CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MARYLAND

THE DRIVER'S SEAT

SPRING/SUMMER 2024 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

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Area Supervisors
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Manchester Valley & Francis Scott Key High Areas
Kim Gold:
Winters Mill & Westminster High Areas

In-County Special Needs
Chip Weaver

Operational Performance
Anita Stubenrauch

.....

Driver Instructors
Angela Williams
Scheneeka Weeden
Shana Clark

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Planner/Analysts
Scott Parsons
Nick Chalk

Routing Associates
Sue Hudson
Jill Fulton

.....

Staff Support
Cindy Washick

As we enter the 4th quarter of another successful school year, here is a brief recap of some of our accomplishments and interesting facts about the 2023-2024 school year:

As of April 15, 2024, a total of 36 new drivers were trained and certified by our CCPS driver instructor team. Another 20 driver candidates have attended class and are awaiting receipt of their CDL learners to continue with behind-the-wheel training, testing, and certification.

Beginning this school year, there were a total of 354 certified school bus drivers, 226 classified as driving full- time, every day, and 128 classified as substitute bus drivers, meaning that they only drive certain days of the week, certain times of the day, or strictly part-time as needed.

This school year there were a total of 251 daily bus routes (185 regular ed and 66 special ed) traveling approximately 27,500 miles daily (5.2 million miles for the entire school year). Of the 66 special ed routes, a total of 15 buses are assigned to nonpublic schools outside of Carroll County, the Maryland School for the Deaf (Frederick and Columbia campuses), and the Maryland School for the Blind (Baltimore campus).

While the nationwide driver shortage issues continue to affect Carroll County, as of April 15 there were a total of 247 occurrences where alternative arrangements needed to be made to provide school bus service for all eligible students. While we continue to expect all bus routes to be covered as designed, this represented an approximate 50% reduction in the number of driver absences from the previous school year.

This year we were successful in utilizing alternative van/ taxi transportation to certain nonpublic schools for some special needs students where school bus transportation had not been successful. A total of 92 students in transition (homeless) who are temporarily residing out of district from their home school were successfully transported by school bus to their school of origin/ home school.

Approximately 425 drivers, assistants, and contractors received training in first aid and were certified/ re-recertified in CPR. Additional in-service training was provided on the topics of sexual assault, bullying, safety and security protocols, and school bus stop procedures.

The number of preventable accidents as of April 1, 2024, totaled 18 compared to 37 preventable accidents for the same period last school year. The number of preventable accidents with personal injury and/or appreciable property damage totaled 3 through April 1, 2024, compared to 7 preventable accidents with appreciable property damage and/or personal injury last school year. Our number of preventable accidents with appreciable property damage and/ or personal injury remains less than 1 accident/ million miles traveled. Based on national standards, this is an exceptional safety record that we all must continue to work hard to maintain.

Thank you to all of our Transportation Team members: bus contractors, drivers, assistants, driver instructors, analysts, support staff, and supervisors for helping make this 2023-2024 school year a success!

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS:

SUE HUDSON

The Transportation Department would like to welcome Sue Hudson to our team. Sue started in January, as a Routing Associate supporting the north west and north east areas.

Sue was born in Howard County, and moved to Carroll County when she was 11 years old. She is a graduate of South Carroll High School. Sue has been married for 31 years and currently lives in Westminster with her husband Steve, 2 dogs Flash and Fred, and cat George. She has two sons and seven grandchildren ranging from 2 years – 11 years old.

Sue began her career with Carroll County Public Schools in 1999 starting as a Cafeteria Assistant at Mechanicsville Elementary School until she became a Student Support Assistant at Winfield Elementary School. Next, she was a one-on-one supporting a student learning to read and write braille. Sue's last assignment at Winfield was as their Registrar for the past seven years. After 23 years in the system, Sue decided to join the Transportation Team. Sue is looking forward to learning the new technology associated with routing school buses and supporting the bus drivers.

One of Sue's favorite things to do is attend her grandchildren's sporting events! Sue also enjoys fishing, crabbing, and riding her motorcycle.

