



# The Driver's Seat



**FALL/WINTER 2022-2023 EDITION**

**DIRECTOR'S CORNER**

**410-751-3229**

## **Director**

Michael Hardesty

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## **Supervisor**

Keith Shorter:

Out-of-County  
Special Needs, &  
Liberty, Century &  
South Carroll High  
Areas,

.....

## **Area Supervisors**

John O'Meally:

Manchester Valley &  
Francis Scott Key High  
Areas,

Scott Parsons:

Winters Mill &  
Westminster High  
Areas,

## **In-County Special Needs**

Kristin Ebert:,

## **Operational Performance**

Anita Stubenrauch

.....

## **Driver Instructors**

Angela Williams,  
Scheneeka Weeden,  
Chasity Foerster

.....

## **Planner/Analysts**

Kim Gold

Nick Chalk

## **Routing Associates**

Pat Wall

Jill Fulton

.....

## **Staff Support**

Cindy Washick

As the leaves have fallen and frosty windshields have provided their morning greeting, we know that Old Man Winter is on our doorstep. Preliminary forecasts from our Accuweather and Foot's Forecasting services are calling for slightly less snowfall than a normal Carroll County winter, but we know what forecasts are, just forecasts. Let's hope that they are correct.

Automatic chains were checked during the just completed fall bus inspection, but drivers should be sure to check again before we encounter the first snowfall or that dirty word ICE. This school year's calendar includes a total of four snow days that will be treated as traditional snow days if schools are closed for inclement weather (the last day of school will be June 15 if all four snow days are used). Should there be more than four days where schools are closed for inclement weather, those additional snow days will be treated as "virtual instruction" days with no transportation.

The fall Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) Program began on October 11 and will continue for eight weeks through December 8 on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings for selected elementary students. Middle and high school ELO students attend for twelve weeks on Tuesday and Thursday evenings with the fall program ending on January 19. A total of 47 buses are involved with the fall ELO program. The Transportation Services office hours have been extended to 6 p.m. on ELO program days.

As part of the recent fall bus inspection, Transportation Services staff and technicians from Bus Patrol and ZONAR inspected camera DVR units, ZONAR GPS, and the FirstNet push-to-talk communication devices. While many of the operational issues encountered were addressed on site during the inspection, many could not be and will require future scheduled visits to repair defective equipment, wiring, and other issues. We appreciate the bus contractors' cooperation in working with the technician teams as they schedule these visits around daily operational requirements.

Finally, some good news regarding the ongoing driver shortage issue facing us here in Carroll and across the state. With the November class, a total of 48 driver candidates have gone through classroom training since July with 20 newly certified drivers now employed by contractors! Another 15 driver candidates are in the process of becoming certified. Congratulations to our driver instructor team for going the extra mile to ensure that driver candidates are trained and processed as quickly as regulations allow. Kudos also for their successful implementation of the new Federal DOT Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) curriculum and the new MDOT CDL School Bus Driver curriculum and testing requirements. Drivers and assistants are encouraged to continue your efforts to recruit new driver candidates!!

**Fingers crossed for a mild winter season.**

# Please Welcome Our New Team Member

## NICK CHALK

I am a native of Maryland and was raised in Baltimore City. I attended private school through grade twelve, after which I attended Towson University and Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I received a Bachelors in Music Education from Towson and a Masters in Music Performance from Duquesne. Following graduate school I married my beautiful wife. She is a native of Carroll County, Maryland, graduate of Westminster High School and alum of Towson University. She has been an outstanding music educator with Baltimore County Public Schools for the last twenty-five years. We moved to the Reisterstown area for a few years, then settled in Hampstead, Maryland where we have been for thirteen years.

We have two children, both currently high school age and they attend Manchester Valley High School. My son is a senior and is currently working on planning his professional goals for the future. My daughter is currently in tenth grade and aspires to be a physical therapist.

Professionally I started my career as a music teacher with Anne Arundel County Public Schools in 2000. In 2001, I shifted to the music retail business for one year with Music and Arts Centers in Ellicott City, Maryland. In August 2002, I became Director of Music at Oklahoma Road Middle School with Carroll County Public Schools. I enjoyed twenty years of teaching middle school students the joy of performing music as an ensemble, as well as supporting them over the years as young students.

