



## *Rural Municipality of Belfast*

Mayor: Garth Gillis; Chief Administrative Officer: Bob Brooks  
*Incorporated 1972*

July 27, 2023

Honourable Natalie Jameson  
Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning  
P.O. Box 2000  
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8

### *Re: Driver's Passing Stopped School Buses*

Dear Minister Jameson,

In the community of Iona, we have a recurring problem that endangers our children on a daily basis as they go to and from their school. This issue happens routinely and only increases with severity year after year. It is not limited to Iona, or to only the children who attend the Montague Consolidated School; this problem exists island-wide and it is time that the Government of Prince Edward Island (the Province) takes a stand for the safety of our children.

You will not be shocked to hear that the problem I speak of, is drivers passing stopped school buses. These drivers claim they do not see the bus or the flashing lights. They claim they are not aware they have to stop when children are entering or exiting a bus or they insist the bus driver waved them forward. Of course, these claims are only made in the **rare** case that the driver is caught and charged for their offence. The ignorance of these individuals and the complete disregard for our children's safety is astounding.

This happens on our road (and many other island roads), year after year, month after month, day after day. Strict enforcement of the laws (already in place), are required before a child is severely injured, or killed.

Therefore, I am asking that:

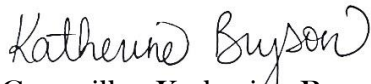
- Rear and forward-facing cameras be placed on all school buses island-wide;
- The Province initiate an awareness campaign to inform, educate and remind the public of the school-bus rules;
- The Province install signs (similar to those recently installed for drunk driving), at all entry points to the Island, informing the rules of law regarding school buses on Prince Edward Island; and
- The Province strengthen and enforce the laws put in place for the safety of our children and increase the penalties for these infractions.

Our children deserve more. No child should fear taking the school bus, nor suffer from anxiety when entering or exiting the school bus. These offenders must be held accountable. I ask and I plead that you do everything in your power to ensure the safety of our island children.

At the recent sitting of Council of the Rural Municipality of Belfast; Council unanimously agreed that this is not only a problem in the community of Iona, but across our whole Municipality, and indeed, across the whole Island.

School is now out for the summer; this is the perfect time to prepare the materials and information for this action. Your urgent attention is required in this matter; before the next school season and indeed, before someone gets hurt!

Sincerely,



Councillor Katherine Bryson  
Rural Municipality of Belfast  
13056 Shore Road - Unit 103  
Wood Islands, PE C0A 1R0

CC: Hon. Dennis King, Premier  
Hon. Bloyce Thompson, Minister of Justice and Public Safety  
Hon. Darlene Compton, MLA District 4-Belfast-Murray River  
Hon. Cory Deagle, MLA District 3-Montague-Kilmuir  
Mayor and Council, Rural Municipality of Belfast  
CAO Bob Brooks, Rural Municipality of Belfast

... 2 of 2