

**For Immediate Release: October 21, 2014**

**Contact: Jeanne Kraft, Public Information Officer, 903-737-7473**

## **Paris ISD recognizes National School Bus Safety Week**

In conjunction with National School Bus Safety Week (Oct. 20-24), the Paris ISD Transportation Department is reminding drivers to be cautious when driving near school buses. “We are asking our citizens to obey the law—don’t pass stopped school buses,” said Transportation Director Tony Gunn.

The Texas Department of Public Safety released a statement Monday reminding drivers it is illegal to pass any school bus that is stopped and operating a visual signal – either flashing red lights or a stop sign.

During National School Bus Safety Week, troopers will be patrolling areas where school buses pick up and drop off students, watching for motorists violating the school bus law. Drivers who violate the law could face fines as much as \$1,250. In 2013, Texas Highway Patrol troopers issued 566 tickets for passing a stopped school bus. According to the Texas Education Agency, more than 40,000 school buses transport 1.5 million Texas children every school day.

According to Texas statute, a driver – traveling in either direction – must stop when approaching a school bus that is stopped and operating a visual signal. The driver may not proceed until one of the following occurs: the school bus resumes motion; the operator is signaled by the bus driver to proceed; or the visual signal is no longer activated.

If a road is divided only by a left-turning lane, drivers on both sides of the roadway must stop for school buses with alternating red flashing lights activated. However, if the lanes are separated by an intervening space or physical barrier, only motorists going in the same direction as the bus are required to stop.

(As a reminder, school buses, by law, must stop at all railroad crossings.)

Additional safety measures drivers can take to help keep children safer include:

- When driving in school zones, watch out for student pedestrians.
- Slow down and watch for children congregating near bus stops.
- Look for children who might dart into the street without looking for traffic.
- Know and obey the laws concerning traffic and school buses in Texas.



Members of the Paris ISD Transportation Department photographed from the left are Don Walters, Tommy Thompson, Ronny Ellis, Marcus Jenkins, Antonio Chaverria, Jamie McMillan, Marvin Wroten, Monique Dixon, Gary Hass, J.O Sims, and Tony Gunn.