



MOORE
COUNTY SCHOOLS

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PRESS RELEASE

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Drivers certified in School Bus Watch

Approximately 110 Moore County Schools' bus drivers and monitors recently participated in the School Bus Watch training on identifying and reporting situations that may present a danger to students.

Moore County Schools is the first school district in the state to have its bus drivers certified in this program, according to Derek Graham, Chief Consultant with the NC-DPI Transportation Services. The program was conducted by Dr. John Leak, Transportation Education Consultant with the NC-DPI Transportation Services.

School Bus Watch was developed for the school bus industry by representatives from the National Association for Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS), and the National School Transportation Association (NSTA) in cooperation with the Highway Watch program. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the American Trucking Association.

The purpose of the program is to educate school bus professionals on how to identify, evaluate and report unusual activity. The training also provides bus drivers with an awareness of potential terrorist damage and informs them and support staff of security issues to the school bus community.

By participating in the program, drivers will be enrolled in School Bus Watch/Highway Watch. Each driver will be issued an identification number, a certificate and a wallet card with his/her name, and the number to call for the Highway Watch Call Center. No one else can use that number except the person it is issued to.

If a report is made that is safety-related, then it is forwarded directly to local law enforcement. If a report is made that is security-related, it is still forwarded directly to local law enforcement. It is also forwarded to the Highway ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) so the information can be analyzed and shared with federal intelligence agencies.

The ultimate goal of School Bus Watch is to prevent terrorists from using large vehicles (like school buses) from taking American citizens as hostages. According to Charles McDowell, Executive Supervisor for Transportation with Moore County Schools, "School buses are allowed (almost) anywhere in the United States, they could easily be used in a terrorist activity. Our bus drivers are now trained to look for suspicious acts and how to report them to the proper authorities. We must continue to enhance our training in providing the best possible care, safety and security for our precious cargo."

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