



CARROLL COUNTY (MARYLAND) PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

THE DRIVER'S SEAT

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



410-751-3229

Spring

2015

Edition

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As this is being written on this last day of April and we can look out at the beautiful rolling hills of Carroll County, flowers and trees in full bloom, the sound of mowers and tractors, and the many other signs of spring, it might be easy to forget the persistent and stormy 2014-15 winter season. The Transportation Services Department staff was on "snow patrol" a total of thirty-five (35) days this past winter. There were a total of ten (10) school closings, eight (8) delayed openings, and two (2) early dismissals related to the seemingly endless series of winter events bringing snow, ice and cold.

While some may disagree with some of our school closing recommendations, we believe that most drivers and contractors understand that the decision to close, delay or dismiss school early is never an easy decision; and, these decisions are not made without considering the primary mission of the Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) which is to provide a high quality education for our approximate 26,000 students each and every day of school. That being said, we have a responsibility to drivers, contractors, parents, students, and to public safety to make sound, well-reasoned judgements regarding the severity of winter road conditions and the potential for travel issues during the time that buses are on the road. These judgements are based primarily on weather forecasts, personal observations, and actual driving conditions. In addition, we gain important input from the county's Bureau of Roads, the school system's maintenance and operations staff which is responsible for clearing school parking lots, bus loops and school sidewalks, and from our counterparts in our neighboring counties. In the end, it is never an easy call to make a recommendation to close, to delay or to dismiss schools early. We thank the overwhelming majority that understand the difficulty and uncertainty that come with forecasting winter weather in this part of the country and in predicting what road conditions may be like at any given time during the school day.

As we move closer to the end of the 2014- 2015 school year, we also are moving closer to the end of an era. This school year will mark the end of Carroll County Public Schools owned and operated school buses and bus routes. Beginning next school year, all 262 CCPS school bus routes will be operated by the 58 school bus contractors currently under contract with the CCPS. We sadly say goodbye to the five CCPS drivers/ assistants who will be retiring at the end of this year and thank them for their dedicated service over many years to the special needs students whose care they have been entrusted with. (Please see the article later in this newsletter.)

Finally, as the warmer weather approaches, please be aware that students and children playing in and around neighborhoods will be much more active. Please keep your guard up and be alert as each trip may bring an unexpected event that may call upon you to use your defensive driving techniques and to take quick and appropriate action. Thank you for all you do to safely transport our students.

RESULTS OF APRIL 22, 2015 "FLY-BY" SURVEY

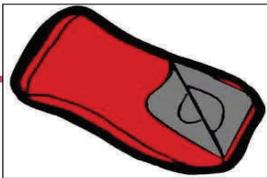
Carroll County school bus drivers participated in the 4th annual statewide and national "fly-by" survey, conducted on Wednesday, April 22, 2015. Two hundred and fifty-eight responses were received (out of 261 bus routes) with the results as shown:

Number of Fly-by's:	101 (55 – a.m., 3 – midday, 43 – p.m.)
Number passing from the front:	67
Number passing from the rear:	34
Number passing on the left (driver's side):	100
Number passing on the right (door side):	1



We thank all of the school bus drivers and contractors that participated in this year's survey. Your participation assists in calling attention to this national problem. The following link was produced for the "Today Show" and helps bring home the seriousness of this issue and the potential consequences of motorists who run the flashing lights of a school bus.

<http://www.today.com/video/today/57304163>

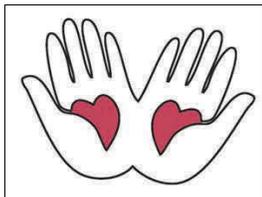


Red Emergency Request Pouch

Now that it is at the end of the school year, remember to remove all papers from your Emergency Red Pouch and shred them or return them to the school office. The information contained on these papers is confidential and you will receive new and current information at the beginning of the next school year if needed.

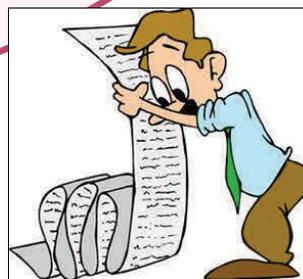
ID Badge

Remember to store your ID Badge safely over the summer for those drivers and assistants not working over the summer. If you are retiring or resigning, please turn your ID Badge over to your contractor.



