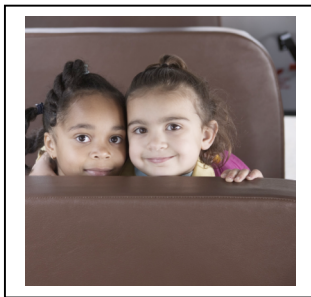
NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

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Our future is riding with us!

NEWS AND NOTES

January 2012---Have a Great New Year!



THOUGHTS...

Some thoughts on Change: “Change isn’t necessary...and survival isn’t mandatory.” Those were words of guidance from quality guru Charles Deming. As we begin the new year, our thoughts should center on our upcoming annual conference theme: **“COMMIT TO EXCELLENCE.”** Just like “Together We Can” and “Our Future is Riding with Us”—that theme has a meaning that we would like to dwell on for a moment.

Our profession is faced with many questions that we often find difficult to answer. We have been comfortable in the successes we have achieved over the years but need now to take more time to document those successes or how we have attained them. When budget makers and state leaders are looking at us for budget reductions and suggesting we are inefficient and ineffective, we need to be able to produce solid and sound data that will support our work. You will learn in this News and Notes about changes in the tenor of the discussion that will affect all we do and how we need to be prepared.

In the coming months, NYAPT will be working to increase the capacity of all our members to deal with and manage the data that demonstrates how successful and efficient we have been. In this age of accountability and transparency, that is a vital part of our future. We will provide educational opportunities, including webinars and Winter Workshop sessions, research papers to inform and expand your knowledge and opportunities to participate in work groups focused on developing materials and tools for our members.

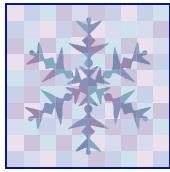
The Future is Riding with Us --- Indeed it is! And we must Commit to doing all we can to ensure that that future is sound and that our ability to keep our kids safe is fully intact and strengthened. Efforts such as these are vital to that ability and to our success.

Our best wishes to all for a successful and meaningful 2012 ahead for all!

David Christopher
President

Peter Mannella
Executive Director

AND NOW THE NEWS....



COME TO THE WINTER WORKSHOP!

The NYAPT Winter Workshop that will be held from February 23-24 at the State University of New York/Albany-East Campus in Rensselaer, NY. The “WW” will begin at 9:00 on the morning of February 23rd and come to a close at noon on February 24th.

The registration fee for the Winter Workshop is **\$125 per person** attending (\$265 for non-members). Hotel rooms are available at three locations with room rates between \$94 and \$96. Reservations must be made by **January 22, 2012**, in order to receive our group room rates.

The focus of the Winter Workshop will be on the fundamentals of school transportation as well as on financial and management issues that are critical to school transportation in our current environment. The **TENTATIVE** program includes:

THURSDAY

- “The Job”: What Is It? How Has It Evolved?
- Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Records
- Preventive Maintenance Solutions
- Routing and Scheduling in Tough Budget Times
- Budgeting for School Transportation

FRIDAY

- Legislative Briefing
- Patterns in School Transportation
- School Bus Replacement Strategies
- Special Needs Makes for Special Decisions

Registration forms are available on the NYAPT homepage. In the meantime, if you plan to attend but are awaiting approval from your districts, take time to make a hotel reservation to take advantage of the low room rates! We are hoping for a good attendance for this year’s Winter Workshop!!



GOVERNOR OFFERS STATE OF THE STATE MESSAGE 2012

Before several thousand attendees, Governor Andrew Cuomo this afternoon presented his 2012 Annual Message to the Legislature — or the State of the State message.

His message was an ambitious plan to move New York forward, appropriately entitled “Building a NEW New York...with you”. In the plan he outlined ways to rebuild our infrastructure including the

long-delayed construction of a new Tappan Zee bridge and a major infusion of development funds into the City of Buffalo. He called for continued efforts to reduce the deficit without raising taxes. He called for measures to relieve hunger among our children and to strengthen the middle class in our state. He called for reimagining (his word) state government which he suggested is not functioning effectively or efficiently.

