



BAM'S GUN PLAN

Proposal gets mayor's seal of approval

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Alex Ndoka drops off his son Henry Ndoka, who usually rides the bus to school, at PS 9 on the UWS yesterday. (AP)



SCHOOL BUS BLUES

Parents scramble on strike's first day

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Scramble to get kids to class

Parents go extra mile on Day 1 of school bus strike

BY MEREDITH GALANTE
Special to amNewYork

Suman Jain had to choose between a two-hour subway ride and a 30-minute drive to take her special-needs daughter to school yesterday morning.

Because of the school bus strike, Jain, 49 of Forest Hills, now has to chauffeur her fourth grader back and forth to P.S. 88 Elementary School in Ridgewood.

"I really depend on the bus," said Jain. "The drivers and matrons really know my daughter. I trust them. It's sad what's going on."

Jain, a teaching assistant at a preschool, has forewarned her job that she'll need to come in late and leave early during the strike.

Jain's plight highlights the 152,000 New York City school children affected by the bus strike that began yesterday.

School administrators gave the children student MetroCards for them and their parents to compensate for transportation.

But when most parents arrived at the subway — like Russell Langan and his wife — they found that the card had not been activated yet. The city said the cards should be turned on by today.

"You have to cut corners until the strike ends. Leave work early. It's a mess," said Langan, of Ridgewood.

Langan and his wife split up fetching their two children from school. Langan got their son, Louie, a



fourth grader at P.S. 71 Forest Elementary, while his wife headed to Long Island City to pick up their other son, who is autistic.

Judy Delvalle, 27, of Bushwick has to pick up two kids from two schools while caring for a toddler by herself.

"Thank God I'm not working at the moment or who knows what we'd do," she said at the end of the day.

Delvalle's son, Joey Torres, is a special-needs student in the fifth grade at P.S. 88 in Ridgewood, while her other child attends P.S. 81 a few blocks away.

"It's really hard to juggle all of this by myself," Delvalle said.

Shirley Lara of Ridgewood trudged in the sleet to P.S. 88 to pick up her son, first-grader Daniel Rodriguez, from school.

Normally, Jose Resto's 9-year-old son takes the bus to P.S. 63 in Manhattan, but yesterday Resto escorted his child to and from their home on Avenue D.

"It's inconvenient for everybody who takes the bus, but with this weather, it's especially hard for us," added Pagan. (WITH ANNA SANDERS)

About 8,000 school bus drivers and matrons went on strike as 152,000 students and their families walked, taxied or drove to school.



Job security the key sticking point

BY IVAN PEREIRA
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The city's school bus strike shows no sign of slowing down anytime soon, with the mayor and the drivers union entrenched in their respective stands on job security.

As more than 8,000 drivers picketed at bus depots throughout the city yesterday, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said he still wouldn't put employee protection provision in the bids for 1,000 new bus contracts.

The mayor said he hoped the strike wouldn't last 14 weeks, like the last one did in 1979, and urged Local 1181 of the Amalgamated Transit Union to accept the court ruling that deemed EEP illegal.

"This strike is about guarantees that the union can't have," Bloomberg said.

The union says the protection will keep experienced driv-



The drivers went on strike for the first time since 1979. (GETTY)

ers behind the wheel.

The protection requires companies that win the bids to hire workers from the losing companies based on experience. The court ruling only covered pre-K drivers, according to the union.

The strike didn't seem to

deter parents and students from getting to school. They received student MetroCards and reimbursement for car mileage, and overall attendance was down less than 1%, according to schools chancellor Dennis Walcott. (WITH MEREDITH GALANTE)

Local leaders slam city's Sandy response

City officials said they are doing a top-to-bottom review of their actions during Superstorm Sandy, but that didn't stop some pointed criticism yesterday during a sometimes heated City Council hearing about the Bloomberg administration's handling of the storm and its aftermath.

20K
911 calls were made during Sandy, a councilwoman said

The sharpest exchange was prompted by Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley of Middle Village, who said that the 911 system was overwhelmed with more than 20,000 calls an hour.

She said calls were misrouted and there were delays of more than five minutes.

"Can you tell me why the system failed during this major storm?" she asked.

(NEWSDAY)

2 arrested in brutal beating

Two Brooklyn men have been arrested and more arrests are expected in the savage group beating of a 24-year-old man in Greenwich Village early Sunday morning.

Kevin McCarron, 24, of Andover, Mass., was severely beaten with a bat and a tire iron at 5:10 a.m. in front of 95 MacDougal. He suffered severe head injuries, police said. (AMNY)

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