My heart is moved from what I've seen;
Some may not understand what I mean.
You've opened your hearts to those on the bus,
When you could have complained or fussed.
Providing happiness to those that are sad,
And comforting the passengers that are mad.
You will find your name on the list
Of those people that are dearly missed.

By Rick Sommer



A friendly smile is always in style

END OF AN ERA

FAIRWELL TO COUNTY-OWNED SPECIAL EDUCATION FLEET

An end of an era will occur at the close of this school year. The county will no longer have routes for special needs buses. All of the routes currently held by the county for these students have been transferred to contractors. Phil Martin, a former Supervisor of special education transportation (1987-1996), provided a brief history of the county special education fleet. Mr. Martin expressed that in the early stages of special education transportation, there were two lift buses that serviced the county. The rest of the buses for students with special needs were either regular size buses, or a smaller class size buses. He also related that the county fleet of the 1980's grew to 22 special education lift buses: 16 had routes and the other six were used as spares for the county fleet as well as other contractors. This was the peak number for the county. Since that time, the number of county-owned buses has dwindled down this year to a total of three route buses and six spare buses.

There were many drivers and assistants that have worked for the county throughout the years, and even though this newsletter may reach only a few of them, we would like to send out a "THANK YOU" to all of the former and present CCPS bus drivers and assistants for your care, kindness, and patience with our special needs population. We have a few drivers and assistants who are currently active with the fleet and have devoted many years to the county. We would like to take this time to recognize these retirees for their time and effort in making this fleet a positive experience for our students:

Naomi Angell: Naomi is our most tenured employee. She started with the county during the school year of 1977-1978. Naomi started out as an assistant and in 1996 became a driver. Most of her tenure as a driver was in the south east district of Carrolltowne Elementary, Oklahoma Middle, and Liberty High Schools. The past few years, Naomi has also added the Eldersburg area Pre-K Program. Naomi has seen many of our former employees and students come and go and her skills and knowledge will be missed. Thank You Naomi!

Fran Bosley: Current Assistant, Fran started in the school year 1990-1991. Fran started as a bus assistant and then became a driver. For many years Fran was working with the students of the North Carroll High, North Carroll Middle, and Hampstead areas. She also drove the Robert Moton Elementary/Carroll Springs students. Currently, Fran is a bus assistant for the Francis Scott Key, New Windsor Middle, and Runnymede Schools. Thank You Fran!

David Cook: Current assistant and sub driver, Dave started in the school year of 1990-1991. He was the driver for most of his routes that led to the Robert Moton Elementary/Carroll Springs Schools. The past few years, Dave has also worked with the POST Secondary students with the shuttles that are connected to the job site programs. Thank You Dave!

Norman "Butch" Keeney: Current driver, Butch has been driving since the 1994-1995 school year. Butch had a long tenure of serving the students of the south eastern area of the county. Carrolltowne Elementary, Oklahoma Middle, and Liberty High Schools, are all sites that were greeted by Butch. Butch ends his tenure servicing Robert Moton/Carroll Springs as well as the shuttles for the POST Secondary job sites program. Thank You Butch!

Joyce Seabolt: Current bus driver who started with the county in the school year of 2000-2001. She has served the students of the North Carroll High School district as well as the Francis Scott Key area during her tenure. Thank You Joyce!



