

PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDE  
FOR  
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION



Cecil County Public Schools  
September 2023-June 2024

## INTRODUCTION

Student safety to and from school is a hallmark of our public school transportation program. Providing for the safety of our children whether transported by school buses or by other means requires the efforts of many partners including parents, students, transportation staff, and school administrators. This publication highlights parental roles, student responsibilities, and bus conduct rules. They exist solely for the safety of your children.

We recommend that parents review the contents of this guide and discuss the student responsibilities with their children. Continued cooperation and support of these rules and regulations will enable us to maintain a safe and efficient transportation system.

Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

***The driver's first responsibility is to safely operate the bus.***

***The student's first responsibility is not to interfere with the driver's ability to safely operate the bus.***

## PARENT'S ROLE IN STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

1. **RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE.** This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if the misconduct of the student jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of the other students riding the bus.
2. **UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BOARD THE BUS.** Only students and authorized passengers are allowed on the bus. Violators may be charged with trespassing. **Non-passengers shall stay back 10 feet from the bus unless authorized by the driver.** Per Federal Law 26-104 (a) in this section, "school bus driver" means the driver of a school vehicle as defined in 11-154 of the Transportation Article while employed by or under contract with a local school system. (b) A person may not obstruct, hinder, or interfere with a school bus driver while the school bus driver is engaged in the performance of the school bus driver's official duties. (c) Any person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$1,000, imprisonment not exceeding 90 days, or both. Under no circumstances should anyone block the doorway or otherwise hinder the operation of the bus or bus route.
3. **PARENT CONCERNS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.** If you are upset over something that happened on the bus, please **DO NOT** go to the bus stop to have a confrontation with the driver or assistant, instead please call your student's school and talk with a school administrator.
4. **PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE** for the safety of their students from the time the students leave home in the morning until they board the school bus, and at the end of the day from the time they get off the bus until the students reach home. Bus stop supervision is a parent's responsibility. Once the student enters the school bus, the responsibility lies with the bus driver and the school administration until students are unloaded at the end of their day.
5. **THE MID-DAY RUN,** pre-kindergarten students will be let off the bus only under appropriate supervision. You need to make arrangements to have someone at the bus stop. Appropriate supervision would include a responsible adult or older sibling. If appropriate supervision is not provided, the driver will return the student to the school. **Repeated instances of supervision not being provided shall cause the administration to revoke transportation privileges and inform social services.**
6. **AT THE END OF THE DAY,** pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students will be let off along with other students at their stop. However, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students **getting off alone at a stop** will be let off the bus only under appropriate supervision which is a responsible adult or older sibling.

7. ABNORMAL CONDITIONS AT THE BUS STOP MAY REQUIRE STUDENTS TO BE TRANSPORTED BACK TO THE SCHOOL. Drivers are trained to use their own judgment in determining if the conditions at a stop are abnormal. In such instances, drivers may not let students off and will return them to the school at the end of the route.

8. A TEMPORARY CHANGE OF A STUDENT'S BUS STOP ASSIGNMENT IS RESERVED FOR EMERGENCIES. The purpose of the school bus is to provide transportation from the student's home or daycare to school and back. A request to the principal for the student to ride a different bus home or to school is to be reserved for emergencies. Students are safest when using a consistent bus stop.

9. STUDENTS SHOULD LEAVE HOME EARLY ENOUGH TO ARRIVE AT THE DESIGNATED SCHOOL BUS STOP OR CROSSING POINT TEN (10) MINUTES BEFORE THE APPROXIMATE ARRIVAL TIME OF THE BUS. Students are safer being at the stop on time versus running for the bus. Students should be visible to the bus driver at the bus stop, as the bus approaches the stop. Drivers are required to slow and look for students; but when students are not visible, the bus is NOT required to stop. Drivers are not required to wait for tardy students. At places where the bus picks up at the driveway, the house number should be located by the driveway and easily visible from the roadway in both directions. This is supported by a 1997 Cecil County Ordinance.

10. PARENTS, TOGETHER WITH THEIR STUDENTS, SHOULD DEVELOP A ROUTE TO AND FROM THE SCHOOL BUS STOP OR SCHOOL\*, WHICH MINIMIZES THE EXPOSURE OF STUDENTS TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC. We encourage parents' supervision of their students to and from the school bus stop, using this opportunity to teach the students proper pedestrian practices. If walking alongside the road, walk facing oncoming traffic. If you miss the bus, **DO NOT CHASE THE BUS** as it is dangerous. Nationwide, there have been an increased number of student deaths from chasing a moving bus. \*There is space at the end of this booklet for your child's specific information.

