

NYC DCAS, NYC Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Transportation Announces Joint Effort to Improve School Bus Safety

Plan will outline ways to improve the design and operation of school buses

NEW YORK – NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) Commissioner Dawn M. Pinnock, together with the NYC Department of Education (DOE), and the U.S. Department of Transportation Center Volpe Center (U.S. DOT Volpe) today announced a joint effort to improve school bus safety. Working in partnership, DCAS, DOE, and U.S. DOT Volpe will study ways to improve the design and operation of school buses in New York City to reduce crashes and increase safety. The effort will have a particular focus on electric school buses as the City will transition all school buses to electric by 2035. The study will result in a Safe Fleet Transition Plan to be published by the end of the year.

“Traffic safety is public safety — and nothing is more vital than the safety of our children,” said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. “Developing and implementing our Safe Street Transition Plan will ensure our school buses are equipped with state-of-the-art safety features. Coupled with our recent announcement on installing Intelligent Speed Assistance in 50 city vehicles, this announcement shows that New York City is leading on creative ways to make our streets safer.”

“The implementation of the Safe Fleet Transition Plan is integral in enhancing the safety of our city’s students, who rely on school buses daily,” said **DCAS Commissioner Dawn M. Pinnock**. “It is a collective responsibility to explore and implement new safety measures that protect our children on school buses. We are proud to lend our expertise to devising this plan which will improve bus operations and increase sustainability.”

“Whether in the classroom or on the way to school, student safety is at the core of all we do in the Department of Education,” said **Schools Chancellor David C. Banks**. “As our schools, city, and methods of transportation transition towards environmental sustainability, I am thrilled to be partnering with DCAS and U.S. DOT Volpe to continue to prioritize student safety and protect our youngest commuters.”

“We are pleased to be working with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, the US DOT Volpe Center, and DOE Office of Pupil Transportation in reviewing collisions and other incidents in the school bus industry both in the city and nationally,” said **Matt Berlin CEO of NYC School Bus Umbrella Services**. “Based on the city’s Safe Fleet Transition Plan, the work we are doing jointly regarding telematics, and pilot programs such as intelligent speed assistance (ISA) we are confident that our joint work will find additional technologies and vehicle design changes that will make our industry and drivers safer and prevent serious injuries and fatalities on our roadways.”

The plan will lay the foundation for critical safety improvements including the potential to adopt high vision buses, determine the viability of intelligent speed assistance and automatic braking, and consider employing audible turn signals and alerts similar to those used by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. In addition to exploring these features, the plan will also gauge the efficacy of surround cameras on buses, improve and implement new ways to utilize telematics, assess the use of backup alerts and cameras, expand the DCAS safety training to school bus operators, and more.

Upon completion of the study, DCAS will work closely with the DOE and school bus companies to develop short-term retrofit proposals and identify funding sources, reevaluate and develop specifications and requirements for future school bus contracts, and urge school bus suppliers to invest in electric vehicles with standard safety features.

Through [Executive Order 53 of 2020](#), DCAS is called on to promote and implement safe and electric fleets of the future for the City and for private fleets and other public fleets operating within the five boroughs.

In partnership with [U.S. DOT Volpe](#), DCAS will prepare Safe and Clean Fleet Transition Plans (SFTP and CFTP) for the broader fleet industry to outline the state of the market and technology to achieve safer and more sustainable fleet. DCAS and Volpe have already published four reports. [The first report on truck side-guards](#) has now inspired two NYC local laws and the nation's largest side-guard implementation. The two published SFTPs for the City fleet from [2017](#) and [2018 - 2019](#) have resulted in over 63,000 safety improvements so far.

In December 2021, DCAS, the Business Integrity Commission, and U.S. DOT Volpe also published a [Safe Fleet Transition Plan for the commercial waste industry](#). The waste industry report will be a model as they launch a similar effort with private school bus companies serving New York City children.

This fall, on October 25, DCAS will also host an in-person [Fleet Safety Forum](#) at the Queens Theatre. This will be the first in-person forum since 2019. In conjunction with Together for Safer Roads (TSR), DCAS has hosted a series of online safety fleet forums since 2020. DCAS will present initial findings for the school bus report at the forum.

“As we transition to electric school buses, we can also make our buses safer,” said **DCAS Deputy Commissioner and NYC Chief Fleet Officer Keith Kerman**. “High vision buses, surround cameras, improved implementation of telematics, and pedestrian avoidance and warning systems can all be part of the school bus designs of the future. We look forward to examining these options with the Department of Education, school bus vendors, and US DOT Volpe.”

In addition to the Safe Fleet Transition Plan, DCAS has implemented a wide variety of safety measures as part of Vision Zero. Other measures include the City's fleet first CRASH management system, the nation's largest rollout of live vehicle tracking devices managed through our Fleet Office of Real Time Tracking (FORT), the nation's leading program of truck safety guards, barring hands-free phone use by fleet operators, and providing safety training to over 76,000 City employees.

About the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services

The NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) makes city government work for all New Yorkers. Our commitment to equity, effectiveness, and sustainability guides our work providing City agencies with the resources and support needed to succeed, including:

- Recruiting, hiring, and training City employees.
- Managing 55 public buildings.
- Acquiring, selling, and leasing City property.
- Purchasing over \$1 billion in goods and services for City agencies.
- Overseeing the greenest municipal vehicle fleet in the country.
- Leading the City's efforts to reduce carbon emissions from government operations.

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