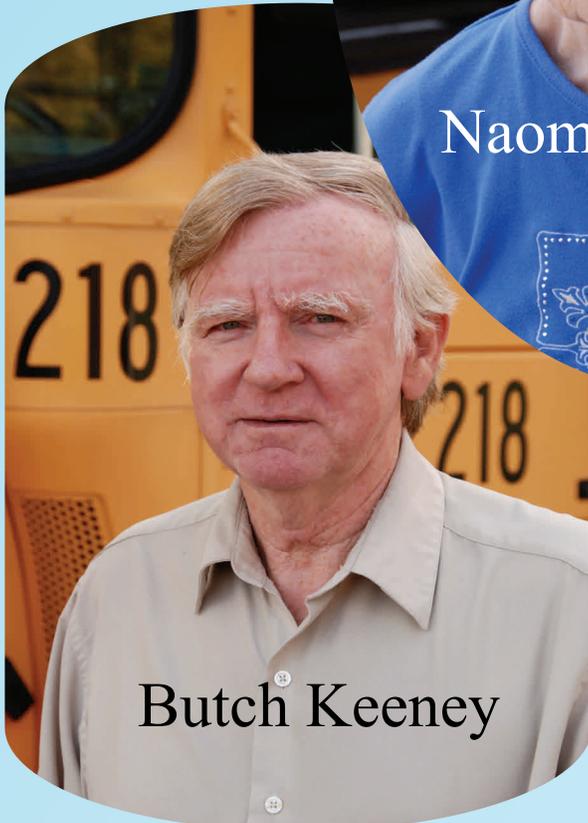
Dave Cook



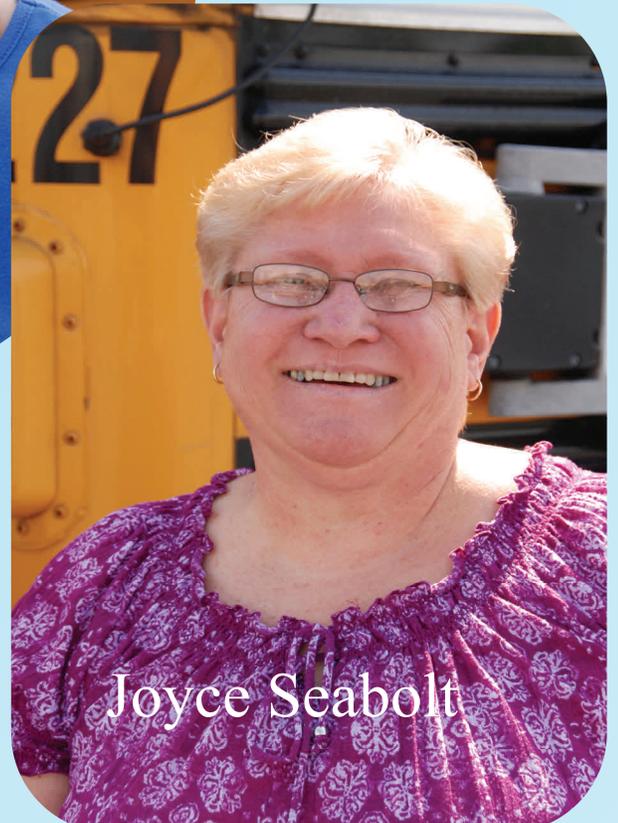
Fran Bosley



Naomi Angell



Butch Keeney



Joyce Seabolt

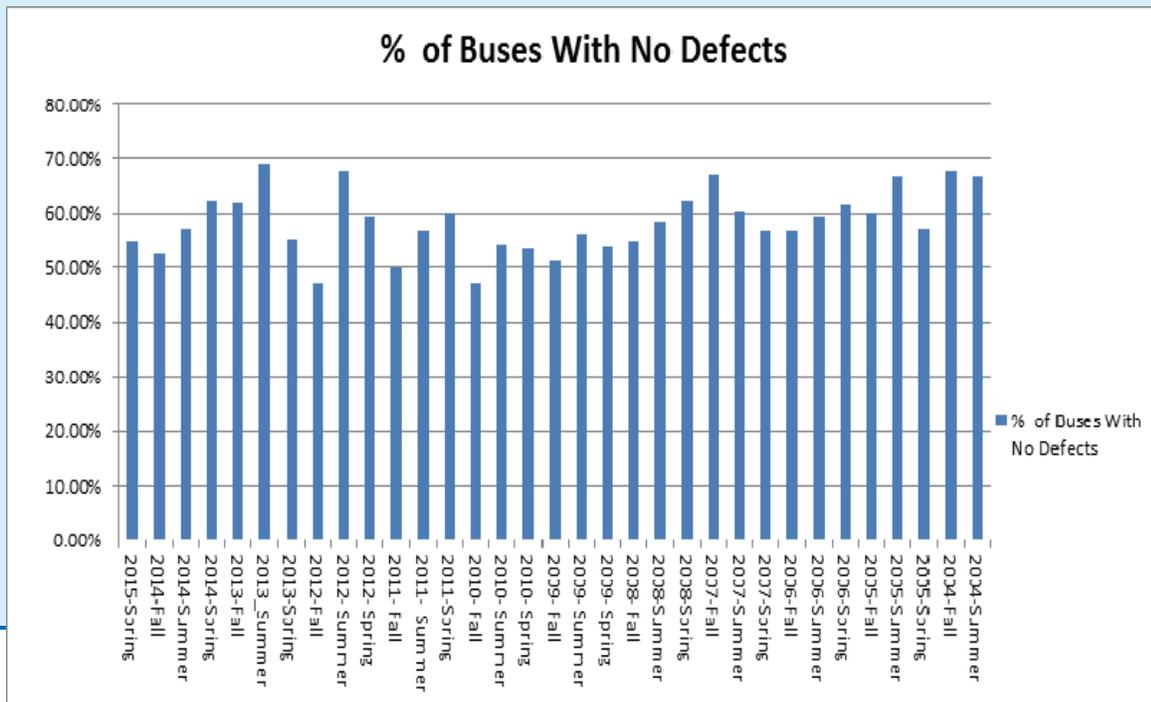
Spring Bus Inspection

Spring bus inspection has come and gone. We appreciate the effort our drivers and contractors put forth in preparing for each bus inspection. That effort really shows