The Governor called in strong terms for reform in education which he continues to say is #1 in spending in the nation but #38 in graduation rates. He called on legislators to work with him to ensure that schools are properly managed and even suggested that the tax cap has “forced” fiscal discipline in the schools. He emphasized the word “forced” as if to suggest that no fiscal discipline would have happened were it not for the imposition of the tax cap. One can imagine that school leaders might have a different view of that position in that they have been cutting school expenses for years prior to the tax cap being enacted.

In a special shout-out, the Governor remarked that everyone in education seems to have a lobbyist....he rattled off ‘teachers, school boards, superintendents’ and then said that **“even bus drivers have lobbyists”** with a picture of a school bus on the screen behind him. He also noted that the only people without a lobbyist are the students and that he would take that role on for them! While it might seem that we have joined an elite company of friends, it also suggests that we are a part of the budget discussion. We must be prepared in the coming weeks to argue our positions related to budget proposals and mandate relief and a range of topics. And we need to be willing and ready to negotiate change where that change will benefit our children while saving dollars for our taxpaying community.

NYAPT will communicate with the Governor that we, too, are “for the children” and that we only offer proposals that are good for the children. We have never lobbied for ourselves as school employees--- we have always advocated for things that help the children we transport. NYAPT will communicate with the Governor that we have put forth serious proposals for mandate relief that will save real money for the state and our school district budgets and have had no one seriously consider those proposals. We understand the situation that the state and municipalities and schools are in and we are willing to take up the cause with reasonable and practical proposals. Conversely, we cannot stand by and allow proposals to be advanced without speaking out on their practicality or relevance. It would be wrong and unprofessional to remain silent about inappropriate or ineffective proposals.



STATE BUDGET NEXT ON TAP

The Governor will issue his 2012-2013 Executive Budget Proposal on January 17, 2012. We expect that he will propose a budget that cuts expenses further in order to balance the budget without raising taxes or fees --- as he promised in his State of the State message. It is unclear how this will affect education, or more specifically, school transportation aid. But it is clear that there will not be a lot of new money in the system next year.

NYAPT members can expect a detailed briefing about the budget presentation and its implications for school transportation. Just as importantly, NYAPT members will receive an analysis of the entire education/school aid budget so that we all understand the overall implications of the Governor’s proposal on the schools in which we work and interact.



STATE DIRECTOR RETIRES

Marion Edick, who served as State Director of Pupil Transportation Services since 1995, has announced her retirement from state service effective December 30, 2011. The text of her message to the industry is inserted below. Over the years, Marion has contributed in many ways to the success of our school transportation efforts and in 2000, she was bestowed the Friend of NYAPT award by President Bernstein.

During her tenure, Marion led the efforts to implement Physical Performance Tests and the initial programs to be funded by the \$400,000 training fund. She worked with all of us on delivering the Master Instructor programs and strengthening the PDS and driver refreshers and worked with us on the implementation of the attendant/monitor training. She also guided us through development of the initial PJs Law training and bullying and anti-idling training for drivers. And Marion was always proud to be a part of presenting the SBDI of the Year award at our Annual Conference Banquet.

In our advocacy roles, NYAPT had disagreements with Marion over policy decisions and actions, but none of us ever doubted her commitment to the safety of our school children in all that she did. We wish Marion all the best in her retirement and remind her that she is always welcome among us as part of the NYAPT family.

Marion had this to say in sharing the news of her retirement: *“...Throughout my thirty-seven year career in public service, I have had the privilege of knowing and serving with many wonderful and dedicated individuals; but none finer than those who have chosen to work in pupil transportation. Your passion and dedication for protecting our children is infectious, and it truly infected me. I will cherish the memory of those times and all we were able to accomplish together. ...”*

We are communicating with the Education Commissioner that in the transition process we urge him to ensure that school transportation issues and services are addressed effectively and efficiently. For now, let us all wish Marion the best in her future.



