



410-751-3229

THE DRIVER'S SEAT

SPRING 2022-2023 S/Y EDITION

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



**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 we move into the last quarter of the 2022 – 2023 school year and with the days getting longer and warmer it is important for drivers to keep a sharp lookout for more activity within the neighborhoods that you travel. It is equally important to remain focused and not become complacent with your everyday bus route and routine. It only takes one incident where you were distracted from concentrating on your driving to result in an unfortunate accident.

Regarding the topic of accidents, I always hesitate to brag on our overall accident record, but kudos are due to our drivers as the number of accidents through ¾ of this school year have declined by fourteen total accidents from the previous school year at this same time, a 30% reduction! With nearly 300 buses travelling over 5.4 million miles annually, our drivers continue to have an exemplary safety record. Congratulations are due to our school bus contractors and driver trainers, but mostly to the school bus drivers who consistently apply their defensive driving skills and understand the responsibility they have in safely transporting our school students.

Kudos are also due to the many drivers and assistants who reported to work every school day so far this school year. While the driver shortage is still a major concern across the country and here in Carroll County, the number of contractors that missed bus runs this year due to driver absence was greatly reduced from the prior 2021- 2022 school year. Drivers and assistants are encouraged to continue to recruit their friends, family members, and neighbors to become a school bus driver for the CCPS.

Thanks to all of the drivers that participated in the one-day survey of stop arm violations on Wednesday, April 19. The results will be tabulated and included in the statewide survey and then made part of the national effort to call attention to this most serious safety issue. Based on our Bus Patrol exterior cameras, we are averaging between 30 – 40 stop arm violations per day. Each citation issued cost the owner of the offending vehicle a \$250 fine. The revenue collected from these violations is paying for the exterior and interior cameras, Zonar fleet tracking, First Net push-to-talk communication devices and upgrades to our bus routing software (Transfinder +). It is our hope that we will see the number of stop arm violations begin to decrease as time goes on.

Finally, John O'Meally, Transportation Area Supervisor for the Manchester Valley High and FSK High area schools, has announced his retirement effective June 30, 2023. John served as a science teacher for 15 years at Mt. Airy Middle and South Carroll High schools prior to coming to the Transportation Department in 2003. For the past twenty years John has maintained an excellent relationship with his bus contractors, drivers, and school administrators. He has chaired our Accident Review Committee and managed the CCPS drug and alcohol driver testing program. John's imprint on Carroll County Public Schools Transportation will be felt for many years into the future. We wish John well in retirement and the next phase of his life. Stay tuned for an announcement regarding an opportunity to say goodbye and thank you to John.



## What Happens After Retirement?



Carroll County Public School buses in the fleet are normally retired and replaced every 12 years with a few exceptions. For example, if Bus XYZ is retiring in the Summer of 2023, a new bus is ordered in the Fall of 2022 and scheduled for delivery prior to the start of the 2023-2024 School Year.

At the end of each school year in June, all “after-market” equipment is removed from the retiring bus. This year the equipment removals will take place at the Ag Center during the week of June 12 – 16. “After-market” equipment often includes all interior and exterior cameras (other than backup cameras), the DVR used for recording video footage, the First Net Radio System, Zonar equipment, etc. This equipment is scheduled for removal immediately following the end of the school year so that the bus contractor can dispose of / sell the bus. The equipment is then placed in storage in preparation for reinstallation on a new bus in August.

When the replacement bus arrives in August, the bus acceptance process and the “after-market” equipment installation process are scheduled for a date, usually on or before bus inspection week, in August. This year, most acceptances and installations will take place at the Ag Center during the last few weeks of August. Twice as much time is needed for the installation of “after-market” equipment than was needed for each bus during the removal process. Ideally, all the “after-market” equipment is installed and tested prior to the first day of school.



## In-Service 2023/2024

In-service will be two phases:

**Phase One:** CPR modules will be completed through Health and Safety Institute link that will be emailed on ***Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>***, **directly to the driver or assistant's email** that was provided/confirmed by the contractor. As was the case in the past years, each driver/assistant must complete the skills using the link emailed to them. **DO NOT SHARE OR FORWARD EMAIL FROM HSI**, as the intended recipient will be the only person who gets credit for completing the videos. Do not fast forward or close a video before it is complete; otherwise, it will require the viewer to re-watch the video in its entirety. HSI does not recommend viewing on a phone, as the screen cannot accommodate all quiz questions. Online videos must be completed ***ON or BEFORE Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>***.

