



Breaking News

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School bus crossing visual catching on in other states



The Steffi Crossing Enhancer is a reflective arrow with elastic bands that drivers wear on the back of their hand. The arrow is designed to provide a clear visual through glare on the windshield. Inventor Victoria DeCarlo said it has caught on at operations in many states since its launch last year.

Dozens of school bus operations across the nation are now using a tool that can help students see the bus driver's hand signal when crossing the street.

The Steffi Crossing Enhancer, [invented by longtime New York school bus driver Victoria DeCarlo](#), is a reflective arrow with elastic bands that drivers wear on the back of their hand. The arrow is designed to provide a clear visual through glare on the windshield.

School bus drivers in New York are required to use a thumb and forefinger signal to direct students when it is safe to cross the street in front of the bus.

Since DeCarlo launched the Steffi Crossing Enhancer last year, it has caught on at operations in many other states. She recently told *SBF* that "thousands" of Steffis are now in use across the U.S., and they are being introduced in some parts of Canada.

New York Bus Sales is now distributing the product, which can also be ordered via www.steffiproducts.com.

The Steffi is also making its way to state legislators. DeCarlo said that a couple of New Jersey assemblymen's offices have received samples, and Sen. Jim Anderson of Wyoming has received samples as well. Last week, she met with New York state Sen. George Maziarz, who she said was impressed by its simplicity, effectiveness and low cost. Maziarz also reportedly told DeCarlo that the Steffi Crossing Enhancer will be brought before the Senate transportation committee when the next session begins.

"I firmly believe that every bus driver in this country and Canada should be wearing them," DeCarlo said. "The Steffi is not for the driver; it is for the student. ... A student that crosses should not have to guess; it should be a given."

During the last school year, DeCarlo awarded a \$500 scholarship to a student whose crossing practices had improved. She also awarded a \$250 scholarship to a graduating senior on her bus for being "the safest crosser in front of his bus."

DeCarlo said that for the upcoming school year, she plans to offer other drivers at her operation an opportunity to submit a brief essay on their senior students' "excellent crossing" practices and why they should be awarded a scholarship.

The Steffi Crossing Enhancer will be one of the items on view at the New York Association for Pupil Transportation's trade show on July 15 at the Albany Times-Union Center.