

CARROLL COUNTY (MARYLAND) PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT
THE DRIVER'S SEAT



Fall 2017 Edition

410-751-3229

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

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Areas

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Anita Stubenrauch

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First, let me acknowledge the tremendous job done by all of our bus drivers and bus contractors leading to a very smooth and successful opening of school. Congratulations to all for a job well done!

This was the first year we were able to provide computer generated directions for both the a.m. and p.m. regular education bus routes. We appreciate the feedback from drivers that has helped us tweak routes to better reflect the actual path the bus travels and adjust stop times. Computers are smart, but never as smart as the person who actually drives the bus on paved roads, through traffic, and around road obstructions and hazards. The Transportation Services Department (TSD) has begun working on special education bus routes using our computer routing software and we hope to have some preliminary routes out to special needs contractors and drivers for review prior to the end of this school year.

Now that we are in mid-October, it is time to start thinking about the change in the weather that will be right around the corner. Again this year, there are conflicting early forecasts for the upcoming winter season. Depending on what you read and who you listen to, this winter could be either mild or cold with varying types and amounts of precipitation. The Farmer's Almanac predicts a cold and snowy winter. A normal Carroll County winter brings an average of 36" of snow, some freezing rain, and many cold mornings. As drivers you should review your winter weather safe driving practices and be sure that your automatic chains are working properly before the need arises.

As always, our team of transportation supervisors will be out on the roads early each morning when winter weather is expected. We will do our best to make our recommendation on school closures and delays as early as possible with the safety of bus drivers and students always our primary focus. Please keep in mind that Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate in terms of the timing of the precipitation or agreement with weather forecasters. Unfortunately, our job is mostly one of reaction to whatever the forecasts are predicting and what we are able to observe between 3:00 a.m. and 5:45 a.m. Our deadline for announcing school delays or closings continues to be 6:00 a.m.

Finally, Tuesday, October 17, 2017 was recognized as National School Bus Driver and Bus Assistant Appreciation Day with the week of October 16- 20, 2017 National School Bus Safety Week. At the October 11, 2017 Carroll County Public Schools' School Board meeting, the School Board publicly recognized the exceptional job done by our school bus drivers and school bus assistants each and every day by reading a special proclamation issued by Governor Larry Hogan. A copy of this proclamation appears later in this newsletter. As you have heard many times, school bus drivers and assistants are the first and last persons representing our school system that students interact with each day. Drivers and assistants can and do make a big difference in a child's outlook on the day ahead and their overall perception about our school system. Congratulations to all of our dedicated professional school bus drivers and assistants!



Q's and A's from Special Education Transportation

Q: Why do certain drivers and assistant attend in-services at school ?

A: During the months of September and October, in-services have been provided for certain drivers and assistants who are on special ed. buses. These buses service students who attend one of the central/regional schools: Hampstead Elementary, Winfield Elementary, Shiloh Middle, and Winters Mill High Schools. Below are some helpful strategies and practices that were discussed and used by these drivers and school staff with the students who attend these schools. Many of the other special ed. buses *and* regular ed. buses may have similar students riding their buses and would benefit from some of these strategies and practices.

Things to think about:

- Students with autism may have impaired judgment, sensory issues, or significant fears that might cause unexpected behaviors.
- Be mindful that students with autism often have communication challenges.
- Some may use a device to help them communicate, such as an IPAD.
- It may be necessary to give them extra time to respond to a question or direction.
- If possible, use their communication systems to talk to them.
- Most of these students thrive on routine, so any changes may increase their anxiety.
- Transitions are difficult for some of these students, such as getting on/off the bus.

Strategies for success:

- Be calm and positive. Model appropriate behavior for the students by greeting them, saying good-bye, etc.
- Give verbal praise for the behaviors you wish to see with behavior-specific praise, such as "I like the way you went right to your seat and buckled up."
- Give positive directions; minimize the use of "don't" and "stop". "Please sit in your seat." can be more effective than "Don't stand up."
- Give clear and concise directions — avoid giving too many directions to a student who's behavior is already escalated.
- Allow a student who may be overwhelmed by noise to use headphones.
- Allow a student to use hands-on sensory items.