**Phase Two:** In-person training is being offered on two dates, June 14<sup>th</sup> or June 15<sup>th</sup> at Winters Mill High School. Doors will open at 7:00 a.m. H.S.I. online courses **MUST** be complete before attending in-person. Dates are assigned to contractor groups as follows:

Dates are assigned to contractor groups as follows:

Wednesday, June 14th	Thursday, June 15th
Sunset	The ARC
F&S	Johnsons
Rawlings	Garcia
Miller	Savage
Paugh	Maring
Feeser	Clover
Palmerino	J. R. Maley
R. Haines	Bauer
J. Haines	J. Seiler
Daniel Green	R. Seiler
Delbert Green	N. L. Seiler
Ruby	S. Norris
Neal	Glover
G. Lynn Seipp	Beall
Beaver Run	Boone
Rill	Freedom
E. Haines	County

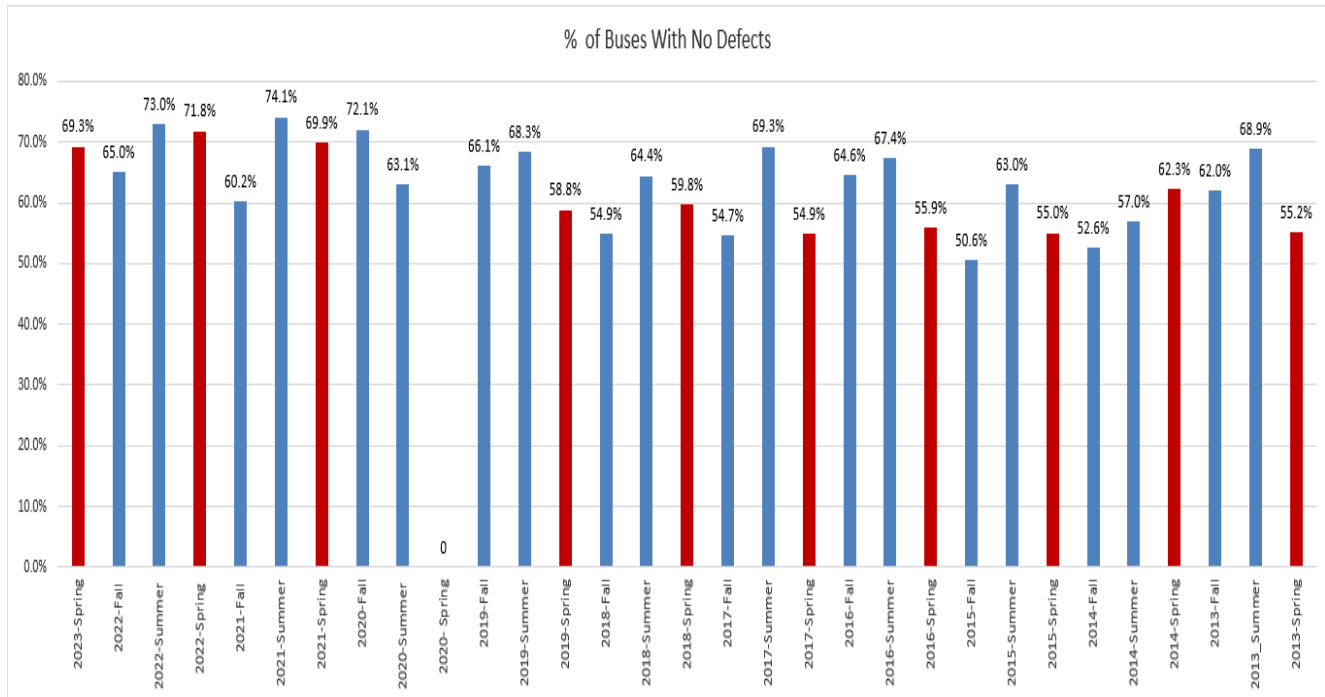
The Spring bus inspection occurred in late March and before the start of Spring break in April. This inspection was under the auspices and control of MDOT inspectors. The inspectors continued to praise our inspection process and the condition of our buses as a model throughout the state. Overall, the inspection went very well and the weather cooperated except for a bit of rain the first day. Just over 69% of the buses came through inspection without a defect. The most successful day, based on passing rate, was on March 23 rd. at Winters Mill High where over 80% of the buses passed. The chart below shows the daily results for our spring inspection.

