



MAPT 61ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BOYNE MOUNTAIN RESORT

JUNE 30-JULY 2, 2026

PRE-CONFERENCE - JUNE 29, 2026

ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR ALL PRE-CONFERENCE CLASSES (except Advanced Supervisor)

6:30 AM - 8:30 AM

REGISTRATION

9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

DISPATCHER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES **

- This three-hour course presents an overview of the general function of the dispatcher, including proper radio procedures, developing listening skills and gaining and maintaining control during emergencies.

9:30 AM - 4:00 PM

TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS FACILITIES **

- Learn the fundamentals of fleet maintenance for anyone responsible for or interested in shop operations. Topics include budgeting and recording keeping, vehicle purchasing factors and vehicle maintenance, benchmarking, state police inspections, MIOSHA, and OSHA and under-ground storage tanks.

9:30 AM - 4:00 PM

ADVANCED SUPERVISOR CLASS - MUST BE A SUPERVISOR

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

NAPT 203 COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS **

- This four-hour course is about how to project self-confidence, how to recover from mistakes, and how to get ideas accepted and implemented. This is an important class for transportation personnel who want to give quality presentations, hone communication skills and enhance their careers.

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

NAPT 405 STUDENT NEEDS AND MANAGEMENT **

- A four-hour look at student behavior issues from the management perspective. A brief review of "normal" student characteristics and behavior management strategies is followed by an in-depth look at preparing drivers and attendants for student management, working within the school district structure, developing district policy, procedures, and forms, and understanding nuances of working with students with disabilities and children from other cultures.

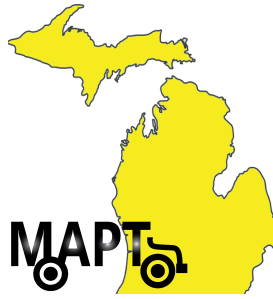
7:00 P.M. - 9:00 PM

PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION; EUCHER & CORNHOLE TOURNAMENTS

**** Additional cost for these classes**

PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOT

- Get a professional headshot taken at the following times:
 - Monday 6/29 6:30 AM - 9:30 AM
 - Tuesday 6/30 6:30 AM - 8:00 AM
 - Thursday 7/2 6:30 AM - 8:00 AM



MAPT 61ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BOYNE MOUNTAIN RESORT
JUNE 30-JULY 2, 2026

DAY 1 - JUNE 30, 2026

6:30 AM - 8:30 AM	REGISTRATION
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	FIRST TIME ATTENDEES BREAKFAST
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
8:00 AM - 8:30 AM	SPONSOR
8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	WELCOME, INTRO, DIRECTION OF MAPT
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	LISA NAVARRA - THE POWER OF PRAISE (see handout)
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	BREAK
11:15 AM - 11:45 AM	MSP UPDATES (Sgt. Matter)
11:45 AM - 1:00 PM	LUNCH

BREAKOUTS

1:15 PM - 2:10 PM

- **Alternative & Traditional Fuels, A Look at What Works for Michigan Schools (Ryan Zic, Roush CleanTech)**
 - As Michigan schools face increasing pressure to cut emissions, lower costs, and modernize their fleets, they are faced with a rapidly changing landscape. From drastic changes in emissions requirements for traditional fuels to changes in funding for alternative fuels, the uncertainty can be overwhelming. Many districts are looking at the horizon and are wondering if it's time to reevaluate. This panel session, brings together school transportation staff members from across the state who have implemented various fuels within their fleets.
 - Attendees will hear firsthand how these schools evaluated their options, secured funding, and implemented new technologies to meet both environmental goals and operational realities. Panelists will share lessons learned on topics such as fueling infrastructure, driver and technician training, maintenance adjustments, and long-term cost management.
 - From rural to urban districts, each panelist offers a unique perspective on how these fuels deliver in Michigan — and how they have impacted their fleets, budgets, and communities. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in open discussion, ask questions, and gain practical insights that can help guide their own fleet decisions.
 - Whether your district is in the early stages of exploring alternative fuels, already operating a

few cleaner vehicles or plan on staying with a traditional fuel, this session will provide valuable, experience-driven strategies for planning your next move.