11. DAYCARE LOCATIONS. Inside residential communities or urban areas where students have an adequate walking pathway, stops are placed where they serve the majority of students in the most effective manner. Daycares receive the same consideration as any family residence and are not provided a special exception. It is the responsibility of the daycare provider to ensure that their students are able to safely get to and from the assigned consolidated stop. All stops are separated by approximately a quarter mile as stated in our regulations and recommended in state law. That distance is designed to consolidate students into larger groups to improve the efficiency of the bus operations and reduce ride time without unusual risk.

12. STATE LAW REQUIRES THE AMBER WARNING LIGHTS OF THE BUS TO BE ON A MINIMUM DISTANCE TO ALERT MOTORISTS THE BUS WILL BE STOPPING. This does not apply to stops made on Pulaski Highway (Rte. 40). The higher the maximum posted speed limit, the longer the lights should be on. Our minimum distance between stops is 200 feet in areas where consolidated stops are not used.

13. PARENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THEIR LIABILITY FOR DAMAGE CAUSED BY THEIR STUDENTS TO THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS, INCLUDING THE SCHOOL BUS. Damage not paid for within a reasonable time will result in a loss of bus riding privileges. Students should show consideration and respect for the bus and property of those citizens whose homes and places of business are located along their routes to and from the bus stop.

14. INCLEMENT WEATHER: Media announcements and electronic phone calls regarding the opening of schools begin at approximately 5:30 a.m. Please refer to specific information distributed by your student's school.

15. STUDENT BAGGAGE: Space on a school bus is restricted to the seating of students and there are no storage compartments. Loose objects can become dangerous to students by either becoming projectiles in a collision or blocking the bus aisles in the event of an emergency evacuation. Student baggage (backpacks, book bags, lunch boxes, musical instruments, class projects, and sports equipment) is limited to what a student can hold in their lap or place on the floor under their seat. Seat space is reserved for students. On some buses, conditions may allow some seating space to be used for excess materials, but this can change daily. The driver has the authority to refuse to allow excess baggage to be brought on the bus based on those conditions. Parents should be aware of the size of those items students bring onto the bus and plan on transporting by private vehicle to school those items that are too big.

16. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES such as cell phones, and handheld game units are the responsibility of the student. Even though the use of personal electronic devices is restricted in the school building, students may use their electronics on the school bus for personal and private non-disruptive activities. If the use of any electronic device disrupts the safe transport of students, the privilege of using those devices will be stopped. Drivers will report the issue to the school administration on a referral form. Any belongings left on the bus will be held by the driver or turned in to the school office.

## STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. Students Awaiting School Bus Arrival:

I shall not stand or play on the roadway.

I shall not cross the roadway until the bus arrives and has come to a complete stop. All crossings will be made only after the driver signals me to do so. Before crossing, I will look for traffic in both directions, and then pass at least ten feet in front of the bus. No student shall direct traffic.

I shall remain in line at least ten feet from the stopped bus, and move towards the bus only after the door is opened.

I will be at the designated bus stop at least TEN (10) minutes before the scheduled arrival of the bus and will board with the least possible delay.

### B. Students on the Bus

I will follow the driver or assistant's instructions at all times for the safety of others and myself.

I will stay properly seated in my designated seat.

I will talk quietly with my seatmates & act responsibly, and I will not yell or scream or use improper language.

I will keep my hands and feet to myself and inside the bus at all times.

I will respect the bus driver or assistant as the person in charge of my safety and I will respect other students and their property.

I will not throw anything inside the bus or throw objects out the windows.

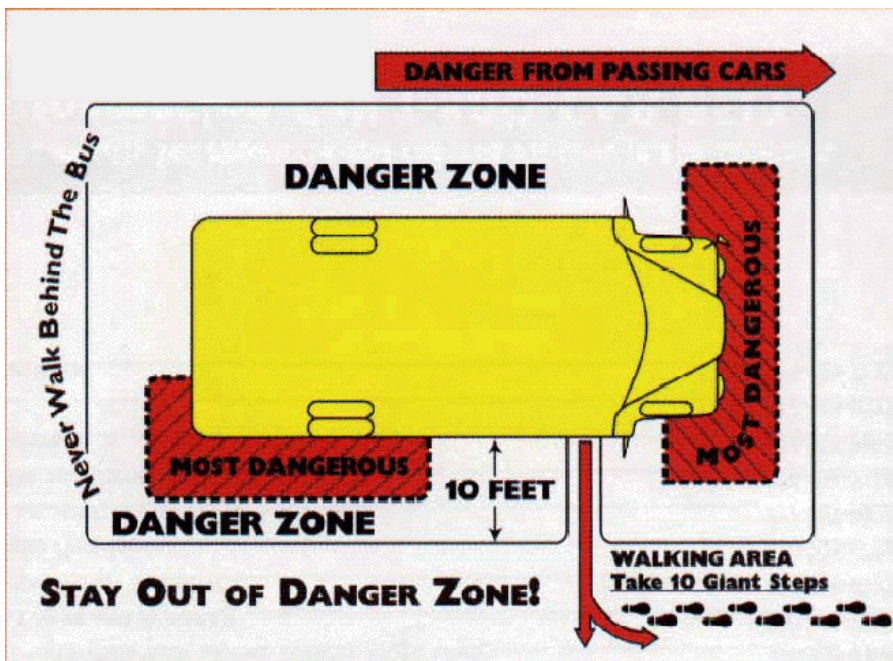
I will not consume food or beverages on the bus.