when a bus comes through the inspection line shiny and clean—inside and out—and in good working condition. When a bus comes to inspection clean and in great mechanical condition, we all take pride in your inspection report. That “O.K., Nice Job” you get is an indication a bus has passed. The effort required for a passing bus is certainly a team effort.

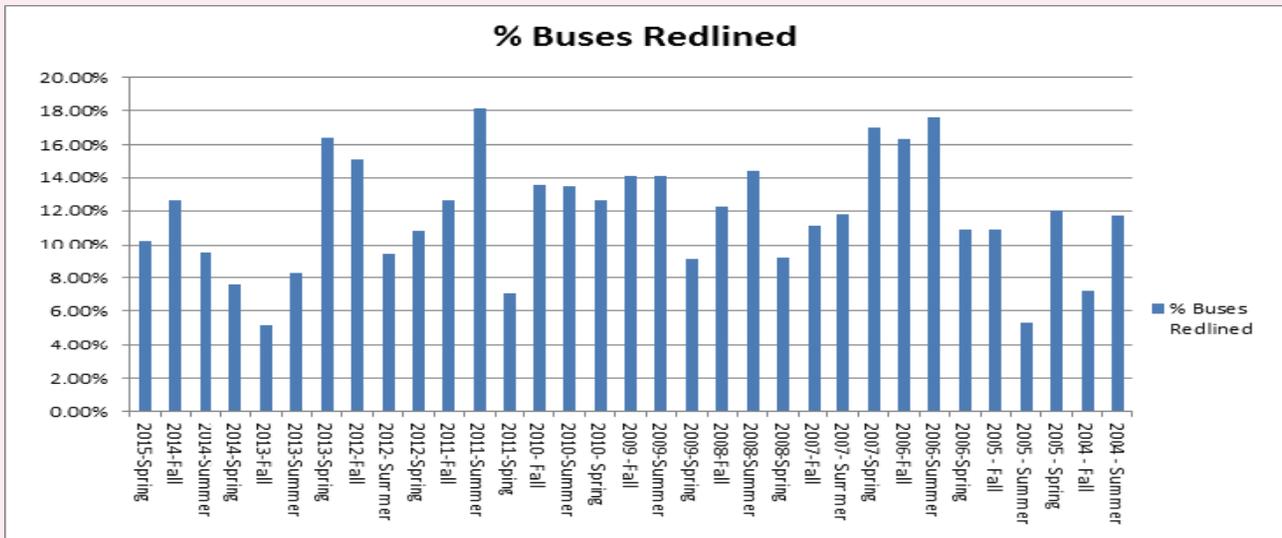