THE MAIN INGREDIENT

Thank You All...

For an outstanding start to the new school year. Our drivers and assistants are the *main ingredient* to ensuring a successful opening. Your knowledge of your routes, students and school dismissal practices are what makes a successful opening.

The Transportation Services Department staff appreciates all that you do.

Bus Assistants.....

As a reminder, it is imperative that you stay focused on your main task, which is ensuring the safety and managing the behavior of students on your bus. The assistant should be seated as close to the middle of the bus as possible so that he or she can respond quickly to any disturbance or unsafe situation.



"You're a good assistant Mr. Woodstock, now Mr. Brown would you please take your seat and buckle up? Thank you Mr. Brown, I appreciate how quickly you got to your seat. You're a good man."

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT DRIVING IN THE SNOW

We have all been looking at weather forecasts for this winter. Scientists measure sea ice coverage in Antarctica. Others look to the Woolly Bear caterpillar. If the rusty band is wide, then it will be a mild winter. The more black there is, the more severe the winter. The Farmer's Almanac will have you measure the depth of burrowing animals. If the mole digs its hole 2 1/2 feet deep, expect severe weather; if two feet deep, not so severe; if one foot deep, a mild winter. Either way, we need to be prepared for weather that does not mimic our clear dry day optimum driving conditions. A few things to prepare you for the winter months:

Before you Drive:

Do not park your bus in a compromised position the night before. Your long driveway may not be salted before the roads you will be traveling. Make sure you can get out if school is on time.

- ◆ Check the weather report. Wake early in case you need extra time to prepare your bus for the day.
- ◆ Check the roads yourself.
- ◆ Check that your windshield wipers are working properly. If not, replace them.
- ◆ Check that you have plenty of washer fluid.
- ◆ Check that window defrosters are working properly.
- ◆ Warm up vehicle for several minutes.



On your Route:

- ◆ Start your trip earlier than usual to be at the first pupil pick up point on time.
- ◆ Slow down gradually. Signal stops by tapping brake pedal to make the brake lights blink.
- ◆ Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, turning—nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- ◆ Avoid aggressive braking or steering.
- ◆ Turn on headlights and strobe lights.
- ◆ Stop, get out, and check the road surface yourself (not with students on board the bus).
- ◆ Increase following distance. The normal dry pavement following distance of three to four seconds should be increased to eight to ten seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed when you have to stop.
- ◆ Give others a lane.
- ◆ Practice defensive driving.
- ◆ Anticipate limited visibility. Watch snow banks along the side of the road. Remind students to stay off the snow banks when waiting for the school bus. Turns may be more difficult when snow *banks* limit visibility.
- ◆ Beware of snow *drifts*. Conventional buses may be able to go through a fairly good sized snow drift. A transit-style Type D bus may not be able to go through drifts. Watch for hazards in snow drifts (solid objects or previously plowed and now frozen snow).

(continued)

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT DRIVING IN THE SNOW

- ◆ Slick surfaces exaggerate any movement. If you brake too hard or turn too hard or drive too fast, you can go into a skid.
 - a) Take your foot off the brake and begin turning in the direction of the skid.
 - b) If you turn too far, the school bus may skid in the opposite direction.
 - c) Turn gently the other way, again in the direction of the skid.

HOW THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER SHOULD RESPOND IN LIMITED VISIBILITY

- ◆ Turn on your lights (low beams only).
- ◆ Turn on your strobe lights and or your 4-way yellow hazard lights.
- ◆ Establish and maintain a safe following distance.
- ◆ Follow the center painted line and the painted lines on the side of the road.
- ◆ Sound your horn periodically.
- ◆ Call in to Transportation Services. You may be requesting help or you at least want to let them know what situation you are in and that you may be running late.
- ◆ Be alert to other motorists whose visibility may also be limited by snow on their vehicle or by frosted windows.