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS:

SHANA CLARK

The Transportation Department also welcomes our new Driver Instructor, Shana (Banana) Clark to our team who started in February.

Shana was born in Anne Arundel County and grew up in Pasadena. She attended Northeast High School and Anne Arundel County Community College. Shana moved to Carroll County 10 years ago with her husband. They have been married for eight years and currently live in Manchester. Shana and her husband have five children ranging in age from 16-24 years old. Shana enjoys spending time camping with her husband in the North Carolina mountains while leaving the kids home to take care of the three dogs, eight cats, lizard, and chickens on the farmette. Shana's husband, children, and animals keep her very busy.

Shana began her career as a bus driver with F & S Transportation in 2015; she was Scheneeka's first trainee. Before her career as a bus driver Shana worked as a corporate accountant and an entrepreneur in the waste industry. Shana was a great softball player, a as well as pianist in her past, and has always enjoyed anything to do with cars and hot-rodding. Shana is looking forward to getting to know all of our bus drivers and having adult conversations.

SPRING 2024 BUS INSPECTION

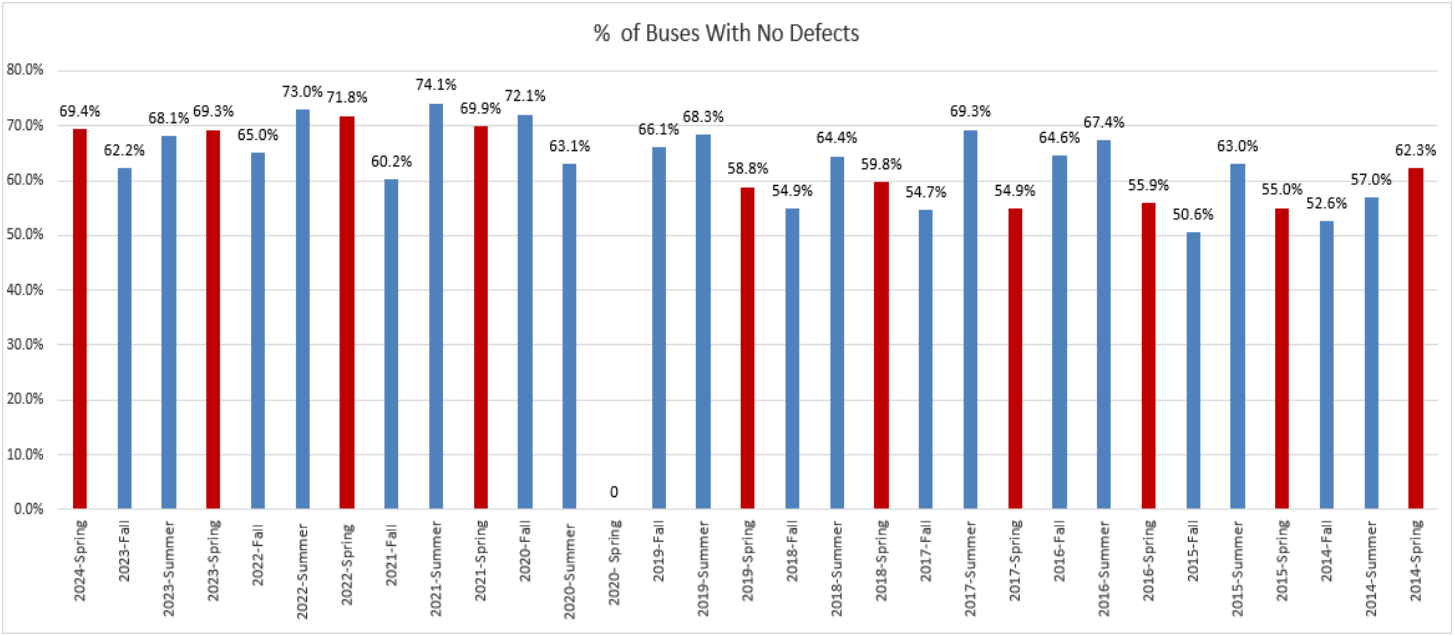
Our spring 2024 bus inspection was held March 19th, 20th, 21st, 26th and 27th, 2024. As is usually the case for our spring inspection, the weather varied widely from day to day. The temperature ranged from 22 degrees to 70 degrees. We had sun, clouds, rain and even a little snow. Fortunately though, mother nature kept us just dry enough to complete the inspections as scheduled. In general, the buses came through clean and well maintained. Staff from the MVA were in attendance, as this was their "B" required inspection; and, they were responsible for data entry in the portal and tag removal where appropriate. As is usually the case when the MVA is present, their staff praised the condition of our buses and the efficiency of our inspection. As a department, we appreciate the effort put into maintaining our busses by our contractors. Hopefully as a contractor group, you all appreciate the emphasis and importance we place on bus inspection as well. The safety afforded our children is of primary importance; but, the recognition we receive for our inspection throughout the state gives us all credibility. Again, thank you for your efforts.

