

I'm Your **BUS DRIVER**

by Pedro Anes
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I MOVED TO LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS IN 1990, and met a friend who started talking to me about becoming a professional driver for one of those “big yellow buses” that transports children to and from homes and schools. As a young kid, I was always good with street directions and loved to drive. I took after my grandfather, also a public transportation operator and school bus driver on the island of Puerto Rico. My grandfather was my inspiration; he was a very responsible and caring man who never missed a day of work. “Abuelo” always treated everyone with respect and was loved for his kindness and professionalism. Every morning, at the sound of roosters, I remember getting up to help him prepare the vehicle and perform the inspection. I knew I would follow in his footsteps and become “the king of the road” someday. He was the best! Being a school bus driver always was, and today remains, as big of a thrill to me as when I think of my grandfather, but it is the most serious responsibility that I have as well.

Whenever I am behind the wheel or training other drivers, I focus on three things. The first is having pride in my job I am professional, my “vehicle” is my office and it is neat and clean, and I respect my customers.



My second priority is developing a good, working relationship with parents, providers, school administrators, office staff, and clients. Learning the names of children and their parents is key; if your driver doesn't know your name, he should learn! These are the things that help me with passenger safety and child guidance on the bus.

Last, but not least, is teamwork! Situations arise daily where a route runs behind; vehicles experience mechanical malfunctions, or personal emergencies pop up. All of these situations warrant the willingness and can-do attitude from all of the drivers to ensure our services remain consistent and uninterrupted.

I will never forget one Sunday walking through the mall, one of the children on my bus saw me from a distance and yelled “Dad, there’s my bus driver!” He dashed over to where I was, leaving his parents

behind and cutting through groups of people. He gave me a big hug, then looked at his mom and dad and said, “This is Pedro, my bus driver.” Making a positive impact on the lives of children and providing a service to parents who otherwise couldn't send their children to child care or school are reasons why I continue to be a proud school bus driver for families in the city of Lawrence. It is a noble profession, and one of the hardest.