In November I became the newest member of CCPS Transportation Department as Analyst/Planner I. I have enjoyed learning the details of transporting students to school safely, as well as new technology associated with routing school buses. I look forward to learning as much as I can and following the new path in my career with CCPS. I am proud and thankful to continue working with the great people of Carroll County Public Schools.



*Did I say that Nick loves his two black cats?*

### CHOWCHILLA & GPS

On July 14th and 15th of 1976, 27 students were kidnapped by three men in Chowchilla, central California. Without the current GPS tracking technology it took law enforcement 18 hours to locate the bus, its students and the bus driver. The criminals' intent was to collect a \$5 million ransom in exchange for the safe return of the students. Fortunately, the students and driver were ultimately unharmed, but the situation could have turned for the worse. The incident was, at the time, and still is, the largest mass kidnapping in U.S. history.

Fortunately, in Carroll County, our buses are equipped with GPS tracking technology, so an incident of this magnitude is extremely unlikely. Hopefully the GPS technology on our buses serves as a deterrent to a similar incident. Currently, more than 300,000 buses across North America are equipped with GPS. If a similar incident were to occur, we would immediately know the location of any bus affected. Further, the technology has proven extremely effective in resolving bus stop timing, stop verification, late bus tracking, last drop off monitoring in inclement weather or traffic congestion, mileage questions and more.

As administrators, we are extremely grateful for the additional information verification and protection GPS provides. As a tool, the technology has proven invaluable.





## BUS INSPECTION 2022 RESULTS

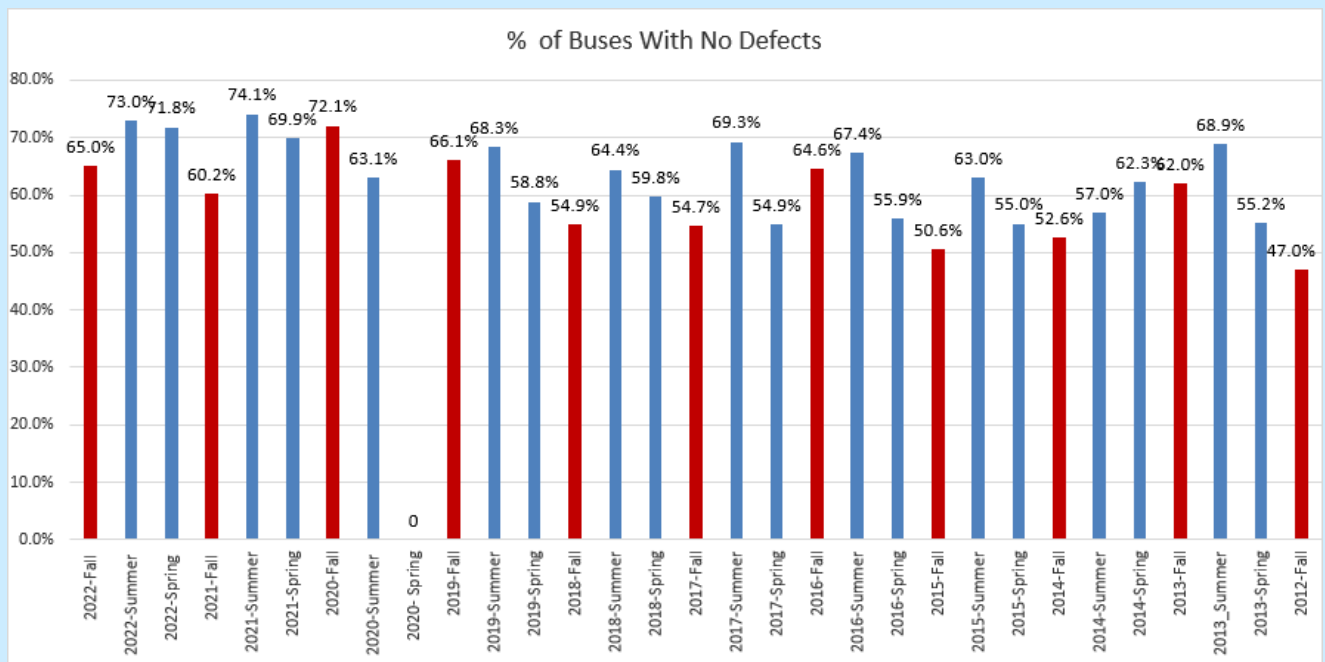
The fall 2022 bus inspection was held October 25th through the 27th and on November 1st and 2nd. For the most part, we were fortunate to have dry, mild weather.