Overall, our pass rate was 69.4%. The FSK area buses had the best passing rate of 76.2%.

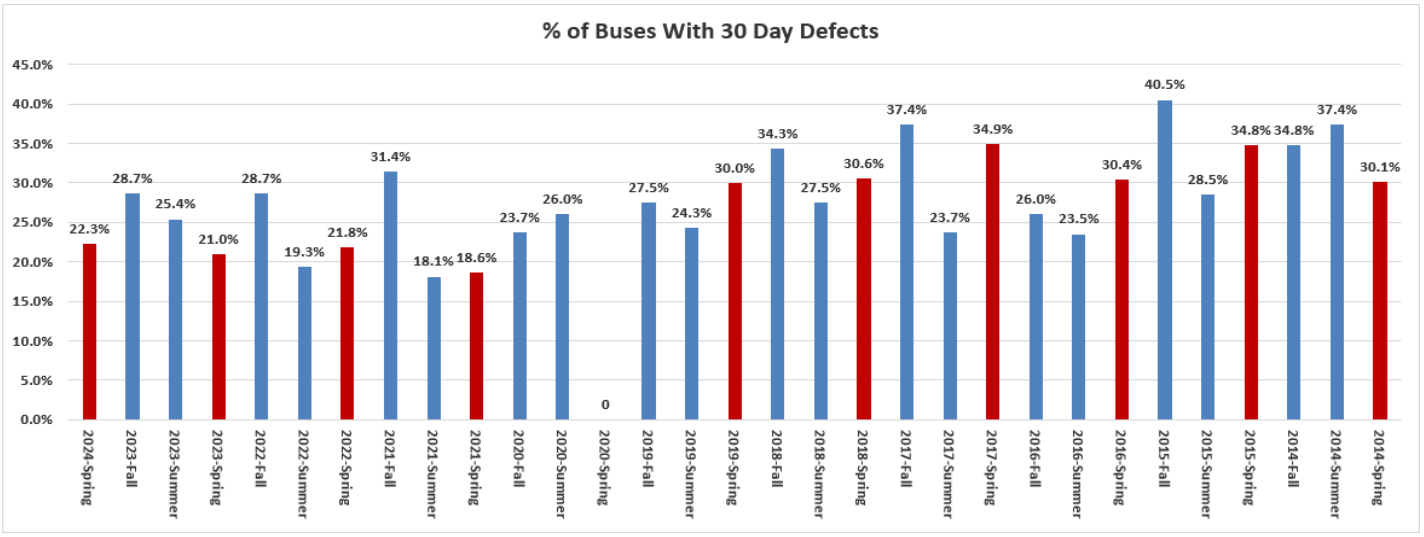
Daily Bus Inspection Results Spring 2024

	Pass		30 Day		Redline	
Inspection Location/Date	# of buses	%	# of buses	%	# of buses	%
FSKHS- Tuesday, March 19	32	76.2%	7	16.7%	3	7.1%
CHS- Wednesday, March 20	40	63.5%	17	27.0%	6	9.5%
WMHS- Thursday, March 21	43	67.2%	13	20.3%	8	12.5%
MVHS- Tuesday, March 26	42	67.7%	15	24.2%	5	8.1%
WMHS Wednesday, March 27	45	75.0%	13	21.7%	2	3.3%
Total	202	69.4%	65	22.3%	24	8.2%