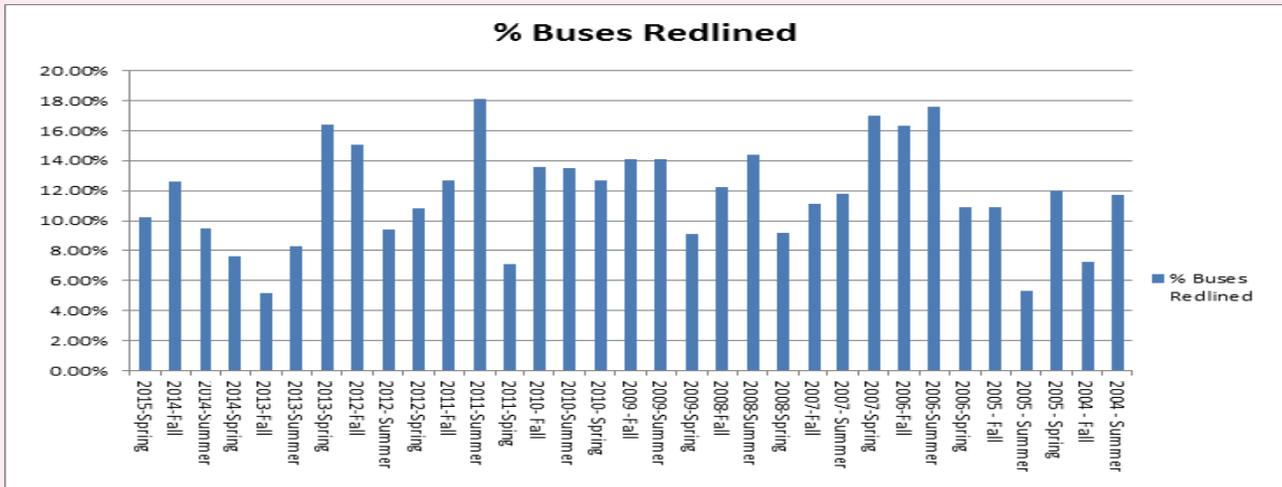
Drivers have the responsibility to complete thorough pre- and post-trip inspections and to report defects when noted. Contractors have the responsibility to correct these defects as noted and to maintain regular, comprehensive maintenance on their buses. It is through this team effort that our outstanding fleet of buses is kept in top shape.