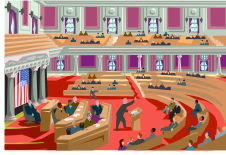
NYAPT TO GOVERNOR: CUT MANDATES

On December 28, 2011, NYAPT sent a letter to the Governor urging his attention to a wide-ranging list of mandate relief proposals. That letter has been posted to the NYAPT website under “ISSUES AND ADVOCACY” and members are encouraged to read it and become familiar with its contents. Members are also urged to share the letter with their business officials and superintendents as a means to garnering additional awareness and support.

The letter suggests that our recommendations for mandate relief measures are realistic and will actually result in savings. It lays out the many mandate relief items that are contained in our legislative agenda (see below) and points out that some of the recommendations run cross-current with our desire to ensure that ALL children are able to ride the yellow bus. We argue that we are offering these recommendations cognizant of the state’s and our districts’ financial plight. We argue

that several of our recommendations are focused on administrative streamlining but avoid consolidation and regionalization because we are not convinced that those approaches will actually save money--but we ARE sure that our ideas will save money.

NYAPT Members are urged to review this important letter and to become familiar with its contents so that, as we engage in budget negotiations in Albany, you can articulate our arguments and discuss them with your local leaders as well. We need all voices to raise up.



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: TAKE TIME TO REVIEW IT

This year's Legislative Agenda builds on the 2011 agenda but adds several timely issues as well.

We had a major success last year with the enactment of long-awaited amendments to improve Section 509-cc of the Vehicle and Traffic law dealing with disqualifying crimes for school bus drivers. And we had a successful budget season in turning back detrimental proposals offered in the Executive Budget. Accordingly, we need to build on those successes in the coming year and not forget the struggle that we encountered during the 2011 budget effort.

The 2011 Legislative Agenda focuses on mandate relief, illegal passing and a small number of safety-related measures. Among the **mandate relief measures** to be advocated are:

- Reducing the mileage for transportation for non-public school students to 10 miles;
- Reducing the mileage for mandated transportation for special education services to 25 miles;
- Eliminating the "Fire Suppression equipment" mandate;
- Eliminating mandated installation of seat belts on large school buses;
- Establishing a deadline for BOCES to provide special education placement information;
- Eliminating disincentives for shared services among districts;
- Adopting standard school year calendars and adjusting bell times for greater efficiencies.

Our agenda continues with a multi-faceted program related to eliminating **illegal passing**. We also continue our opposition to **advertising on school buses** and call for strengthening of the **school bus driver training infrastructure** and the skills of school transportation professionals.

With our key focus on the state budget and mandate relief, the agenda also includes a bold plan to **eliminate lap belts** from our large school buses. We are asserting that the lap belts are used by fewer than 5% of all students in the state and that, absent a directive from NHTSA for their use and absent a compelling argument about child safety, it is an unnecessary and unwarranted expenditure of tax dollars. This is certain to garner attention but we believe our arguments are logical and persuasive.

PLEASE take time to read and review the Legislative Agenda and to share it with your school leaders. We have a lot of work to do and we need all our members pulling in the same direction. Please read it and learn what it says so that we can all speak with one voice. Go to www.nyapt.org/issues-advocacy.



TEAM MEMBERSHIP: LOOKING FOR MEMBERS!

Time to sign up as a **TEAM MEMBER of NYAPT** and have your voice heard in our State Capitol!

TEAM membership is a new membership category approved by the NYAPT membership in July 2011. The target audience for the TEAM member category is drivers, dispatchers, attendants and mechanics who are not head mechanics or supervisory mechanics. Their inclusion will increase our ability to present ourselves to the Legislature as representing the school transportation industry.

Team Member dues are **only \$25.00** per year. A listing of the benefits for all membership categories is posted on the NYAPT website under "Benefits of Membership." The application form has is posted on the website as well. THANKS TO THE 12 PEOPLE WHO HAVE SIGNED UP TO DATE!!



DRIVER TRAINING NEWSLETTER: SAMPLE ISSUE

The **Cyr Foundation** thanks all who have subscribed to the **"IN THE DRIVERS SEAT"** newsletter and the training video series subscription program. There are 78 school bus operators and school districts that have signed up for this new service.

The program is still open to those who would like to receive the newsletters and training videos. Just fill out the registration form that is on the website (under Professional Development as well as under CYR FOUNDATION). The cost for nine newsletters and six videos is \$125 per district per school year.

