

'School's Open - Drive Carefully'

AAA Western and Central New York, Sen. Timothy Kennedy, New York State Police partner to raise awareness

BY AAA OF WESTERN AND CENTRAL NEW YORK

There's no doubt that school openings this year will look much different from every other year. While we are looking to give our children a sense of normalcy in returning to school, there will be some changes to the daily routine. There are many twists and turns that complicate the roadmap for the reopening of schools, but figuring out how to get students to school safely may be the most complex.

AAA's annual "School's Open - Drive Carefully" campaign alerts motorists to the special risks to school-age children from motor vehicle crashes - the leading cause of death for children from 5 to 14 years old. More parents will be walking and driving their children to school, due to the uncertainty of school bus services and new COVID-19 protocol. Motorists should continue to be extremely cautious of children darting out between parked cars.

To raise awareness of this important issue, AAA teamed up with Sen. Timothy Kennedy, chairman of the New York Committee on Transportation, along with the New York State Police for a virtual press conference held last Thursday.

AAA WCNY President Tony Spada emphasized the need to show extra caution when driving as schools reopen, since vacation-minded children are apt to be less careful. Again, motorists should be particularly alert for children darting out between parked cars on busy streets.



Trooper James O'Callaghan and his daughter, Ava. She is a member of AAA School Safety Patrol at her school. (AAA photo)

"More parents will be walking and driving their children to school, due to the uncertainty of school bus services and new COVID-19 protocol. Bus patterns will be different," he said. "And with the virtual model in place at many schools and limited in-person learning, more children will be home throughout the day. That means

motorists must be vigilant at all hours and look for children who may be playing near or even in the street."

Kennedy said, "In a typical year, there are 55 million students that go back to school across the country. Some are going back in person, some are utilizing a hybrid model, and some are learning virtually at

home. We need to treat school zones, in particular, with caution and care, but this year, given the complexities of the pandemic, we need to consider that any community could be a school zone potentially, and we have to be mindful of children outside playing."

Trooper James O'Callaghan, public information officer for New York State Police, Troop A, said, "This is an important and successful campaign. Not only do we have cars passing buses on the left, we have cars passing on the right. You're looking at a 5-point ticket; that is steep, but the real deterrent should be the fact that you can take a life. We want to make sure your children are as safe as they can be when they get on and off that bus every single day."

As part of the campaign, the New York State Thruway Authority will display the "School's Open" digital message on Thruway TVs in every service area 24/7 through mid-October and the New York State Office of Parks and Recreation will display "School's Open" posters in its facilities.

As upstate New York's largest member services organization, AAA Western and Central New York provides more than 887,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding in 1900, AAA has been a leading advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. Visit AAA at www.AAA.com.

Cuomo launches 'The COVID-19 Report Card'

Online dashboard tracks real-time COVID-19 infections & testing operations of every school & school district

• Signs executive order to ensure schools, local health departments, labs and all testing sites properly collect and report COVID-19 data on daily basis

• Data includes: positive cases by date of students and staff; number of students and staff on-site; percentage of on-site positive cases; number of tests administered by school, test type, lab used and lag time; date of last submission and update

Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Tuesday announced the launch of "The COVID-19 Report Card," an online dashboard that tracks real-time COVID-19 infections and testing operations of every New York school and school district. The governor acted by executive order in directing schools, local

health departments, labs and all testing sites properly collect and report COVID-19 testing data for students and staff at each school in New York, ensuring this information can be accurately presented on the online "COVID-19 Report Card."

As schools reopen and districts, local health departments and labs begin reporting this data to the New York State Department of Health, the "COVID-19 Report Card" will be live at: <https://schoolcovidreportcard.health.ny.gov/>.

"Facts empower people to make informed decisions for the health and safety of themselves and their families," Cuomo said. "The 'COVID-19 Report Card' will give par-

ents, faculty and students the most up-to-date information on the status of their school and their school district's testing and results. I urge our school communities to stay vigilant and be smart."

The "COVID-19 Report Card" will provide parents, teachers, students and all New Yorkers with comprehensive data updated on a daily basis, including:

- ✓ Positive infections by date of students and staff by school and school district
- ✓ Whether school/district (and student and staff) are remote, in-person or hybrid
- ✓ Number of students and staff on-site

Percentage of on-site students and staff who test positive

Number of tests administered by the school, test type, lab used and lag time

Date of last submission/update

The "COVID-19 Report Card" online dashboard features user-friendly design to make it easy for parents, teachers, students and all New Yorkers to access the data in

one central location. Visitors to the website can simply type in their home address to identify their school district, select their specific school, and find all reported positives, a breakdown of testing and results for students and teachers and the current enrollment. The dashboard will feature 7-day trend charts so visitors can track results over time.



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SUNY starts COVID-19 case tracker dashboard for 64 colleges & universities

Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Chancellor Jim Malatras on Monday announced the launch of a SUNY systemwide COVID-19 case tracker dashboard. The centralized dashboard will provide real time, up-to-date information on COVID-19 cases, testing, and quarantine and isolation space availability across SUNY's 64 colleges and universities to more efficiently monitor, respond to, and contain the virus.

State University of New York Chancellor Jim Malatras said, "As coronavirus cases spring up on our college campuses, we are reviewing real-time case data around the clock. This data is crucial to helping SUNY make quick, smart decisions that contain COVID-19 and protect our campus communities. With the launching of this new COVID-19 case tracker dashboard, everyone can now access that same data. Controlling this virus is a team effort. As we ask ev-

eryone to rise to the challenge and act responsibly, we owe students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities transparent, easily-accessible, up-to-date case information. If we are all informed and resolve to work together to make data-driven decisions in the interest of public safety, we can keep COVID-19 cases down and have a successful semester."

The COVID-19 case tracker dashboard will provide a case count for SUNY and for individual campuses. The data will be reported by campuses every 24 hours and added to the dashboard daily. The dashboard also includes vital information on the different types of tests administered, daily and weekly test data, overall positivity rates, available quarantine and isolation space, and hospitalizations. The tracker is developing and will be augmented as new categories of data become available.