- Sign up for CARS & Clearinghouse - Bring your laptop!
- **Making Bus Video Work for you; Cloud Tools, Trends & Tactics (Justin Hall, Pro-Vision)**
 - As school districts face rising expectations for student safety, operational transparency, and fleet efficiency, the role of onboard video continues to expand. Yet many transportation departments still rely on traditional, on-premise video systems that strain IT resources, limit data accessibility, and create delays when responding to incidents. This presentation explores how cloud-based video platforms can modernize school bus operations by simplifying system oversight, improving video availability, and strengthening district-wide safety practices.
 - This presentation outlines the core capabilities of a cloud-enabled school bus video management system, including centralized fleet monitoring, automated health reporting, remote troubleshooting, and secure cloud storage designed to protect sensitive student data. Attendees will learn how cloud tools help districts reduce manual maintenance, prevent gaps in video coverage, and streamline the process of locating and sharing requested footage with administrators, law enforcement, and families.
 - Real-world scenarios illustrate how cloud analytics can support proactive safety initiatives, such as identifying frequent driver-assist events, improving student behavior management, validating stop-arm violations, and ensuring compliance with district policies. The session also addresses the practical challenges school districts face when evaluating cloud solutions: navigating data privacy requirements, managing limited IT staffing, working within public-sector budgeting constraints, and preparing their network infrastructure for cloud adoption.
 - By the end of the presentation, participants will understand how cloud-based video management transforms school bus video from a reactive tool into a strategic asset. With a clearer view of system health, improved access to incident footage, and better alignment across transportation and administrative teams, districts can enhance student safety, increase operational efficiency, and make more informed, sustainable technology decisions.

2:15 PM - 3:10 PM

- **Beyond the Route, Bringing Safety to the School Bus (Kathy Drenth)**
 - During this session, we will cover new crisis response language and the best ways to react to each situation. We'll specifically focus on how these protocols apply to bus drivers—whether you are at school or on your route. We'll also detail the transportation department's critical role in safe student reunification and highlight ways to incorporate on-bus drill procedures.
 - The training will cover these key areas:
 - Policy and Safety Language: We will review the newest state terminology and policy changes, including newly mandated State of Michigan Standard Response Protocol (SRP) actions (Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, Shelter).
 - On-Bus Procedures: We will translate every SRP action into specific, actionable steps for the unique and dynamic bus environment, preparing drivers to effectively manage a crisis and protect their students.

- Unified Alert System: We'll detail how drivers—both on school grounds and out on the route—may be notified of an incident and how to respond.
- Drill Preparation: We highlight procedures to integrate these updated protocols into annual Bus Safety Week and mandated Drill Day activities, building essential emergency response habits.
- Safe Student Reunification (SRM): We will cover the driver's role in the I Love U Guys Standard Reunification Method (SRM), including planning alternative routes to ensure the controlled, safe, and accountable release of students to their parents after an incident.
- Future Safety Planning: We'll look ahead at how our expanded safety roles will apply to upcoming EOP development for Athletic and Fi
- **NETWORKING** - Set up like speed dating (Jason Fredenburg)
- **Why is Everyone So Mad (Jen Laidlaw)**
 - Understand why people get angry- and why there seems to be more anger now than ever
 - Learn best practices in handling angry employees/ coworkers
 - Practice one strategy on a common scenario
 - Increase confidence in handling conflict

3:15 PM - 4:10 PM

- **Using Google Forms & QR Codes (Pete Dohrenwend)**
 - As a former educator for 20+ years and then changing to the role of Transportation Director, I was able to see student behavior and driver interactions with students from a different angle. In the previous behavior management system and strategy at the school, drivers grew frustrated with the slow movement between student behavioral issues and action steps by principals and administrators. In this extended timeframe, drivers did not feel heard and behaviors escalated, which potentially created unsafe situations on the bus.
 - With a QR code linked to a Google Form as seen in "Resources" below, drivers have a quick way to return to the bus garage, document student behavior and communicate to me, the Transportation Director, that a parent needs to be contacted. The information is collected in a spreadsheet and easily tracked.
 - By making phone calls quickly and communicating early in the process, parents and guardians feel informed and can support student safety on the bus. Parents appreciate the quick communication and ability to partner together to create a safe school environment. Parents and guardians can have a conversation with their student immediately after the incident and they feel "in the loop" about the happenings of their child at school.
 - With this system, the load or burden of the initial contact by the principals has been reduced. If the behavior continues, the next steps of any behavioral management plan can be enacted with the involvement of principals, parents and the student as needed.
 - The use of a Google Form and QR code supports the focus of Respect and Safety on our buses. As a result, drivers feel supported and student behaviors have been redirected early, instead of growing into larger problems.
- **Leading the Future In AI (BusRight)**
 - In today's rapidly evolving K-12 environment, transportation leaders are expected to deliver

