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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 15, 2018

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U-46 Transportation Department to be Honored with 'Accent on Achievement'

Board of Education to mark National School Bus Safety Week

ELGIN - In honor of National School Bus Safety Week, School District U-46 is celebrating the Department of Transportation, including about 300 dedicated bus drivers. The department ranks in the top five percent of pupil transportation programs in the United States and ensures that 27,000 students get to school every day safely and on time.

"Our entire transportation team plays a vital role in ensuring that students' journeys to school and back are safe and comfortable," said U-46 CEO Tony Sanders. "I applaud the Transportation Department staff for their exceptional commitment to student and public safety."

The Board of Education will honor the Transportation Department with an "Accent on Achievement" during Monday's meeting.

U-46 bus drivers log 4.5 million miles a year, safely transporting students daily to 57 schools and programs in the District's 11 communities. In addition to drivers, the department includes assistants, dispatchers, route managers, office staff, fleet maintenance crew, and routers.

"The U-46 Transportation Department does an amazing job of safely transporting thousands of students each and every day," said U-46 Director of Transportation Jeffrey Prowell. "We are the first District employee that many students see each morning and the last one they see at the end of the school day. I am very grateful for the hard work and dedication of the 420 Transportation Department employees who perform this important work every day."

Distracted driving by other drivers texting or talking on phones is one of the most common threats to school bus safety, Prowell said. He says he's seen an increase in the number of buses being rear-ended during his 20-year career.

To bring awareness to the importance of school bus safety, the U-46 Transportation Department encourages the public to remember:

- Anytime there's a school bus on the road, realize that children are most likely nearby and take extra care – leave a lot of space around the bus.
- When the bus turns on its yellow flashing lights, this means it is about to stop and pick up students. Slow down and prepare to stop.
- When the bus turns on its red flashing lights and extends its stop arm, this means stop in both directions. Never pass a school bus with red flashing lights in either direction. (The only exception in Illinois is when the driver is on a highway with four or more lanes with at least two lanes of traffic in either direction. If the driver is going in the opposite direction of the bus, the driver does not have to stop.)
- The most dangerous part of a school bus trip for students is actually the bus stop. Students, especially young children, are at risk of being injured or killed when motorists don't stop for the flashing red lights and extended bus arm.
- Remind students who ride a bus to always look to the right before they exit. Also let them know if they drop an item while exiting or entering the bus, they should never pick it up. Instead, ask the driver and follow his/her instructions.

The Board of Education will recognize the U-46 Department of Transportation on Monday, Oct. 15 with an "Accent on Achievement" certificate during the Board's public session, which reopens at 7 p.m. in room 140 at the Educational Services Center. Another Accent will be delivered to U-46 Gifted Coordinator April Wells for an award she received from the National Association for Gifted Children.



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School District U-46 serves families in 11 communities: Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In total, the District encompasses 90 square miles within the Fox River Valley, approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and includes communities within Cook, DuPage and Kane counties. More than 39,000 pre-K through twelfth graders attend the 57 District schools and programs. To learn more, Visit the U-46 [website](#), or like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).