



SURVIVAL FACTORS ATTACHMENT 6

Responses from School Transportation on Experience with Seat Belts

Chattanooga, TN

HWY17MH009

(3 pages)

Summary of Responses

1. Certified driver and instructor, twin rivers unified school district California

Email exchange with Nancy Jensen on August 3, 2017. Summary notes as follows.

Driver's perspective has found it "very difficult" to ensure proper use of the belts. Have seen kids put the shoulder portion behind their back or take off the restraints on longer trips, requiring driver to pull over and ask them to put them on. Sees a need for school districts to assist in the process. Mixed feelings and believe the safety issues they create associated with drivers workload might create a more dangerous environment on large buses, and thus would rather not have them on the larger buses, noted that its not such a problem on smaller buses.

2. Orange County School District

Email and Phone conversation with Pam McDonald on August 3, 2017 and August 7, 2017. Notes as follows.

In talking with the drivers they say the younger Elementary students wear them, it's the Middle and High School students who don't like to wear them. Drivers make them put them on before they leave the school sites, but sometimes they take them off. We have had a couple of students who are too big and the three point seat belt will not fit them and there are no seat belt extensions available. This is an issue.

3. Director of Transportation, Saint Lucie County FL

Email received from Donald Carter, August 25, 2017. Summary notes as follows.

This School district already has lap belts, and had a crash in 2012 in which 3points would have been a benefit, which was investigated by NTSB. Switched to ordering buses with 3points and now has 75 out of 308 routed buses with 3 point belts. Checked on retrofitting the replacement bus from the crash, but did not pursue the \$20K price. Has found the 3points better than lap belts because the don't get used as weapons, and believes the kids are more secure and have fewer discipline issues. The spacing for 2 or 3 placements for seats work.

4. Director of Transportation, Clark Pleasant Community School Corporation (Indiana)

Letter received from Robert Downin, September 11, 2017. Summary notes as follows.

Have 3 buses with 3points, 6 on order. Had support of parents, but concerns for capacity, solved by systems by IMMI. Transition went well with proper planning and training of drivers. "Beyond thrilled" with the results and has seen improved student behavior. Noted that compartmentalization does not work if students are seated improperly.

5. Program officer, Nevada Dept. of Education

Email received from Diana Holander, September 12, 2017. Summary notes as follows.

Per law effective July 2019, new buses purchased will have 3 points. No opposition in public hearings. Have some buses with restraints in service and have found no serious issues. It will have the effect of reducing the number of buses purchased by a district, but this has not resulted in opposition. Concerned that some districts can not afford it, but recognizes the funding limitations.

6. Transportation Manager of Helena Public Schools

Email received from Tom Cohn on September 13, 2017 with attachment. Summary notes as follows.

Added protection for side impacts and rollovers and less driver distraction. Sees a potential drawback of the time required for kids to put them on, but has not seen a problem in Helena. Concerned that students refuse to wear them despite it being a law. Started in 2011, process held community meetings and saw wide support. Was concern for cost but an evaluation estimated it was 7 cents a day (per child).

7. Director of School Transportation, Indiana Department of Education

Email received from Michael La Roccco on September 13, 2017. Summary notes as follows.

Noted that school bus purchases are done at the district level, but noted that his office provides information as to why they consider the purchase and use of lap/shoulder belts to be important.