clarity, efficiency, and strong communication across their teams. Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers powerful ways to meet these expectations while improving accuracy and reducing the burden of manual, paper-heavy tasks.

- This session is designed for directors, supervisors, and district leaders who want to understand not just what AI can do, but how to adopt it thoughtfully to support their staff and strengthen leadership practices. Attendees will learn best practices and lessons from real implementations of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, for data analysis, reporting, and drafting clear, effective communication both internally and externally.
- This session emphasizes leadership approaches: how to champion AI adoption with confidence, create practical processes that reduce friction, encourage staff buy-in, and model responsible use to build trust across your department. Whether you're just beginning to explore AI or looking to strengthen your current practices, this session provides clear frameworks to help you lead your team toward a more efficient, empowered future.
- **In a Universe of Solutions, Meet the Universal Solution (Gregg Prettyman - First Student)**
 - We all know that getting kids to school can be a challenge and now there's a large market and growing demand for safe, reliable bus alternatives in student transportation — school districts and their students need an innovative, flexible solution. That need is often going unmet as many districts cannot find suitable vendors and resort to the less-than-ideal use of taxis or having staff drive a school van. But what if there was a universal solution to this problem?
 - Alternative transportation provides students with special transportation needs safe, consistent, and cost-efficient student transportation. In an industry where districts often work with multiple vendors, each with a standalone solution for the district's various transportation needs, the introduction of First Alt provides one universal solution for school districts for all of their transportation needs.
 - In this presentation, we will explore the many advantages of implementing alternative student transportation into a yellow bus company and how incorporating a century's worth of experience exceeds the current industry standard for ensuring student safety is a top priority and necessary accommodations are provided for all students.
 - What school districts, parents, guardians and students should expect from their transportation company is a solution that is all-inclusive: routing, driver training, technology, and industry-leading standards. Drivers should drive fixed routes, building rapport and trust with students while helping them get their days off to a great start. Transportation partners and contracted drivers should meet all state, local and district requirements before they can service trips, including pre-service, random, post-accident and reasonable suspicion drug testing and initial and continuous background and MVR checks. The training program for drivers should include training on special needs equipment to behavioral
 - challenges. Using research-based interventions, accommodations, and modifications will allow contracted drivers the ability to better serve your students. In addition to extensive behavioral training, drivers should be connected to technologies to make things like tracking and communication more seamless.
 - By the end of this presentation, participants will be well-equipped to address the challenges of student transportation and best understand how a universal solution is about meeting all the needs for your special cargo.



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BOYNE MOUNTAIN RESORT
JUNE 30-JULY 2, 2026

DAY 2 - JULY 1, 2026

6:30 AM - 8:30 AM	REGISTRATION
7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
8:30 AM - 8:45 AM	SPONSOR
8:45 AM - 10:30 AM	DR. NATHANIAL "COACH" HEARNE (From the movie Friday Night Lights)
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	BREAK
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM	MDE (Troy & Ken)
11:45 AM - 1:00 PM	LUNCH

