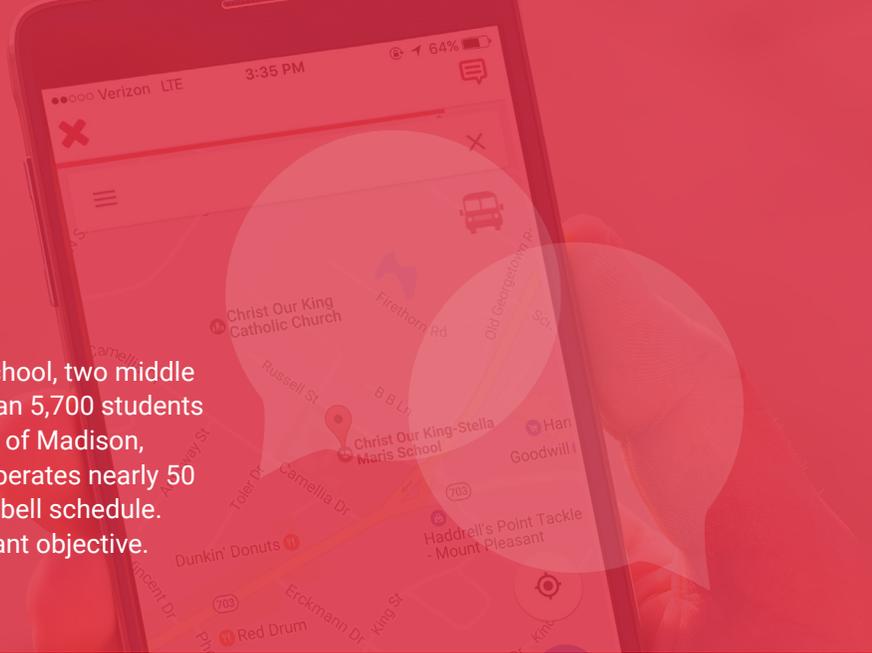


Customer Q&A with



The Verona Area School District consists of one high school, two middle schools and seven elementary schools serving more than 5,700 students in the cities of Verona and Fitchburg and small portions of Madison, Wisconsin. Verona contracts with Badger Bus, which operates nearly 50 buses covering a predominantly rural area on a two-tier bell schedule. Expanding the district's technology has been an important objective.



Kelly Kloeping

Public Information Officer

Verona Area School District
Verona, WI



SafeStop provides students and parents with peace of mind and the confidence that they know when and where the bus is as it travels to and from school each day. SafeStop has satisfied our need to keep parents informed.”

What problems, issues or needs led you to deploy a school bus tracking app?

Our interest in introducing a school bus tracking app was driven by the rural nature of the areas we serve. A large portion of our district consists of country roads where students wait for the bus at the end of long driveways. The winters in Wisconsin can be very harsh so we need to minimize the amount of time children wait out in the cold for buses to arrive. When temperatures drop below zero, a bus that is five to ten minutes late can be a big issue. Because we serve two communities, some of our bus routes are as long as 45 minutes so communication with parents regarding bus arrivals and departures is critical.

What made you choose SafeStop? What made their services and technology stand out from others?

We worked closely with our contractor, Badger Bus, who brought a number of school bus tracking options to the table. We were just looking to start with the basics – GPS tracking and notifications to parents when a bus is late. When we compared systems and looked at the total cost to the district, SafeStop was the best fit for us. Badger takes care of administering the systems and handles the direct communications with parents.

What has the implementation phase and ongoing relationship been like with SafeStop?

We conducted a limited trial of SafeStop at the end of the 2016-2017 school year and launched the system across all our contracted buses in the fall of 2017. We had some minor issues on a couple of buses during the initial launch when buses were running ahead of schedule due to students who ride the bus intermittently, but the SafeStop team was very responsive and worked with Badger Bus to smooth things out. We're now in our second year and it's very good.

What have been the greatest benefits of working with SafeStop? Can you share specifically how they have helped you reach your goals?

The SafeStop team is super responsive and very reliable. When we have an issue, it is addressed within minutes. They also offer informational materials

and support in marketing the app to parents that have been lifesavers for me. Making parents aware of the service and getting them to download the app are crucial to our success. More than one third of our parents were registered for SafeStop last school year. As winter approaches, we're now in the process of sending reminders to parents who have not yet downloaded the app.

How is SafeStop to work with? Can you cite an example of how the company went “the extra mile” to serve you?

The SafeStop marketing materials are great. I've never worked with a company that customizes marketing materials the way SafeStop does. They designed postcards for us and sent enough printed copies for every driver to hand every student a postcard. They also produced custom flyers that we handed out on back-to-school nights. They actually made the copies and shipped them to us. It was phenomenal!

How is the company aligned with the values that drive your business?

Our mission is “Every Student MUST Be Successful” and that starts with getting students to school safe and on-time. SafeStop provides students and parents with peace of mind and the confidence that they know when and where the bus is as it travels to and from school each day. SafeStop has satisfied our need to keep parents informed.

How has working with SafeStop made your job and/or work life easier?

As the district communications person, SafeStop definitely makes my life easier. In the past, if a bus had a mechanical or other issue, I would get an early morning call and then have to put out a message to parents on that bus route. Now, Badger Bus simply sends a message to the affected families directly through the SafeStop app. I still get involved in the more serious issues but these minor issues regarding transportation now can be reported to families directly through the app, which is quicker and more efficient.

We're also in the midst of a building boom in our area with massive new housing springing up and highway construction impacting local travel. This is where the app is super helpful. Roads can be closed for days or weeks and we now can message parents through the SafeStop app to let them know their bus may be late and ask for their patience as we deal with temporary detours.

What surprised you or pleased you the most about working with SafeStop?

I have been most impressed with the marketing support that SafeStop offers school districts. They custom design parent communications that are very professional and provide us with copies to distribute. We don't have the money or the staff to do it ourselves.

Would you recommend SafeStop to others? What positive benefits would you emphasize?

Yes, now that we've had experience with the app, I would definitely recommend SafeStop to others.