



NAPT STATEMENT ON ENHANCING

SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The NAPT Board of Directors, through its Public Policy Committee, conferred with special education transportation experts from among our members to discuss measures we could pursue to improve the delivery of transportation services to children with special needs or disabling conditions.

An underlying concern in those discussions was the lack of substantive input from transportation departments in decisions that will affect their work and their ability to serve these students safely and effectively. That lack of input makes school transportation unique among school disciplines in not being involved or included in those processes.

Our examination of this issue also revealed the need for attention to be given to the training that school bus drivers and aides receive in relation to students with special needs and to the benefits of having another adult on school buses to support the driver and ensure the safety of our students.

Accordingly, the NAPT Board of Directors will advance advocacy efforts that encompass the following:

- *Inclusion of, or practical arrangements for involvement or input by the transportation department in the initial evaluation process, development of the Evaluators Assessment Report and development of the student's Individualized Education Plan.*
- *Assessing the need for an adult aide to allow for supervision of students with special needs on school buses.*
- *Advancing the need to provide proper and adequate training for bus drivers, aides, and supervisors in relation to the transportation of students with special needs.*

These steps are not exhaustive but are important first steps that will (1) yield broad-based benefits for students with special needs and (2) ensure the appropriate and effective involvement of school transportation professionals in the decisions made on behalf of those students.

NAPT has worked vigorously over the years to ensure that our members were informed on the needs of students with disabling conditions and special needs and, conversely, our members have engaged in many efforts to ensure that they and their teams were informed and prepared in this area. With this as background, we are eager to engage with our members and partners to ensure safe transportation for all our students in every state in the nation.