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Shapiro Administration Announces Results of Operation Safe Stop 2023

During one day targeted enforcement and education event, nearly 40 percent fewer violations reported this year compared to last year

Harrisburg, PA – Today, the Shapiro Administration released the results of Operation Safe Stop, an annual school bus enforcement and education initiative aimed at enhancing school bus safety for students across the Commonwealth. Held on October 18 this year, Operation Safe Stop is a one-day targeted enforcement and education event during which law enforcement agencies and participating school districts document occurrences of drivers violating Pennsylvania's [School Bus Stopping Law](#) and emphasize the importance of school transportation safety. The press conference was hosted by **Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, West Shore Regional Police, and West Shore School District.**

This year's Operation Safe Stop data revealed that participating school districts and law enforcement agencies reported witnessing 176 violations of the law, (down/up) from the 252 reported last year.

"While we're certainly glad that violations decreased this year, one incident of passing a school bus is one too many," said **PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services Kara Templeton**. "If we saw this many violations in just one day, it's clear that safety for our students traveling to and from school needs to be a continued focus for our communities and that motorists remain vigilant while sharing the road with school buses and students."

The School Bus Stopping Law requires motorists approaching a school bus with its red lights flashing and stop arm extended, to stop at least 10 feet from the bus. Motorists approaching from all directions are required to stop. However, motorists who encounter a school bus stopping on the opposite side of a divided highway are not required to stop when lanes of the highway are clearly separated by a divider, such as a concrete barrier or grassy median.

"Drivers might consider the steep penalties if convicted of disobeying Pennsylvania's School Bus Stopping Law - a \$250 fine, five points on your driving record and a 60-day license suspension. The fine increases to \$300 if someone is caught by a stop arm camera," said **Corporal Zeina Black, Permits and Bus Safety Unit Supervisor with the Pennsylvania State Police**. "But even worse than these penalties, a tragedy could occur if either a driver or a student is not paying attention to their surroundings."

Some safety tips for students to remember while waiting for or loading and unloading the bus include:

- Get to the school bus stop at least five minutes early, so you won't have to run across the road to catch the bus.
- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic.
- Line up at least five giant steps away from the curb or the roadway to wait for the bus.
- Never run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.
- Never push when getting on or off the school bus.

“Student safety at school bus stops and in school zones is of the utmost importance and requires the undivided attention of all motorists,” said **Department of Education Secretary Khalid N. Mumin**. “Local school districts work hard to identify the safest locations possible for school bus stops and to train their staff. But to ensure that students remain safe, we urge all drivers to watch for the flashing lights of school buses and always stop when students are getting on and off.”

For more information about school bus safety, visit PennDOT's [School Bus Safety Tips](#) page on the [Driver Vehicles Services](#) website. The website also offers an interactive video illustrating Pennsylvania's school bus stopping law.

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