### Daily Bus Inspection Results Spring 2023

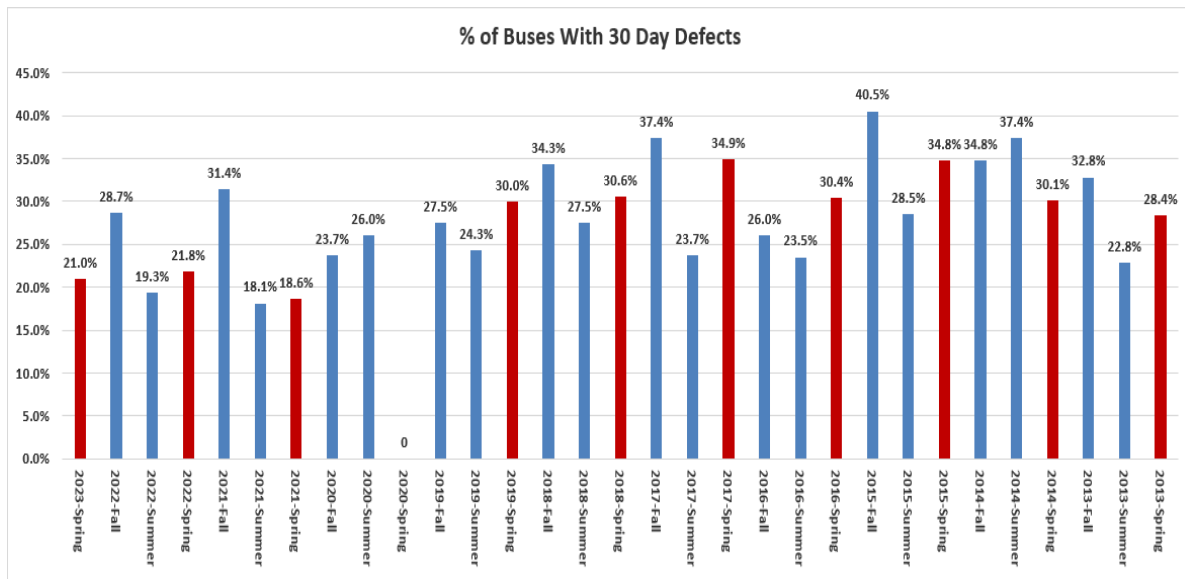
Inspection Location/Date	Pass		30 Day		Redline	
	# of buses	%	# of buses	%	# of buses	%
WMHS Thursday, March 23	60	85.7%	8	11.4%	2	2.9%
MVHS- Tuesday, March 28	40	63.5%	16	25.4%	7	11.1%
WMHS- Wednesday, March 29	42	62.7%	17	25.4%	8	11.9%
CHS- Tuesday, April 4	44	67.7%	14	21.5%	7	10.8%
FSKHS- Wednesday, April 5	28	63.6%	10	22.7%	6	13.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>69.3%</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9.7%</b>

