



## *News Release*

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **BENDIX® WINGMAN® FUSION™ GOES TO SCHOOL**

*Indiana District Adds Flagship Collision Mitigation Technology to School Bus Fleet*

**ELYRIA, Ohio – Feb. 17, 2020** – Bob Downin has always had a straightforward approach to equipping school buses. “Above all, it’s about safety,” said Downin, the director of transportation at Clark-Pleasant Community Schools in Whiteland, Indiana. “Parents should know that schools are doing the most to keep their kids safe, and drivers should know that their district cares about them and wholeheartedly supports them on the road. That’s it, and that’s everything.”

At Clark-Pleasant, Downin has overseen the introduction of Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™ – the flagship collision mitigation system from Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC – to the district’s school bus fleet. Among the district’s 76 buses, six are IC Bus Fusion-equipped now, with five more on order. Downin said Clark-Pleasant plans to continue purchasing the IC buses with Wingman Fusion as older buses are replaced.

“Eighty-seven percent of our 6,700 students use school transportation, and we cover a lot of rural territory in all kinds of weather conditions,” Downin said. “If there’s a technology like Wingman Fusion that helps our drivers, doesn’t distract them from what they’re doing, and makes our kids safer, we’re all for it.”

Bendix, the North American leader in the development and manufacture of active safety, air management, and braking system technologies for commercial vehicles, has worked closely with Navistar subsidiary IC Bus to make it the first original equipment manufacturer to offer electronic stability control (ESC) and collision mitigation technology as standard features on air-

braked school buses. The Bendix® ESP® Electronic Stability Program full-stability system and Bendix® Wingman® Advanced™ – A Collision Mitigation Technology have come standard on IC Bus CE Series and RE Series school buses with air brakes since 2018. Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™ has also been an option on the CE Series.

### **Technology Decisions and Driver Feedback**

“Technology has come so far and so fast in recent years that school districts face a lot of factors when they’re deciding which ones benefit the students and drivers the most,” said Downin. “We’ve worked with video camera companies, seat belt companies – Clark-Pleasant was the first in the state to put lap-and-shoulder belts in place on our buses – and we’ve gotten a lot of positive feedback about the safety technologies we’ve adopted.”

Clark-Pleasant was the first school district in the country to put collision mitigation systems on its school buses when it began testing Fusion on two buses in 2018.

Bendix Wingman Fusion creates a detailed and accurate data picture by gathering input through radar, video, and the vehicle’s braking system. Combining and cross-checking the information from these sensors enables Fusion to deliver enhanced rear-end collision mitigation and adaptive cruise control, along with following distance alerts, stationary object alerts, lane departure warning, alerts when speeding, and braking on stationary vehicles – all while prioritizing alerts to help reduce driver distraction. Through SafetyDirect® by Bendix CVS, event-based data – including video – can be wirelessly transmitted for driver coaching and analysis by fleet safety personnel.

The forward-facing camera of Wingman Fusion is powered by the Mobileye® System-on-Chip EyeQ® processor with state-of-the-art vision algorithms.

Fusion also helps drivers avoid some additional crash situations, including rollovers, loss-of-control, and sideswipe crashes, since it is built on the foundational technology of Bendix ESP.

Bendix ESP is an antilock braking system (ABS)-based stability technology that recognizes and assists with both rollover and vehicle under- and over-steer driving situations. ESP uses a series of sensors to continuously monitor vehicle parameters, including wheel speed, lateral acceleration, steering angle, brake pressure, and yaw rate. These sensors combine to measure driver intent and vehicle direction, helping to mitigate skids, slides, and loss of control – including rollovers – through interventions such as de-throttling the engine and selectively applying the brakes, typically reacting faster than a human can.

“Our bus drivers have told us that these technologies are welcome and helpful additions to the vehicles, particularly on some of the country roads in wet or snowy conditions,” Downin said. “They’ve said it delivers peace of mind and helps make them better drivers.”

Clark-Pleasant’s Bendix® Wingman® Fusion™-equipped buses also feature Bendix® ADB22X® air disc brakes with the Bendix® Splined Disc® rotor. Drum brakes can fade during heavy stop-and-go traffic situations – which school buses typically encounter – or during long, steep descents, and can extend stopping distances as they heat up. Air disc brakes virtually eliminate this brake fade, delivering greater reliability with more consistent stops and shorter stopping distances. In the shop, air disc brakes have other advantages over drum brakes in the form of longer friction life and quicker pad changes.

### **Making Safe Even Safer**

“We’ve had instances where the Bendix equipment probably did make a difference, and the superintendent and school board have been very, very supportive of our transportation department,” Downin said. “We’ve trained all our drivers on the equipment, so they know exactly what to expect out on the roads; and we’ve even shared our experiences with other school districts exploring the technology.

“The main boxes that Fusion checks for us are that it makes the bus safer when it’s raining or showing; it’s something we can afford; and it’s not something that distracts the driver: So many things give the driver something else to do, and this does not.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the classic yellow school bus is 70 times safer than walking, bicycling, or riding in a passenger car or light truck to and from school. Downin – who has several decades of experience in school transportation with districts as far afield as Florida and Louisiana – says Clark-Pleasant’s school leaders see Fusion as taking that safety to a whole different level.

“Few commercial vehicle drivers – if any – face a higher possibility of distractions while driving than school bus drivers,” said Lance Hansen, Bendix vice president – aftermarket sales, fleet, service and operations. “Working with the professionals at Clark-Pleasant, we’ve been able to learn firsthand from school bus drivers even more about their challenges and how we can team up to make student transportation all the safer for them and the millions of passengers they’re responsible for every day. We’re proud to shape tomorrow’s transportation, together with the team at Clark-Pleasant.”

Bendix emphasizes that no technology can replace the invaluable men and women behind the wheel of North America’s school buses practicing safe driving habits, and supported

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by proactive, ongoing driver training. Responsibility for the safe operation of any commercial vehicle remains with the driver at all times, and Bendix safety technologies are not intended to enable or encourage aggressive driving.

“Anything we’ve asked of Bendix, they’ve been very helpful as we’ve undertaken this journey,” Downin said. “They really understand that every safety decision we make impacts not just our students and drivers, but their friends and families, and everyone who shares the roads with our buses.”

Bendix and its ever-growing portfolio of commercial vehicle technologies deliver on safety, vehicle performance and efficiency, and unparalleled post-sales support – all areas critical to the success of school bus fleets. By strengthening return on investment in the equipment and technologies that help school districts improve transportation and lower their total costs of vehicle ownership, the company aims to enhance the safety of school bus drivers, passengers, and all who share the road.

### **About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC**

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of the Knorr-Bremse Group, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 3,200 people, Bendix is driven to deliver solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit [bendix.com](http://bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](http://knowledge-dock.com). Follow Bendix on Twitter at [twitter.com/Bendix\\_CVS](https://twitter.com/Bendix_CVS). Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at [brake-school.com](http://brake-school.com). And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit [bendix.com/careers](http://bendix.com/careers).

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