### C. Students Departing Bus

I shall if necessary cross the roadway, look for traffic in both directions; pass at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus, and only when the driver has signaled me to do so.

I shall not leave the bus at any other place but at the regular stop without the written consent of a School Administrator.

I shall not stand in the roadway to direct traffic or to assist other students to cross the road.



## **STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**

### **PURPOSE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCEMENT OF RULES**

The purpose of these rules and regulations is to provide a basic framework for safe transportation of students to and from school and for efficient operation of the Student Transportation Program. The parents/guardians, the school bus contractor, the bus driver and assistant, the school administration, and the Transportation Department of the Cecil County Public Schools share responsibility for the enforcement of these rules. **Riding a school bus is a privilege. Failure to comply with regulations may result in a revocation of this privilege.**

### **USE OF AUDIO/VISUAL CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUSES**

CCPS Authorized audio/video cameras may be placed on any school bus in order to help provide for a safe and orderly environment. They will be used to monitor student behavior and to provide student safety while riding the school bus.

Students and parents will be notified of the use of audio/video cameras on school buses at the beginning of each school year through the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, which is published in the Cecil County Public Schools yearly calendar. Additionally, a notice of the use of audio/video cameras will be posted on each school bus.

School administrators and/or Department of Transportation personnel will view audio/video tapes. Should student misconduct be evident, the student will be disciplined according to the Board of Education's Code of Student Discipline and school disciplinary policy, and parents will be notified.

### **THE STUDENT**

The student's first responsibility is not to interfere with the driver's ability to safely operate the school bus by following the established School Bus Safety Rules and the regulations outlined in The Student's Responsibilities and Rights. The student or his parent or guardian must reimburse the owner of the school bus for the cost of repairing the damage to the bus caused by the student. The student's riding privilege will be revoked if full reimbursement is not made or payment arrangements are not set up within a reasonable amount of time; usually thirty days. Before the privilege is revoked, the parent or guardian shall be notified in writing that the privilege will be revoked for non-payment.

### **PARENT/GUARDIANS**

For the safety of all students, the parents should support the school bus safety rules by impressing upon the student the importance of and responsibility for following the school bus safety rules.

### **THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER**

The driver's first responsibility is to safely operate the bus. The bus driver is expected to enforce regulations for student behavior while boarding, riding, and exiting the bus. If the driver is unable to enforce a rule, they should request assistance from the school administration. The school administration and the bus driver will work together to ensure that all students are made aware of the expectations for riding the school bus.

### **THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

The school administrator should provide appropriate assistance and guidance to the school bus driver and the student when the student's behavior is not acceptable. When a student is not permitted to ride a school bus, the administrator should notify the parent or guardian in writing of the student's infraction of the applicable rule.

Riding privileges can be revoked anywhere from one (1) to twenty (20) school days at the discretion of the school administration for subsequent infractions, depending on the severity of the incident and the frequency of referrals. A variety of consequences, at the discretion of the school administrator, may be applied to improve the student's behavior. The Superintendent or his designee must approve the revocation of more than twenty (20) school days. Revocation of a student's privilege to ride a school bus may automatically extend from the end of one school year to the beginning of the next school year. The Superintendent may provide additional guidelines.

### **THE SCHOOL BUS CONTRACTOR**

The bus contractor is expected to cooperate fully by impressing upon drivers and assistants their responsibilities for supervision of students riding the bus, maintaining effective cooperation and communications with the school administration, and for carrying out the instructions received from the Transportation Department.

**THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

The Transportation Department shall review with bus drivers and assistants annually these rules and the bus staff's responsibilities for enforcement in cooperation with the school administration.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Webpage: [www.ccps.org](http://www.ccps.org)

“Administration”>“Transportation”>“Parents/Guardians”>“Student Conduct”>“Parent Guide for Student Transportation”

Email: [transportationoffice@ccps.org](mailto:transportationoffice@ccps.org)

Phone: 410-287-4656

Fax: 410-287-4659

**NOTES FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN USE**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Stop Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Route to Bus Stop: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Plan if no one is home: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_