

POLICE SERVICES BOARD

September 22nd, 2022

To All Ontario Police Services Boards:

The Municipality of East Ferris Police Services Board is concerned that not enough is being done to protect children getting on and off school buses. Since the beginning of the 2022 school year, all school buses operating in Ontario have been equipped with a new eight-light amber light system, as well as text added to the back of the bus to remind drivers not to pass when the red lights are flashing. These changes are all intended to help drivers do the right thing. Unfortunately, the results since the beginning of this school year show no change in driver behavior. The East Ferris Police Services Board is convinced we must now proceed with the addition of the third component of the school bus safety program: camera equipped stop arms to ensure safety compliance.

A recent study by Nipissing-Parry Sound Student Transportation Services regarding illegal school bus passing found 552 incidents for the school year 2021 / 22 or 2.95 per school day. As part of the "Let's Remember Adam" campaign in the Municipality of East Ferris, illegal passing noted in the first three weeks of the 2022 / 23 school year by buses carrying East Ferris children shows no change in driver behavior. Therefore, it is time to move to Step 3: mandatory installation of cameras on all school buses. For change to happen, education plus enforcement are needed. The East Ferris Police Services Board is asking all Police Services Boards, given their mandate to ensure safety and well-being, to bring forward to their next Police Services Board Meeting the following resolution to adopt and circulate to the appropriate parties in their area.

WHEREAS in Ontario it is unlawful for a stopped school bus to fail to stop when the red overhead lights or the stop arm is activated, and

WHEREAS, an eight-light yellow and red light system and education campaign to encourage drivers to stop is now in place in Ontario, and

WHEREAS data collected to date by the East Ferris Police Services Board indicates that there has been no change in driver habits since the beginning of the 2022 school year; and
WHEREAS over 837,000 students travel in a school vehicle in Ontario each school day; and

WHEREAS the East Ferris Police Services Board believes that school buses should be as safe as possible and that safety standards should be higher than they are;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Police Services Board of the Municipality of East Ferris request the Attorney General of Ontario to enforce laws that protect students by prohibiting drivers from passing a school bus when dropping off or picking up passengers.

FURTHER, that the Attorney General request that the appropriate provincial government officials review recent proposed changes to school bus regulations by Transport Canada regarding required equipment, including:

- Infraction cameras*
- Extended stop sign arms*
- 360 degree exterior cameras*

FURTHER, that the Attorney General examine the application of camera and fine collection technologies similar to those used on electronically controlled toll highways to ensure that no offending driver is excluded from the law.

FURTHER, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Nipissing MPP Vic Fedeli, local school boards and the Ontario Good Roads Association.

In closing, the Municipality of East Ferris Police Services Board wish to thank you for your support on this matter.

Regards,

Pauline Rochefort

Pauline Rochefort, Chair
East Ferris Police Services Board