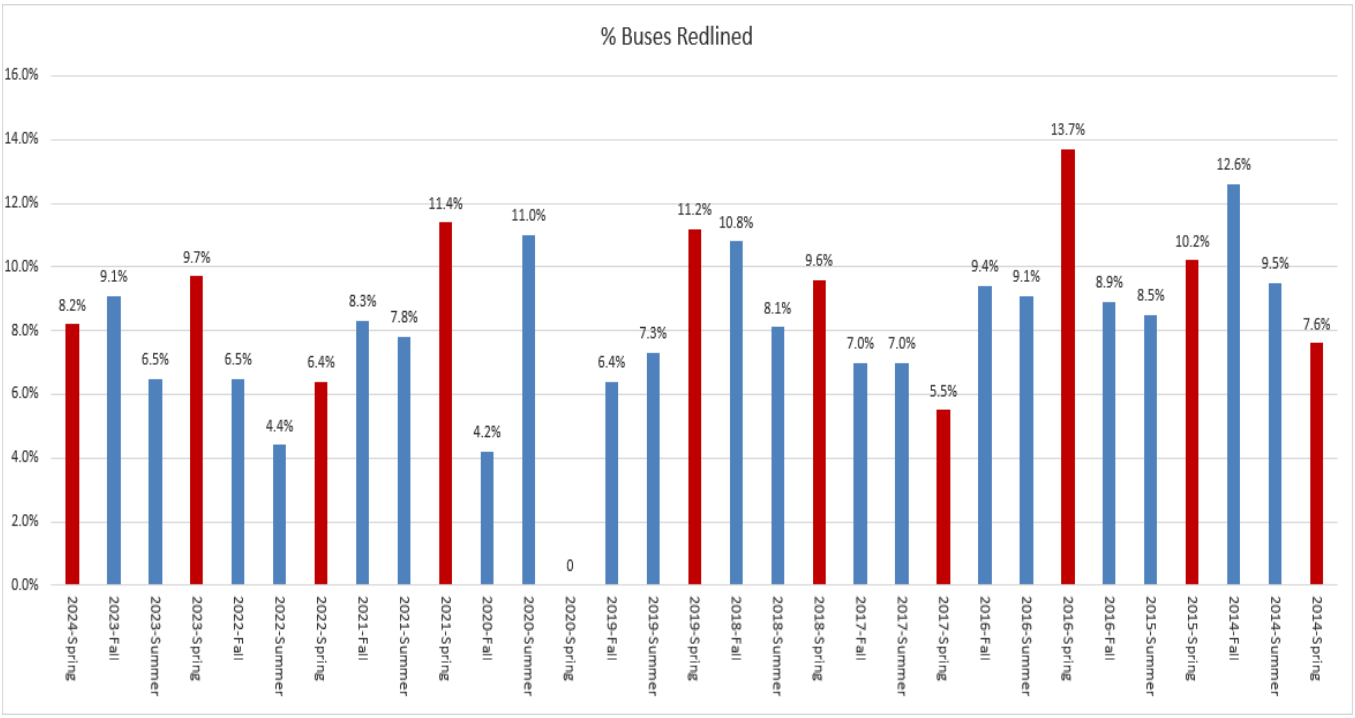
Compared to previous spring bus inspections, the results were similar. Three of the last four inspections had a pass rate of 69.4%



The percentage of buses with only 30-day defects was 22.3%



The percentage of buses with at least one redline defect was 8.2%. This rate is the second lowest since 2021, which had a redline defect rate of 6.4%



Again, thank you for your efforts to maintain our fleet. We also appreciate the cleanliness of the buses. When we see a bus that is extra clean, we make an effort to thank your drivers. You can always tell when a driver takes extra care to keep their bus clean. As a contractor, please continue to encourage and reward your drivers for their efforts, and please continue to work to ensure our buses are safe and held in high esteem throughout the state. Thanks again, Keith.

