



For Immediate Release

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NSTA FLASH POLL SHOWS SCHOOL BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE REMAINS PRIORITY ISSUE

As private school bus contractors throughout the country continue to rebound from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the National School Transportation Association (NSTA) recently conducted a “Flash Poll” in order to measure the severity of the school bus driver shortage from a national perspective.

Private school bus operators provide nearly 40 percent of the nation’s school bus service in 200,000 yellow school buses with close to 380,000 employees. Each day, almost 26 million children rely on the school bus as their primary way to get to school in the safest way possible.

This survey was conducted by NSTA from March 7 to March 14 in partnership with Transfinder Infomatics, a service of Transfinder Corp., a 34-year-old company that develops school bus routing and logistics software.

Poll results showed that 28 percent of respondents saw a 6 - 10 percent shortfall in their driver workforce, followed closely by 26 percent of survey takers who indicated being down 11-15 percent. Overall, the poll results showed that 94 percent of respondents indicated that they were not at expected bus driver staffing levels.

Meanwhile, 12 percent of polltakers said they were down drivers by more than 20 percent short of drivers and 16 percent said their driver workforce had dropped between 16-20 percent.

“This NSTA poll validates what we already knew to be true, and that’s a severe school bus driver shortage continues to impact student transportation. As you can see, the driver shortage has impacted operations throughout the United States, and by aggregating data we see that 54 percent of survey respondents said that they are more than 10 percent short of drivers. That’s a staggering number,” said Curt Macysyn, NSTA executive director.

“The NSTA Driver Shortage Flash Poll that Transfinder Infomatics conducted paints a very clear picture of how school bus operators are struggling to find bus drivers,” said Antonio Civitella, president and CEO of Transfinder. “Very few respondents said they didn’t have a driver shortage issue. The bulk of those taking the survey said they were



down between 6 percent to 15 percent. That’s a sizable shortage that districts are working to overcome to transport students safely and on time every day. And we know the school bus is the safest form of transportation available to students.”

NSTA continues to work with policy-makers at the national and state levels in order to provide solutions that will achieve the result of getting more school bus driver applicants trained, qualified, licensed, and behind the wheel without delay. The recent Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) granting of a waiver for the engine compartment component of the pre-trip vehicle inspection skills testing requirement in 49 CFR § 383.113(a)(1)(i), also known informally as the “under-the-hood” component, for commercial driver’s license (CDL) applicants is an example where the CDL process can be streamlined, without any impact to safety.

Unfortunately, this waiver expires on March 31, 2022, and as the survey results show, the industry continues to be adversely affected by the driver shortage.

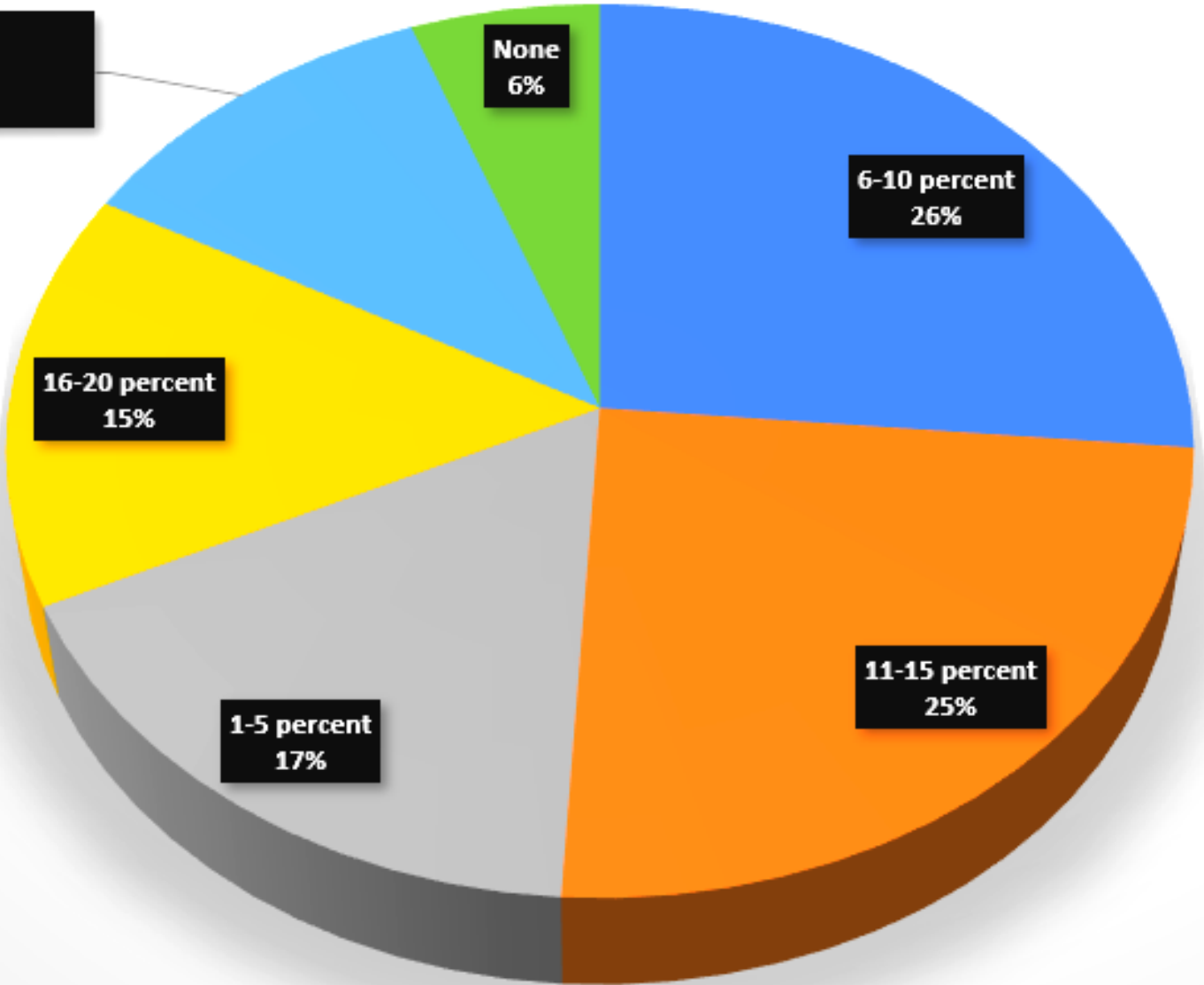
Students are significantly safer riding to and from school in a school bus than walking, riding bikes, or riding/driving in their family car. The number of fatalities of school age children traveling to and from school, per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), is 70 times higher in passenger vehicles than in school buses.

“The iconic yellow bus represents the safest and most efficient way to get children to school each day, so the driver shortage affects communities in an impactful way,” Macysyn concluded.

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About NSTA: National School Transportation Association has been the voice of private school bus contractors, manufacturers and suppliers since 1964. The association provides school transportation professionals with the tools and resources they need to make school buses safe, affordable, and efficient nationwide. Find out more at www.yellowbuses.org.

How many school bus drivers are you down? (by percent)*



Poll conducted by Transfinder Infomatics