BREAKOUTS

1:15 PM - 2:10 PM

- **Driver Shortage: Technology That Attracts & Retains Drivers (BusRight)**
 - The nationwide school bus driver shortage has pushed transportation leaders to rethink how they recruit, support, and retain staff. While pay and benefits matter, districts are finding that modernizing their tools and processes plays a critical role in strengthening driver satisfaction and reducing turnover.
 - This session highlights the leadership practices and district policies that have successfully addressed driver shortages by improving communication, reducing frustration, and creating a more supportive work environment. A key focus will be on how teams use technology to attract new applicants, streamline administrative tasks, and empower drivers with clearer expectations and real-time information.
 - Learn how districts are using intuitive technologies, such as tablets with turn-by-turn navigation and smart cards, to make daily driving and transportation operations easier and more predictable. These tools help reduce paperwork, eliminate confusion around routes, and give drivers clear guidance the moment they need it. By providing real-time updates, districts are creating a smoother, more supportive experience for both new and veteran drivers.
 - Examples will show, on a live ride-and-drive school bus, how user-friendly on-the-road technology has boosted driver confidence, reduced stress, and helped drivers feel more

prepared and supported. These improvements not only make the job more appealing to new applicants but also play a key role in retaining current staff by giving them tools that make their work safer, clearer, and easier to manage.

- **From Planning to Plug-In (Ryan McPhail - Gridlink)**

- School districts across Michigan are adopting electric school buses at a growing pace, but many are discovering that the transition requires new planning, new operational routines, and new coordination with utilities and OEMs. The shift to electric transportation brings opportunities for significant cost savings, improved reliability, and safer operations, but only if districts understand how to ensure visibility, manage their charging strategy, select the right electricity rate plan, and prepare their infrastructure for long-term success.
- This session will provide a practical, non-commercial, district-focused roadmap for both operating and awarded / planning districts. Drawing from real-world deployments and statewide research partnerships, we will break down the key factors that determine the true cost-benefit of electric school buses including how charging schedules, depot infrastructure, utility programs, and extreme weather all influence operating costs.
- Attendees will learn how rate plans are structured, which rate types typically work best for EV fleets, and how districts can reduce annual electricity expenses by charging at strategic times. We will also cover demand response opportunities and how districts can safely participate to lower costs or generate revenue.
- For districts still planning their deployment, we will outline the essential steps for preparing infrastructure and operations: ensuring charger and vehicle interoperability, coordinating early with utilities, securing available rebates, confirming Wi-Fi connectivity in depots, and establishing clear processes for monitoring fleet performance.
- The session will conclude with a practical checklist that districts can take home covering rate plan evaluation, charging optimization, infrastructure readiness, and operational best practices, designed to help transportation directors avoid common pitfalls and get the most value out of their electric buses.
- This presentation is designed for all levels of EV experience and focuses entirely on knowledge sharing. No software purchase or product usage is required to implement the strategies presented.

- **Balancing Empathy & Accountability (Jen Laidlaw)**

- Understand the concept of empathy and how it's different than sympathy
- Why holding your team accountable is important
- Share a framework for a balanced conversation
- Increase confidence in having hard conversations

2:15 PM - 3:10 PM

- **Giving Effective Feedback (Jen Laidlaw)**

- Understand the impact of regular feedback
- Share a framework for planning and holding a feedback conversation
- Demonstrate a conversation on a common scenario
- Increase confidence in having hard conversations

- **Behavior Threat Assessment & Management (Kathy Drenth)**

- The school bus is often the first and last point of contact a student has each day, making transportation staff the "eyes and ears" of the district. To effectively prevent violence, we must

move beyond guesswork and rely on proven data to guide our awareness and response to student behaviors.

- In this session, we will dive into the landmark study, *Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence (2019)*. This training translates federal research into practical strategies for transportation professionals to identify and report concerning behaviors before they escalate into tragedies.
 - **Behavior, Not Profiling:** Because there is no fixed profile for attackers or target schools, we must focus on evaluating a student's specific behaviors and circumstances rather than their personal traits.
 - **Recognizing Warning Signs:** Every attacker in the study exhibited concerning behaviors or communicated their intent beforehand, highlighting the urgent need for staff to report all red flags to ensure early intervention.
 - **Proactive Safety Planning:** Using a multidisciplinary threat assessment team (which may include you) is the proven best practice for transforming data into tangible steps that prevent violence and protect our school community.
- By the end of this session, you will be able to look past the key findings and recognize the specific behaviors that signal a need for help. Turn your daily observations into a lifeline for your school community with a clear understanding of identifying red flags and a renewed confidence in your role as a vital link in the school safety chain.