### HISTORICAL RESULTS

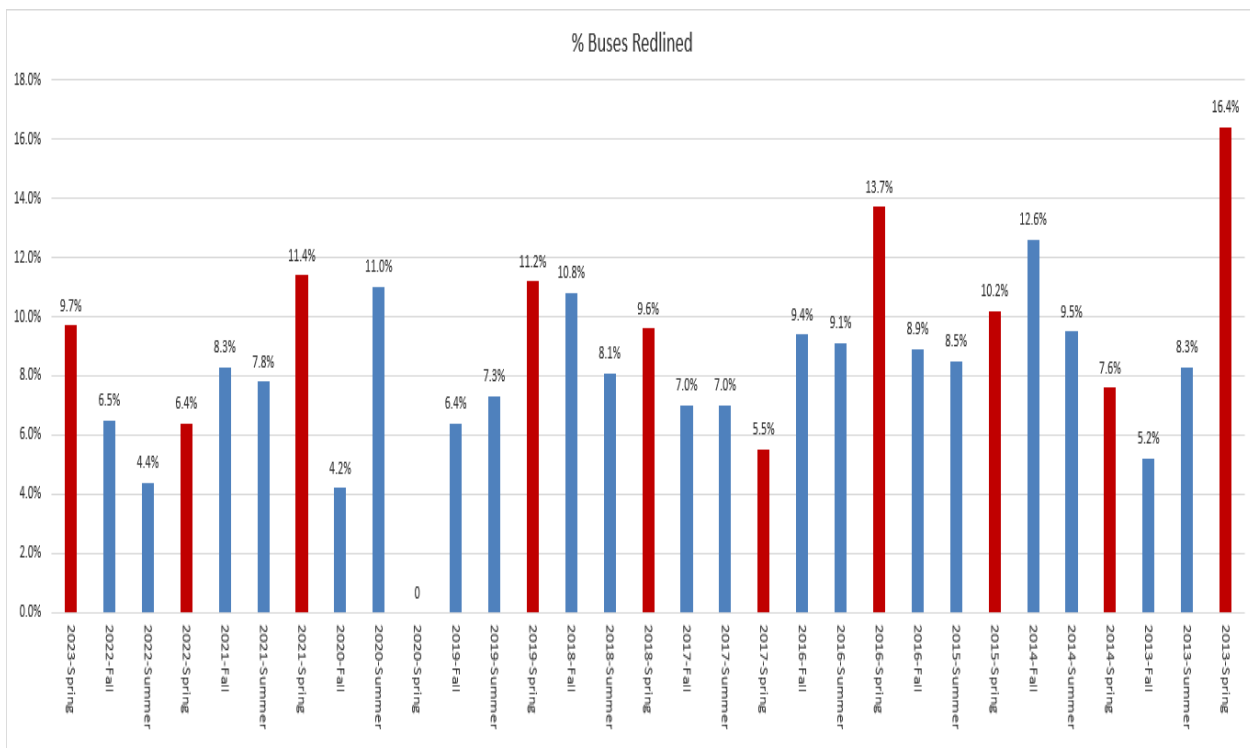
Based on historical trends , our past rate of 69.3% was in line with recent inspections.



The percentage of buses with at least one 30-day defect was 21%, a slight improvement compared to the Spring of 2022, and also in line with recent Spring bus inspections.



The percentage of buses with at least one major defect was 9.7%. This is an increase from Spring of 2022 which had a major defect rate of 6.4%. Overall, this percentage is in line with past inspections.



We continue to be proud of our inspections and the maintenance in our fleet by our contractors. Thank you and keep up the good work. We appreciate the work that you do and we ask that you continue the effort. As a group, our buses are in excellent condition. Individually, some of our contractors can improve on their performance. We will be monitoring individual past and on-going performance as we move forward.

## SPECIAL NEEDS REMINDERS



As the 2022-2023 school year comes to an end there are some special needs bus transportation reminders that are important to share. Thank you for the superb job done by the drivers, assistants and contractors. Thanks for all that you do for our students!

- The Transportation Department will contact the bus staff if a student should keep their vest for ESY. **All other vests should be collected by the bus staff and turned into your bus contractor on the last day of school.**
- Please contact the school administration or the Transportation Department if a recommendation of the use or the discontinuation of equipment is needed for next school year. The decision is the I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) team's decision. However, the input of the bus staff is a great resource for the IEP team.
- If a student has not been riding for five consecutive days, please notify your contractor and the Transportation Department.
- If the information on the student's profile sheet is incorrect, i.e., phone number, contacts, or equipment, call the Transportation Department so information can be corrected for next school year.

*Have a Great Summer!!!*



## Managing Student Behavior on the School Bus

Discipline on school buses is one of the biggest obstacles confronting school bus drivers today. Your response and related strategies will be key in effectively managing behaviors on your bus. There is no substitute for experience when dealing with these behaviors. Drivers need to keep in mind that anytime they interact with a student who has demonstrated unacceptable behavior on the bus, the goal is to change the behavior of the student. Focus must remain on the student's behavior not on the driver's response to the student's behavior. Referrals are not written to punish students but to change inappropriate behaviors to acceptable ones.