Over the course of five days, 306 buses were inspected. Sixty-five percent, or 199 buses passed with no defects. October 27th at Francis Scott Key High School was the location with the highest percentage of buses passing—75 percent.

The daily bus inspection results chart below shows the performance of the fleet for each of the inspection days.

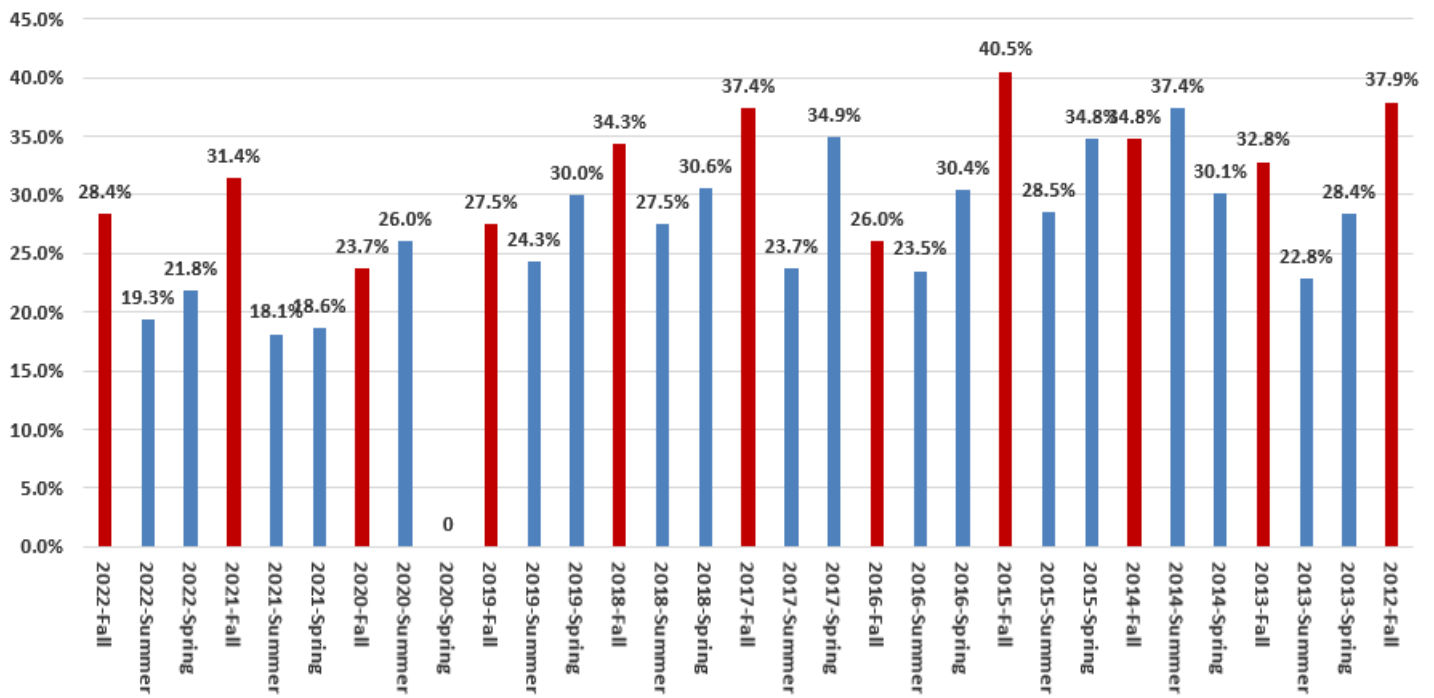
Daily Bus Inspection Results Fall 2022						
	Pass		30 Day		Redline	
Inspection Location/Date	# of buses	%	# of buses	%	# of buses	%
WMHS- Tuesday, October 25	48	68.6%	17	24.3%	5	7.1%
MVHS- Wednesday, October 26	31	59.6%	18	34.6%	3	5.8%
FSK - Thursday , October 27	33	75.0%	6	13.6%	5	11.4%
CHS- Tuesday, November 1	48	60.0%	27	33.8%	5	6.3%
WMHS- Wednesday, November 2	39	65.0%	19	31.7%	2	3.3%
Total	199	65.0%	87	28.4%	20	6.6%