- **Propane School Buses-Reliable Fuel. Real Savings. (MPGA)**

- Michigan school districts are being asked to move more students, cut more emissions, while stretching every taxpayer dollar.
- A cost-effective option is propane. There are over 33,000 propane-powered vehicles in Michigan, and school buses are a big part of that shift; over 700 propane school buses are in operation across 40 school districts, with the number growing every year.
- This session focuses on how propane school buses are clean and improve your bottom line. We'll walk through how districts are lowering fuel and maintenance expenses. Propane buses are, on average, \$1 per gallon cheaper than diesel and gasoline; they avoid diesel after-treatment systems (DEF), need no block heaters, and require fewer oil changes, which cuts down on time in the shop and simplifies maintenance planning.
- We'll also cover how easy it is to install and scale the propane infrastructure; fueling is quick and straightforward, keeping routes on time. Finally, we'll briefly touch on propane school bus safety, quieter operation, and reliable cold-weather starts that warm up a bus quickly.
- We will also hear from Transportation Directors across the state discuss their own propane fleets and why they recommend propane over other fuel sources.
- Propane engines offer both drivers and passengers a clean, safe, and quiet ride.

3:15 PM - 4:10 PM

- **Expanding Student Access; Safe, Reliable, Alternative Transportation Solutions (EverDriven)**

- With the rise in McKinney-Vento, special education, and out-of-district student populations each year, the need for proactive planning and streamlined transportation coordination is more critical than ever. Missed or inconsistent transportation often leads to chronic absenteeism, disproportionately affecting the students who need the most support. In this session, attendees will learn strategies and best practices for building flexible, student-centered transportation programs that improve efficiency, reduce disruption, and ensure every student gets to school safely — even when needs change with short notice.

- Led by Sarah Oedy, who partners directly with school districts across Michigan and other states, the session will draw from real-world experience supporting district teams through both urgent and long-term transportation challenges. Topics will include coordinating across departments (homeless liaisons, special education, and transportation), managing mid-year student placement changes, and aligning transportation logistics with broader student support goals.
- The session will also highlight how consistency (including assigning the same trusted driver each day) can support student comfort and routine, especially for younger students or those with additional needs. Attendees will walk away with insight and actionable ideas for enhancing coordination, communicating with families, and adapting transportation models to meet the unique needs of students with IEPs, mobility supports, or unstable housing.
- The presentation is designed to be practical and solution-oriented, with takeaways that can be applied regardless of district size, geography, or transportation model. This session will equip attendees with adaptable models and practical steps to ensure every student — regardless of circumstance — has reliable access to school each day.
- **Rebuilding the Bus Driver Workforce (Jason Fredenburg)**
 - The nationwide shortage of school bus drivers continues to challenge districts of all sizes. While external factors such as labor competition and training requirements contribute to the issue, many of the most effective solutions begin internally—with leadership approach, organizational culture, communication structures, and staff empowerment. This session will share the real, district-implemented strategies that Lincoln Consolidated Schools has used to stabilize staffing through a **transformational leadership model** that emphasizes trust, inspiration, collaboration, and shared purpose.
 - Participants will explore recruitment methods that go beyond traditional job postings, including community outreach, referral pipelines, and partnership-based recruiting. The session will also highlight retention strategies rooted in transformational leadership, such as mentorship programs, consistent recognition, relationship-centered supervision, transparent communication, and creating an environment where drivers feel valued, heard, and supported.
 - Attendees will also examine how internal obstacles—like unclear expectations, inconsistent communication, or lack of professional growth—affect workforce stability. Using transformational leadership principles, the session will outline practical steps for resolving these issues and creating a positive, high-trust culture that naturally improves retention.
 - This session focuses on actionable, realistic strategies that districts can begin implementing immediately to build a stable, motivated, and long-term transportation workforce.
- Emergency Preparedness

DAY 3 - JULY 2, 2026

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	VICKIE COE - ATTORNEY FOR CLARK/HILL
10:00 AM - 10:15 AM	BREAK
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	BUSRIGHT - ANNOUNCE WINNER OF GIVE-A-WAY
10:30 AM - 11:15 AM	AWARDS, LOOKING FORWARD, CLOSING