### **The following strategies can hopefully help:**

- Do not threaten the entire bus for the wrongful behavior of a few
- Don't yell or berate the students, keep your cool in all instances.
- Never lose your temper or use profanity, Don't be the worst behaved on your bus.
- Avoid threats, repeated threats are just that and students know this
- Avoid "Forever Land." Allow students to correct their behavior and regain your trust
- When loading at a school, don't bury your face in your cell phone. Stand and face the students, set the tone before the ride home
- Greet your students boarding your bus every day, KNOW THEIR NAMES as soon as possible
- Set a good example for courtesy and be friendly but firm. Just because they don't say good morning doesn't mean you shouldn't
- Avoid vague and hard to follow directives "Hey, sit down, why don't you behave like everyone else," Instead try "John, sit in your seat now."
- Positive Reinforcement is the most powerful way of influencing behavior on your bus, "I like the way you are seated," "I like the way you quieted down before crossing the railroad tracks," "I like the way you guys were for the sub driver yesterday."
- Review bus riding rules with your students on the first day and throughout the year
- Rules should be simple and realistic for the age group on your bus, be consistent
- Ignore behaviors that are not dangerous, some students try to get your attention, stay focused on the road
- Punishment works only when it is part of a larger behavioral plan, talk to the administrator at your school, there is a plan in place for repeated offenders
- Never stop writing referrals because you don't think the school is doing anything about them.

With the last few days of school upon us, do not allow behaviors that you have not allowed during the past year. Think about the discipline on your bus and strategies that have worked and those that have not. Next year is a new year for you as well as your students. Students do mature over the summer and you will start September with a new and fresh attitude on behavior. Think about how you want to start next year with a discipline plan in effect. The only way to gain experience is by having experiences. After all you have been through over the past few years, you have had many experiences. Learn and be prepared for the next year with the knowledge you gained this past year. Have a great summer.

## Bus Tech

During your pre-trip, if you notice any issues with camera equipment or other after-market technology installed on the bus, please report it to the Transportation office. Things to keep an eye on include cameras that are not securely attached to the bus, loose or detached DVR box lids, and the lockbox kit that holds the FirstNet phone coming loose.

### FirstNet Phone and Lockbox Kit Checks

To use the FirstNet/Sonim phone and lockbox unit, the bus must be on (Run) or in the auxiliary power mode. You can do the following quick checks to make sure the devices are working:

**Check for any loose connections:** Check the mic connection and the cable connections at the back of the lockbox to ensure all cables are securely attached. The best practice is ensuring lockbox kit cables are secure each day.

**Lockbox “ON/OFF” switch and volume control:** Make sure lockbox switch is in the “ON” position with the blue light lit, and the volume is turned up all the way, so you don’t miss important calls.

**Radio Check:** To make a test call into Transportation at any time, say the following: “Bus # (say the number) to Transportation for a radio check”. Someone from Transportation will respond. If you do not hear a response, try again at least 2 more times waiting 30 seconds between attempts. If you do not hear a response after the 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt, call the Transportation office and ask for assistance in troubleshooting your FirstNet system. Drivers are encouraged to do periodic radio checks to ensure the system is working properly.

### TRANSPORTATION STAFF CHANGES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023

**John O’Meally**, Transportation Area Supervisor for the Manchester Valley and FSK high school catchment areas will be retiring on June 30, 2023.

**Scott Parsons** will be voluntarily leaving his current position as Transportation Area Supervisor for the Westminster and Winters Mill high school catchment areas.

**Kim Gold**, currently Transportation Planner/ Analyst II will be replacing Mr. Parsons as the new Transportation Area Supervisor for the Westminster and Winters Mill high school areas.

**Mr. Charles “Chip” Weaver**, currently Assistant Principal at East Middle School, will be the new Transportation Area Supervisor for in-county special needs.

**Nick Chalk**, currently Transportation Planner/ Analyst I, will be replacing Kim Gold as Transportation Planner/ Analyst II.

**Scott Parsons** will be the new Transportation Planner/ Analyst I.

We congratulate John on his retirement and all who will be assuming new positions and responsibilities within our department!



## **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.