The following charts show the historical performance for the percentage of buses passing, the percentage of buses with 30-day defects and the percentage of buses with at least one redline (major) defect. The pass rate of 65% is the third highest over the last ten years.

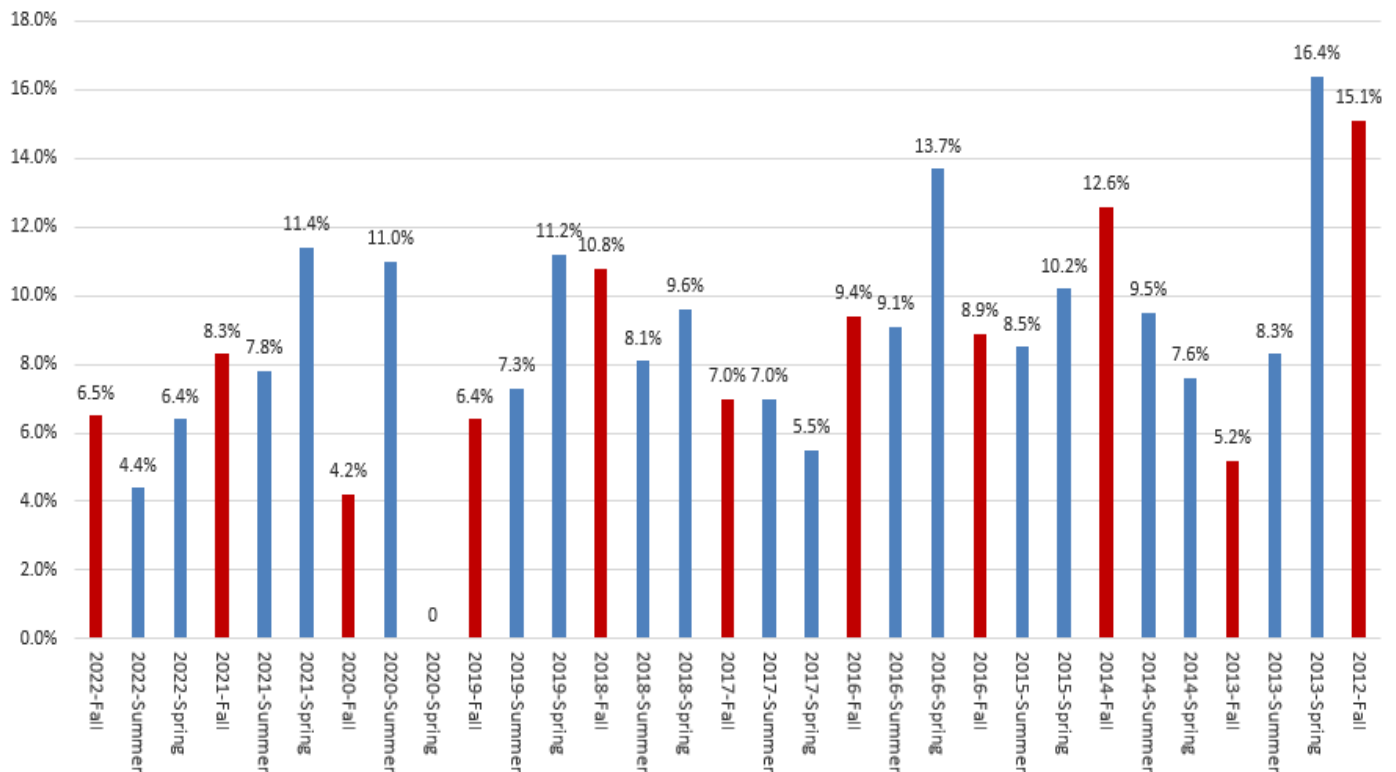


## Bus Inspection

### % of Buses With 30 Day Defects



### % Buses Redlined



### Bus Inspection

The most frequently found defects were tires and fluid leaks. Please remind your drivers to check for these issues during their pre-trip inspections and if items are noted, please make sure they are repaired. The charts below show the top five major and 30-day defects:

Top 5 Defects				
Major Defects		30 Day Defects		
Defect	Frequency		Defect	Frequency
Fluid Leak	29		Fluid Leak	6
Tires	20		Tires	4
Miscellaneous	9		Turn Signals	5
Belts	5		Brakes	3
Turn Signals	5		Belts	3

Overall, our fall 2022 bus inspection was a great success. The pride that you all take in our fleet really shines through. It is always clear when contractors take the extra time prior to bus inspection to clean their buses inside and out, in addition to maintenance inspections. A clean and well-maintained bus is a positive reflection on all of us and contributes to the safety of the children we transport.

Thanks for all you do to maintain your buses, it is the most important thing we can do for the safety of the children we transport.



## SPECIAL NEEDS

### What To Do When People are Being Disruptive:

- Allow the person to vent and tell you what is upsetting him/her. Use silence to allow the person to talk it out.
- Acknowledge the feelings of the individual.
- Set limits. Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable: "I will be willing to speak with you as soon as you lower your voice."
- Be firm, consistent, and honest.
- Focus on what you can do to help resolve the situation.

### What NOT To Do When People are Being Disruptive:

- Interrupt, particularly during the first 20–30 seconds of peak anger.
- Minimize the situation.
- Get into an argument or shouting match.
- Blame, ridicule, or use sarcasm.
- Touch.
- Ignore safety issues if the person is becoming more agitated.
- Assume you can resolve all situations; call for assistance when needed.

