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# newsRELEASE

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## **First Student Drivers to Compete at 41<sup>st</sup> Annual School Bus Driver International Safety Competition**

*Drivers from across North America represent company and state in skills competition.*

**CINCINNATI**— Thirteen First Student drivers from across the U.S. and Canada qualified to compete at the National School Transportation Association's (NSTA) 41<sup>st</sup> Annual School Bus Driver International Safety Competition. This prestigious event features school bus drivers competing in a driving skills challenge and written exam to determine the top drivers in Conventional, Transit and Small Bus categories for 2011. This year's competition takes place July 16-17 in Baltimore, Md.

"At First Student, safety is our core value and our drivers work hard to enhance their driving skills throughout the year," said Gary Catapano, senior vice president of safety for First Student. "We are proud of the drivers who have qualified for this prestigious competition. They continue to raise the bar and we wish them luck at this year's event."

First Student drivers who qualified to compete at this year's International Safety Competition include:

- Rhonda Bitzer, Mounds View, Minn.
- Ronald Bruggemann, House Springs, Mo.
- Laurette Cillo, Merrimack, N.H.
- Michelle Doree, Snelling, Minn.
- Rene Hildebrand, Santa Rosa, Calif.
- Mark Koelbl, Calgary, Alberta
- Jim McMinn, Wichita, Kan.
- David Schoenrock, Parkville, Mo.
- Michelle Schurz, Grand Junction, Colo.
- Laurel Shauger, Lafayette, N.J.
- Douglas Thistle, Seacoast, N.H.
- Jennifer Thompson, Montrose, Colo.
- Theresa Wakefield, Silverton, Ore.

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## First Student Drivers to Compete at NSTA Event 2-2-2-2

Drivers qualified for the event by placing in the top 10 of their state or province competition. Many First Student drivers competed in regional, state and provincial competitions throughout the spring leading up to the International event.

At First Student, the safety and security of the students we transport is our core value and something our drivers take very seriously. All First Student drivers receive more than 50 hours of training before driving one of the company's school buses. In addition to each state's mandated training, First Student drivers participate in in-service safety meetings throughout the year to discuss various topics.

### **About First Student**

First Student, Inc. - a division of Cincinnati, Ohio-based FirstGroup America - is the leader in safe, reliable, sustainable transportation and the largest provider of student transportation services in North America. The company safely transports approximately six million students daily in the U.S. and Canada, using a fleet of approximately 57,400 buses. The safety and security of its passengers is the company's core value, and FirstGroup America was awarded the National Safety Council's 2009 Green Cross for Safety Medal in recognition of its commitment to safety and outstanding safety record. For more information, please visit [www.firststudentinc.com](http://www.firststudentinc.com) or follow the company on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/FirstStudentInc.com>.

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