

## Register if you drop kids at school

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PETALING JAYA : Beginning next year, private car drivers ferrying students to school will have to register their role as part of a standardisation and amnesty process. Transport Minister Anthony Loke said the requirement was necessary to create a more organised school transportation system and to ensure children's safety. He said most unregistered student – ferrying drivers were usually those living around the same neighbourhood who offered to send other children – simply because they were going the same way.

It's a very community-based service where the parents offer the driver some money to cover the fuel costs."it has been around for at least 30 years but the registration needs to be done so that parents are ensured a safer and more organised system of sending their children to the school," he told reporters at the Malaysian School Bus Drivers Association Alliance annual general meeting here yesterday. He said parents who sent their own children to the school need not register. Loke added that he understood the need for the service as there were insufficient registered drivers."There is only one school bus for every 266 students. It is not enough ."However , it becomes a grave concern if driver does not meet the safety requirements.

"They have no insurance, they don't go for the vehicle inspection and as they are not registered, we don't know who they are," he said. Loke said he expected some resistance from unregistered drivers since they had been unregulated for so long but stressed that the move was in the best interest of everyone. On a separate matter, Loke said parents did not have to worry about an unreasonable increase in school bus fares in the next school term."The fares are not controlled by the government as the previous leadership has allowed for it to be based on demand."If it is reasonably high, I'm sure parents will complain," he said, adding that bus drivers should regular dialogues with parents to keep the fares reasonable.

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