Source: Transporting Students with Disabilities and Special Needs Vol 33. October 20, 2022. University of Maryland Global Campus, [www.umgc.edu](http://www.umgc.edu)



## 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. Know the weather report for the next few days.**

- Check your Radio. Do a MIC check if in doubt
- 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.
- Avoid aggressive braking or steering.
- Turn on headlights and strobe lights.
- Stop, get out, and check the road surface yourself (not w/students on the bus).
- Increase following distance.
- 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. Watch for hazards in snow drifts (solid objects or previously plowed and now frozen 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. Use your AUTOMATIC CHAINS when needed

If you start to skid:

- Take your foot off the brake and begin turning in the direction of the skid.
- If you turn too far, the school bus may skid in the opposite direction.
- Turn gently the other way, again in the direction of the skid.

## HOW THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER SHOULD RESPOND TO 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.
- You need to be able to measure 4 seconds following distance to proceed at a speed of 40 mph or less.
- If you can only measure 2 seconds, slow down.
- Follow the center painted line and the painted lines on the side of the road.
- Sound your horn periodically.
- Call into Transportation Services. You may be requesting help or you at least want to let them know what situation you are in and you may be running late.
- Be alert to other motorists whose visibility may also be limited by snow on their vehicle or by undefrosted 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.

**WHAT  
TO  
KNOW  
ABOUT  
DRIVING IN  
THE SNOW**







### **SPRING BUS INSPECTION SCHEDULE**

#### **March**

- 23 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
- 28 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley High
- 29 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High

#### **April**

- 4 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High
- 5 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
- 13 Spring Bus Inspection Inclement Weather Makeup Day (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.)