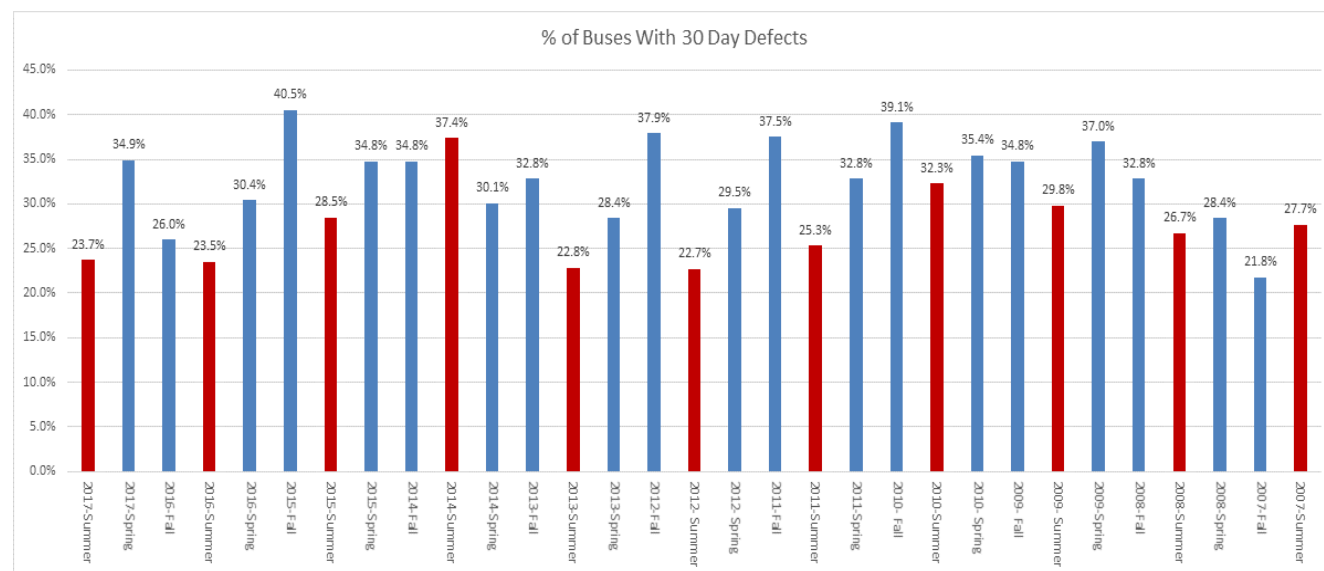
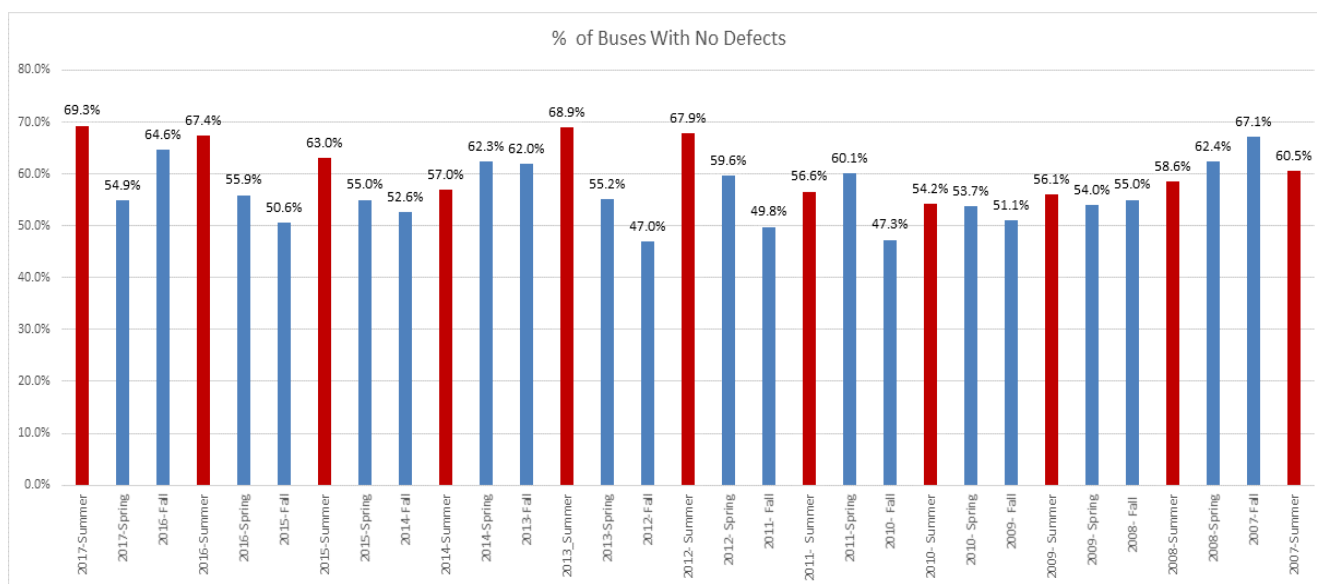
Remember to clean up any water in your bus at the end of your evening run; this will make your life a lot easier the next morning. It's easier to clean up water than to deal with ice in the morning.