Special Need Reminders

First and foremost, we want to thank you all for a phenomenal 2023-24 school year. Thanks to all drivers, assistants and contractors for your continued hard work, dedication and commitment to the safety and well-being of our students. A few reminders as we head into summer:

All vests should be collected by the bus staff and turned into your bus contractor on the last day of school.

*** The Transportation Department will contact the bus staff if a student should keep their vest for ESY.**

Please contact the school administration or the Transportation Department regarding a recommendation for future equipment use; or to discuss discontinuing use of equipment for next school year. Final judgements on equipment belong to the I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) team. However, the input of the bus staff is a valuable resource for the IEP team.

If a student has not been riding for 5 consecutive days, please notify your contractor and the Transportation Department.

If you are aware of any incorrect information on a student's profile sheet (phone number, contacts, equipment, etc.), call the Transportation Department so information can be corrected for next school year.

Thanks again and have a great summer!

TECH CORNER

Cell Phones and Distracted Driving

In Maryland it is against the law to use a handheld telephone while operating a motor vehicle, and a conviction will result in a $75 fine for the first offense, a $125 fine for the second offense and third and subsequent offenses will result in a $175 fine.

Under your Carroll County Transportation Services "Driver Discipline Guidelines", a first time offense for cell phone use will result in suspension and any subsequent offenses shall result in decertification.

Cellular device usage by school bus drivers is easily noticed. Students, parents and school staff will notice if you use your cellular device and when your cellular device is a distraction.

Cellular devices should be out of sight/stored away when driving.

CELLULAR DEVICES CANNOT BE ON ANY PART OF THE BUS DASHBOARD.

DISTRACTED DRIVING IS JUST NOT SAFE!!

For the safety of drivers, the children on your bus and other motorists, please obey the law and understand the potential consequences of talking or texting while driving.

FIRST NET PHONES: SOUND NOT WORKING?

Step 1: On the phone keypad, find the "red telephone" key, hold down until "SONIM" appears on the screen, then let go. Let phone sit for 2 minutes to reboot, then try a radio check.

-Phone Still Not Working?!?-

Step 2: Call Nick at Transportation (410-751-3229) WHILE ON YOUR BUS, either after your AM run OR before your PM run. Nick can provide a couple of trouble shooting steps over the phone.

THANK YOU

In-Service Plan June 13th and 14th

As we prepare for the end of the school year, we wanted to make sure all drivers and assistants were aware of the timeline and plan for In-Service. It will be held at **Winters Mill High School** on **Thursday, June 13th and Friday, June 14th**. Your bus contractor will make you aware of which date you should attend. The online portion of the In-Service will launch on Friday, May 3rd and should be completed by Monday, May 20th. To attend the in-person portion of In-Service, the online portion must be completed. The following is a break-down of the In-Service days at WMH (times and/or order are subject to change).

7:30 - 8:00	Drivers and Assistants Check-In for In-Service
8:00 - 9:00	Auditorium (Full Group Session) Introduction/Welcome Safety & Security
9:00 – 9:10	Assistants Dismissed to Meet with Behavior Specialists
9:10 - 10:10	Assistants w/Behavior Specialists Drivers Remain in Auditorium Bus Patrol MVA Proper Stop Procedures—Driver Instructors
10:10 – 10:20	Drivers Move to Training Session #1 (Behavior Specialists or TSD Meetings); Assistants free to leave.
10:20 - 11:20	Training Session #1
11:20 – 11:30	Drivers Switch Sessions
11:30 – 12:30	Training Session #2
12:30	Dismissal

During the training session with the behavior specialists a variety of topics will be discussed including, preventative tactics, avoiding power struggles, setting expectations, handling physical interactions, etc. There will be opportunities for discussions and questions throughout. The training session with the TSD team member will cover a variety of other topics, including, the updated driver discipline policy, stop additions, arrival times at first tiers, distracted driving concerns, referrals/progressive discipline, and other important reminders. There will also be an opportunity for discussions and questions during this session. Please come prepared to In-Service with an open mind and any questions you have regarding the above-mentioned topics.

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.

CG/bb
Revised 6/30/17