



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent
of Education

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Over the years, our nation has brought to the forefront the danger of drinking and driving. Aggressive media campaigns waged by advocacy groups including mothers and students have effectively told the story of the countless lives lost and even more injuries that have resulted from driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Now, there is another epidemic that is just as, if not more deadly – texting while driving.

Every day on roads across our country, drivers are putting the lives and welfare of other drivers and pedestrians alike at risk by texting on mobile devices while operating a motor vehicle. Already, Alabama roadways have seen the lives of bright young students and others snuffed out by the irresponsible actions of drivers who chose to text while driving. Recent reports indicate that the instances of texting while driving is increasing significantly in Alabama, making our roads and highways even more dangerous. This has to stop.

I stand beside Gov. Robert Bentley, Alabama State Troopers, and many other concerned organizations as we attempt to drive home the message to all motorists that texting while driving kills. Not only does it affect the lives of those immediately involved in accidents, but it also permanently destroys the families of those killed and seriously injured in these completely preventable automobile collisions.

A single life lost due to texting while driving on Alabama streets is one life too many. As State Superintendent of Education, my primary concern is the well-being of the children of this great state. Not only in the classroom, but in every facet of their lives, we have a responsibility to take the best possible care of our young people. We cannot accomplish this without taking a stand on what is rapidly becoming one of the greatest safety risks for students and others in our state and nation.

I encourage everyone to begin the dialogue about the importance of putting the phone down while driving. It is never too early to mold the mindset of our young people and impress upon them that texting distracts drivers. Likewise, adults have the same responsibility to drive defensively and avoid becoming diverted on the road by mobile phones. No text message so important that it cannot wait until the driver is safely parked. The tragedies that have already befallen Alabama families should be a stark reminder that we cannot tolerate texting and driving, nor can we sit idly by while the lives of so many drivers hang in the balance. Please, have the conversation about the dangers of texting and driving. Lives literally depend on it.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

TRB/MS/RS