SUMMER BUS INSPECTION

We are extremely proud of our fleet of buses

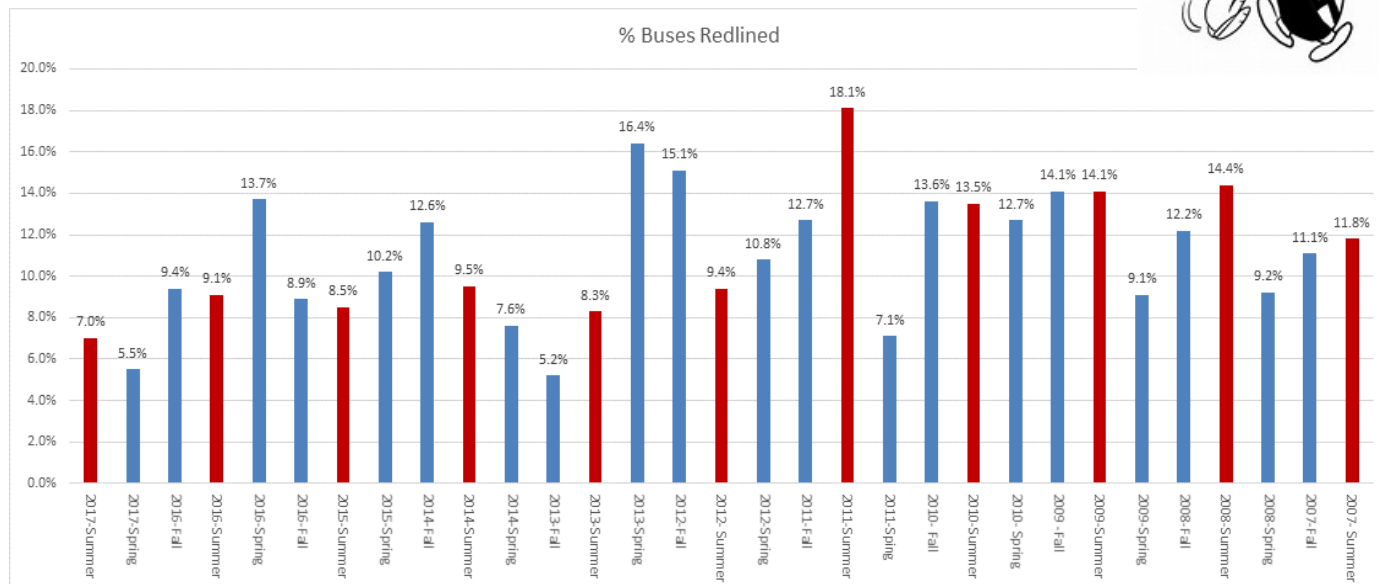
The summer 2017 bus inspection was held in August. The results can be seen in the charts below and on the next page. Almost 70% of the buses inspected passed, the best performance on an inspection we have seen in many years. Also charted are our percentage of buses with a 30-day defect, the percentage of buses with a redline defect and the results by the day. We are extremely proud of our fleet of buses and know that you will continue to strive for a clean, safe and well-maintained fleet.



Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds that you plant.

Robert Louis Stevenson

SUMMER BUS INSPECTION RESULTS (continued)



August 2017 Results Summary

Location-Date	Pass(#)	Pass(%)	30 Day (#)	30 Day(%)	Red Line(#)	Red Line (%)	Total Inspected
CHS 8-21-2017	65	73.0%	17	19.1%	7	7.9%	89
MVHS 8-22-2017	54	70.1%	17	22.1%	6	7.8%	77
WMHS 8-23-2017	47	77.0%	12	19.7%	2	3.3%	61
FSK 8-24-2017	30	53.6%	21	37.5%	5	8.9%	56
Total	196	69.3%	67	23.7%	20	7.0%	283

We are extremely proud of our fleet of buses



“Where Can I Pull Over To Make a Phone Call?”

So you hear the phone ring on your bus phone. Where can you pull over to check your phone and/or return the call?

You may have this experience regularly or you may have never had this experience. Chances are good though that you will receive a call and have to answer this important question.

CCPS Transportation Policy simply says that the call cannot be taken or made “while the bus is in motion and/or while operating on the travel portion of the road.” A bus is considered “in motion” if it is moving, regardless of where the bus is located, even on a contractor lot or school property. According to state law, “in motion” also includes a vehicle that is stopped at a red light, stop sign, or in traffic congestion.

The more difficult restriction to understand relates to the “travel portion of the road”. The “travel portion” includes travel lanes, turn lanes, and decel / accel lanes. On many roads, the non-travel portion of the road can be interpreted simply as the area to the right of the solid white line, provided the shoulder has pavement to safely contain the width of the bus. A gravel, grass, or dirt area would not meet this criteria. Many neighborhoods, however, do not have solid white lines as a guide. If no white lines exist, the bus may be secured in a pavement area that is acceptable for vehicle parking.

Whenever possible, calls should be received and made when no students are on board, either at a school or at the “child check” location. Some emergencies such as a mechanical problem or bus accident should be made regardless of the presence of students. The TSD and your contractor should only be calling your bus while students are on board for a true emergency situation such as a misplaced student.



DRIVER INSTRUCTOR CORNER

To all of our school bus drivers and assistants—thanks for a job well done! As we deal with driver instructors throughout the State of Maryland, we always say that our drivers and assistants are the BEST! Keep up the great work that you do and continue to have safe days ahead.

National School Bus Safety Week is an active and evolving public education program and an excellent way for parents, students, teachers, motorists, school bus operators and school administrators to join forces and address the importance of school bus safety. Designed to promote school bus safety, school districts throughout the country observe ***School Bus Safety Week*** the third week in October each year. Please take some extra time to discuss safety with your students. School bus drivers are held to high professional standards. Drivers and assistants have to be extremely knowledgeable, alert, and mentally and physically healthy. They need to be skilled managers, negotiators, disciplinarians and authority figures. On top of all of these demands, to be a successful driver or assistant, you must be friendly, firm, warm and open while representing yourselves, other drivers, assistants, contractors, and the Transportation Services Department of Carroll County Public Schools.

Learning the proper use of mirrors is vital to the safe operation of a school bus. Mirrors provide maximum visibility when they are free from defects, are properly adjusted and are kept clean. The adjustment of the crossover mirrors is still a major concern on many of the buses. Take time to use the mirror grids painted on the parking lots of the high schools throughout the county.

RAILROAD CROSSING PROCEDURES

- Take Railroad crossings seriously and come to a complete stop.
- Activate the hazard lights at the RRX sign or RRX painting on the road.
- Turn off the master switch.
- Stop 1– to 50 feet from the railroad tracks or behind the white stop line.
- Turn off all noise making devices and quiet the students.
- Open the door and window. STOP, LOOK & LISTEN.
- When safe to do so, cross the tracks.
- Close the door after the front tires cross the tracks.
- Turn off the hazard lights.
- Reactivate master switch.
- Close the window.
- If the railroad signal lights are malfunctioning, call the Transportation Services Department and.....



DO NOT CROSS

The State of Maryland



Proclamation

From the Governor of the State of Maryland

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK

OCTOBER 16 - 20, 2017

- WHEREAS,** *It is fitting that Maryland citizens recognize that 7,161 yellow school buses transport daily 626,076 students to Maryland schools, representing 71 percent of the total student population; and*
- WHEREAS,** *Maryland has 8,991 school bus drivers employed by local school systems that must achieve special training prior to earning their school bus drivers endorsement, issued by the Maryland Department of Motor Vehicle Administration, with an additional six hours of in-service training given during the school year; and*
- WHEREAS,** *During the year, these fleets cover over 123 million, 610 thousand miles and operate in all types of weather conditions and have an outstanding safety record despite the ever present danger of cars running their safety lights; and*
- WHEREAS,** *Maryland is pleased to join the nation in recognizing School Bus Safety in all of our 23 counties and Baltimore City and the hard work that our school bus drivers do keeping Maryland students safe.*

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR., GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, do hereby proclaim OCTOBER 16 - 20, 2017 as SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK in Maryland, and do commend this observance to all of our citizens.

Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland,
this 16th day of October
Two Thousand and seventeen



Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor

Robert H. Lathrop
Lt. Governor

John C. W. W. W.
Secretary of State

BUSTER THE BUS

BUSTER will be making his appearance again this school year. Dena and Angela will be taking BUSTER out to the elementary schools to speak to the pre-k and kindergarten classes about school bus safety. This program instills the proper way to ride a bus, the dangers of not sitting correctly, and how to cross the road safely. The importance of listening to the bus driver, using inside voices and evacuating the bus are also discussed. Those are just some of the safety procedures that the students will learn. All of the students just love BUSTER and listen to his advice. Hopefully, this will teach them the safe way to ride a school bus as they are just beginning their journey of bus riding.

**SAFETY IS MY
MOTTO**



SUBSTITUTE OBSERVATIONS will take place throughout the school year for those drivers that are due for an observation. Your contractor will inform you of the date and place to meet with a driver instructor.

2017 – 2018 Transportation Services Calendar

October

- 6 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal/System-Wide / Closed for Pre-K and Prep Students
 20 Schools Closed for Students and 10-Month Staff – Professional Meeting Day
 27 Special Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services

November

- 10 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal/System-Wide / Closed for Pre-K and Prep Students
 13 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
 14 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
 15 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45a.m. to 10:45 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
 16 Fall Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
 17 Fall Bus Inspection-(8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
 22 Schools/Offices Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
 23-24 Schools/Offices Closed – Thanksgiving Holiday
 27 Schools/Offices Re-open

December

- 25-29 Schools/Offices Closed – Winter Holiday

January

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

February

- 19 Schools/Offices Closed – Presidents' Day

March

- 9 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students-Regular Education Route Stop Sheets and Regular Education Route Manifests; Special Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services
 19 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
 20 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
 21 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
 22 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
 23 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
 30 Schools/Offices Closed-Good Friday

April

- 2 Schools/Offices Closed – Easter Monday
 3 Schools/Offices Reopen
 10 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students

May

- 28 Schools/Offices Closed – Memorial Day

June

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



SAFE KIDS CARROLL
COUNTY COALITION

AT:

Elmer Wolfe Elementary

October 17, 2017



**SAFE
K:DS**