A SAMPLE NEWSLETTER has been posted to the Cyr Foundation page on the NYAPT website.

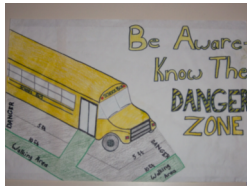
We urge you to take a look at the newsletter and are sure you will see it is a quality publication for your school bus drivers and others on your team.



ANNUAL TRADE SHOW AND SPONSORSHIPS

We have just released our 2012 Trade Show Registration forms as well as our 2012 Sponsorship opportunities. Vendors and potential sponsors should go to the NYAPT website and click on the ANNUAL CONFERENCE button which will take you to all the materials you will need for the trade show, sponsorships and all things Annual Conference!

We have raised some of the larger booth/display area exhibit fees but all other fees and sponsorship levels have remained the same for the 2012 conference and trade show.



AWARDS AND CONTESTS POSTED

We urge you to go to the NYAPT website to access the forms and applications for our NYAPT awards and contests. Recognition and celebration are important parts of being a membership organization! Please take time to nominate and submit applications!

These documents are posted on the **ABOUT US** page—click on the “**AWARDS**” button on the right hand side of the page.

It's time to begin preparing nominations for awards and to get the children and their teachers excited about the Poster Contest. The Above and Beyond Award and the KIDS SAY STOP Bumper Sticker contest will be posted shortly as well.

Deadlines have been set for each award---please adhere to these deadlines in fairness to all! Thanks!



GALLOWAY WINS CYR BOARD SEAT

Robert Galloway, Transportation Supervisor in Sodus CSD and North Rose-Wolcott CSD in the RATSA chapter has been elected to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Cyr Foundation for Excellence in School Transportation. Our thanks to Cy Hughes of Tarrytown for his willingness to be a candidate for that seat.

Individuals interested in being a Cyr Board member or in participating in Cyr Foundation activities should contact Peter Mannella at peter@nyapt.org or any of the Cyr Board members whose contact information is posted on the CYR Page of the NYAPT website.



CANDIDATES FOR NYAPT OFFICE ENCOURAGED

NYAPT members are encouraged to consider running for office or leading their local chapters or a committee at the state or local levels. In 2012, NYAPT members will elect a new **Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President and President-elect**. Any NYAPT ACTIVE member employed by a school district or BOCES is eligible to run for office. Any member who is interested should contact Dave Christopher, other officers or Peter Mannella to discuss your interest and to learn more about the offices.

Please consider taking a leadership role in your future and your organization!



MEMBERSHIP: WE NEED YOU!!

It is important that our membership remain strong and that our voices remain numerous and statewide. Our advocacy efforts are greatly strengthened by our numbers.

That said, we have over 366 members who have renewed their membership but that means we still have some 80 members who still need to renew....and untold numbers who could sign up to active, associate or team members! All are encouraged to join in and be counted!

Joining your state association brings you benefits and opportunities for growth and development. Being a member makes you a part of something larger than yourself or any issue specific to you or your operation. You become a part of the profession in which you work and through which you keep our children safe. So be a part of NYAPT and renew your membership as soon as possible!

Application forms can be found on the website by clicking on the Membership button and then clicking on "How to Become a Member." Sign right up!



CHAPTER MEETING CALENDAR

We have posted the meeting dates for chapter meetings for the 2011-2012 school year on the website Calendar for all those chapters that have shared their dates with us. Executive Director, Peter Mannella, will try to attend chapter meetings in the coming months as a part of our campaign to get the word out about school transportation and our legislative agenda.

We encourage all transportation supervisors to get involved in their local chapter activities and to be involved and engaged in statewide education and advocacy efforts. ***Together We Can!!***



PLAN ON ATTENDING THE 2012 ANNUAL SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE!!

JULY 15-18, 2012 IN SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

BECOME A MEMBER OF NYAPT!!

Go to www.nyapt.org and Click on Membership to Download an Application NOW!

NYAPT NEWS AND NOTES is a publication of the New York Association for Pupil Transportation and is intended solely for the use and information of the Members of NYAPT.