## In Tribute to

### Fern Richard Haines

Fern Richard Haines, 96, of Taneytown passed away on Saturday, November 26, 2022 at his home. Born February 8, 1926 to the late Carl and Vergie Haines, he was the devoted husband of Louise Haines to whom he was married for 75 years. Fern was a dedicated farmer in Carroll County his entire life and was a member of the Maryland Farm Bureau. He served as a volunteer for the Harney and Taneytown Fire Companies, holding many positions including the President of the Carroll County Fireman Association. In 1994, Fern started driving a bus for Charles Barnhart in Taneytown. In 1998, Fern became his own contractor and continued in that role until turning the buses over to his sons Richard and Jim. Bus 387 is the bus associated with Fern for many years.



## What Makes a Good School Bus Driver Great?

Being a great school bus driver is about more than just picking kids up and driving them to school! A great school bus driver has a sense of Pride in their job. They are the biggest factor in kids getting to and from school safely and will be proud of that fact. All of the qualities below combine to make up the 5 P's of a great school bus driver. They are all important attributes that give families faith in the ability of the driver to keep their kids safe and on course.

### Protects from Danger

Driving a school bus is much different than driving a car. A great school bus driver will have mastered the differences and drive their bus as though their own kids were in the back. Obeying the rules of the road and knowing how a bus needs to be handled in situations like snowy roads, high traffic times and in sub par lighting conditions really makes the difference. Nothing is more important than the safe transport of the children in your care. Not only in driving safe, but also things like keeping kids safe from possible bullies while on the bus, keeping them seated and facing forward and even ensuring they cross the street safely before or after riding the bus.

### People Person

A school bus driver's face is often the first adult face a child sees each day other than his/her parents. It is vitally important that students be welcomed with a smile and pleasant greeting, in order to bridge the gap between home and school. A cranky bus driver will just start kids off on the wrong foot!

### Patient

A school bus driver that is able to balance driving the bus while making sure the kids are not acting out takes quite a bit of patience and skill. A driver that gets frustrated easily is going to have trouble maintaining patience with excitable kids. A school bus driver will spend most of their workday surrounded by kids, so it is pretty important that a driver likes being around kids. A great bus driver means being able to value a wide variety of personality types.

### Poised

When you have a couple dozen kids seated behind you and a schedule to keep, things are bound to pop up that might create pressure. Things like bad weather, cranky kids, road rage and poor traffic conditions all require calm responses to ensure maximum safety for everyone involved.

### Punctual

It is a given that kids have to get to school on time. Not only that, but kids wait at their bus stops for their bus to arrive at a certain time. It is important for their school bus driver to make it to each stop on time, and especially important that they are not too early! This all starts with getting to the contractor lot on time, doing a thorough pre-trip inspection, and being settled into the bus for the day.



# SEASONS GREETINGS FROM THE STAFF IN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES



Keith Shorter



John O'Meally



Mike Hardesty

Scheneeka Weeden



Kristin Ebert



Nick Chalk

Scott Parsons



Cindy Washick

Pat Wall



Angela Williams



Chasity Foerster



Kim Gold

Jill Fulton

Anita Stubenrauch



## CONSENT AND RELEASE

### **Permission to Photograph, Videotape or Audiotape**

Throughout the school year, the Carroll County Public School System frequently covers school activities and may use your child's photograph, video image, or voice for educational, informational, or public relations purposes, with or without identification by name.

If you do not wish to have your child's voice reproduced on tape or to have his/her image appear in such things as a video or a photograph, or on the school or school system website or social media, please notify the school principal in writing. It is assumed that parents and guardians consent to their children being audiotaped, photographed, videotaped, or having their image placed on a school website or social media by the school system unless such notification is received.

There are also occasions when the media cover certain school events (such as when a government leader visits a school). If you do not wish to have your child's name or likeness published by the media, you should address your concerns directly to the school involved so that the media is so advised. Please be advised that the school system has no control over the media when they are covering activities such as sporting events and musical programs that are open to the public.

### **Use of Student Work on Websites or in Publications**

There may be times throughout the year when the Carroll County Public School System wishes to display student work on school websites, social media, or in publications. If you do not wish to have your child's art, poetry, writing, etc. appear on school websites, social media, or in publications, please notify the school principal in writing. It is assumed that parents and guardians consent to their child's work being displayed on school websites, social media, or in publications unless such notification is received.