The results for the Spring 2015 bus inspection were as follows:

- ◆ Buses passing with no defects: 177 buses; 55%
- ◆ Buses with 30-day defects: 112 buses; 34.8%
- ◆ Buses with redline defects: 33 buses; 10.2%



Have a safe end to the school year, and continue to maintain our outstanding fleet of buses. Have a great summer.



2015—2016 Bus Inspection Schedule

August

- 17 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
- 18 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 19 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
- 20 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High

October

- 26 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
- 27 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
- 28 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 29 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
- 30 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High

March

- 14 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 15 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
- 16 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 17 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High

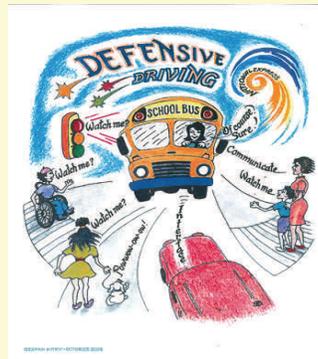


Carroll County Accident Review

The Accident Review Committee met on April 28th. Carroll County Public Schools bus drivers were involved in 27 accidents for the time frame between February 11th and April 22nd. Fifteen of these accidents were determined to be preventable. Of the 27 accidents, two involved major damage of \$1500. or more. One of the majors was determined to be preventable. One school bus accident involved personal injury. Although 27 accidents appears to be, and is a lot of accidents, unfortunately, four accidents occurred between two school buses, which accounts for eight accidents. Three of these occurred on school property and involved drivers failing to secure their parking brake. Two additional accidents occurred when vehicles other than a school bus struck a bus while it was parked loading or unloading students. In the past two months we have had five accidents in the loading zone at school.. These are potentially very dangerous situations and cannot be tolerated. We must do a better job, especially on school property. Total accidents for the year are just over 65. Let's keep it that way. The Accident Review Team meets regularly to determine the preventability of school bus accidents. The determination of preventable does not mean that the school bus driver was primarily or legally responsible for the accident; it means that the driver did not do everything that reasonably could have been done to avoid the accident. In other words, he or she was not a **defensive driver**. A **defensive driver** is one who commits no driving errors and makes allowances for the lack of skill of improper driving practices of other drivers. A **defensive driver** adjusts his or her own driving to compensate for unusual weather, road and traffic conditions and is not tricked into an accident by the unsafe actions of pedestrians and other drivers. By being alert to accident-inducing situations, the **defensive driver** recognizes the need for preventive action in advance and takes the necessary precautions to prevent the accident. It is impossible to describe in detail the many ways a driver might prevent an accident. A school bus driver may not absolve themselves of any defensive driving skills or responsibilities. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) evaluates all major school bus accidents in the state. A report conducted by the MSDE makes this point that drivers should remember:

The vast majority of accidents happen:

- ◆ On clear days
- ◆ During daylight hours
- ◆ On regular routes
- ◆ With buses traveling straight
- ◆ On dry roads
- ◆ With buses without defects



The lesson to be learned is : Accidents don't just happen under unusual circumstances—they happen when everything seems right. ***Cautious drivers never take safety for granted.***



◆ Road Construction Everywhere

This past winter left its mark on our school calendar, our driveways and sidewalks, and the area roads. Local and state officials develop a road repair plan and often accept bids to have the work completed. Because of the volume of potholes and roads in need of repair, repair efforts have not waited for kids to get out of school. Have you noticed?

A couple of suggestions for surviving this added obstacle:

- ◆ ***Be patient.*** Demonstrate to the students on the bus that harsh words and hand gestures will not make the situation better.
- ◆ ***Reassure the students.*** Some students may develop anxiety as the minutes tick away. A kind word or encouraging voice could make the difference to a young child.
- ◆ ***Be alert to flaggers.*** Wait for a signal from the roadwork personnel before changing lanes or proceeding around construction equipment.
- ◆ ***Watch out for aggressive drivers or distracted drivers.*** Distracted drivers are often more dangerous than aggressive drivers. Be alert for drivers using their cell phones and not reacting to flaggers promptly.



THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Carroll County Public Schools

2015 – 2016 Transportation Services Calendar

August

- 17 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
- 18 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 19 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
- 20 Summer Bus Inspection (7:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
- 21 Contractors' Meeting Winters Mill High 9:00 a.m.
- 31 Schools Open – First Day for Students

September

- 4 Regular Education Stop Sheets, Special Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services
- 7 Schools/Offices Closed – Labor Day
- 14 School/Offices Closed – Rosh Hashanah
- 15 Schools Closed for Students and 10 Month Staff
- 23 School/Offices Closed – Yom Kippur
- 25 Regular Education Route Stop Sheets and Regular Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services

October

- 5 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
- 16 Schools Closed for Students and 10-Month Staff – Professional Meeting Day
- 26 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
- 27 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
- 28 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 29 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
- 30 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High - Special Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services

November

- 6 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal/System-Wide / Closed for Pre-K and Prep Students
- 25 Schools/Offices Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
- 26-27 Schools/Offices Closed – Thanksgiving Holiday
- 30 Schools/Offices Re-open

December

- 24-31 Schools/Offices Closed – Winter Holiday

January

- 1-3 Schools/Offices Closed – Winter Holiday
- 4 Schools/Offices Re-open
- 15 Regular Education Route Stop Sheets and Regular Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services
- 18 Schools/Offices Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- 22 Special Education Manifests due in Transportation Services
- 29 Schools Closed for Students

February

- 15 Schools/Offices Closed – Presidents' Day

March

- 8 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
- 11 Regular Education Route Stop Sheets and Regular Education Route Manifests; Special Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services
- 14 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 15 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
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- 17 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
- 18 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
- 24-29 Schools/Offices Closed Spring Break
- 30 Schools/Offices Re-open

April

- 5 Schools/Offices Closed – Primary Election
- 12 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students

May

- 30 Schools/Offices Closed – Memorial Day

June

- 14 Last Day for Pre-Kindergarten Students
- 15 Last Day for Students, Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide