PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDE
FOR
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Cecil County Public Schools
July 2025-June 2026

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

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 student's misconduct jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of the other students or adults 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 COMAR 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 1 year, 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 confront 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 they leave home in the morning until they board the school bus and 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 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 school is 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 at the stop on time than running for the bus. Students should be visible to the bus driver at the bus stop as the bus approaches the stop. Drivers must 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. A 1997 Cecil County Ordinance supports this.

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 to supervise their students to and from the school bus stop, using this opportunity to teach them 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 has been an increased number of student deaths from chasing a moving bus. *This booklet has space for your child's specific information at the end.

11. DAYCARE LOCATIONS. Inside residential communities or urban areas where students have an adequate walking pathway, stops are placed where they serve most students most effectively. Daycares receive the same consideration as any family residence and are not provided a notable exception. The daycare provider is responsible for ensuring their students can 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 more prominent 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 losing 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 about school openings 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 students' seating, 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 for excess materials, but this can change daily. The driver can refuse to allow excess baggage on the bus based on those conditions. Parents should be aware of the size of the items students bring onto the bus and plan on transporting them by private vehicle to school if they are too big.

16. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES such as cell phones and handheld game units are the student's responsibility. Even though personal electronic devices are 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:

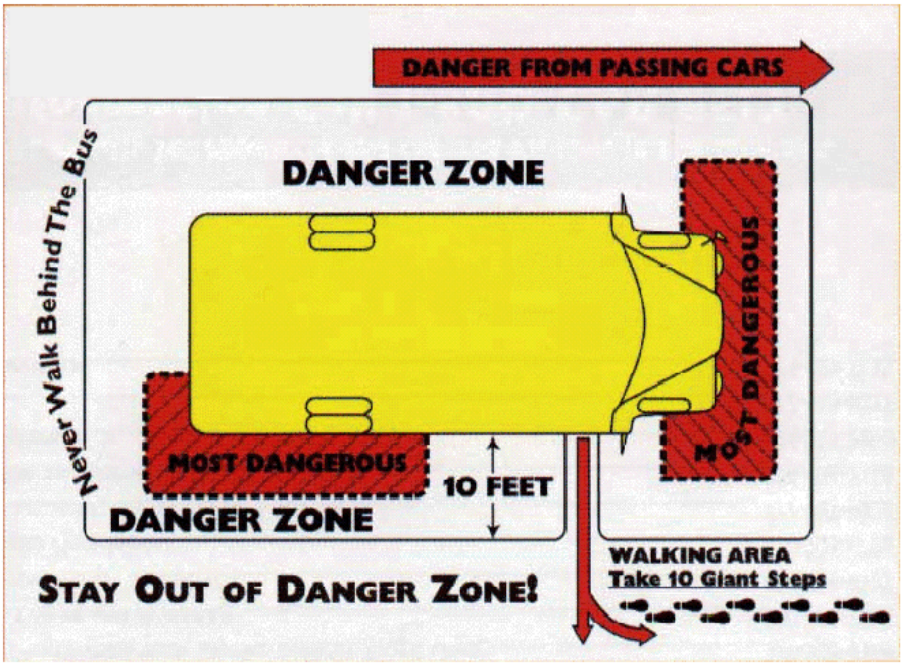
I shall not stand or play on the roadway.
I shall only cross the roadway once the bus arrives and has come to a complete stop. I will only cross after the driver signals me to do so. Before crossing, I will look for traffic in both directions and then pass at least ten feet in front of the bus. No student shall direct traffic.
I shall remain in line at least ten feet from the stopped bus and move towards it only after the door is opened.
I will be at the designated bus stop at least TEN (10) minutes before the bus's scheduled arrival and will board with the least possible delay.

B. Students on the Bus

I will always follow the driver or assistant's instructions for the safety of others and myself.
I will stay properly seated in my designated seat.
I will talk quietly with my seatmates and act responsibly. I will not yell, scream, or use improper language.
I will always keep my hands and feet to myself and inside the bus.
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 objects out the windows.
I will not consume food or beverages on the bus.

C. Students Departing Bus

If necessary, I shall cross the roadway, look for traffic in both directions and pass at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus only when the driver has signaled me to do so.
I shall not leave the bus at any place other than 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 in crossing the road.



STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

PURPOSE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCEMENT OF RULES
These rules and regulations provide a basic framework for the safe transportation of students to and from school and for the 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 enforcing 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 to help ensure a safe and orderly environment. They will monitor student behavior and ensure student safety while riding the bus.

Students and parents will be notified of using audio/video cameras on school buses at the beginning of each school year through the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, 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 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 their 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, parents should support the school bus safety rules by impressing upon the students the importance of and responsibility for following them.

THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER
The driver's first responsibility is to operate the bus safely. The bus driver is expected to enforce regulations for student behavior while boarding, riding, and exiting the bus. If the driver cannot 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 know the expectations for riding the school bus.

THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
The school administrator should provide appropriate assistance and guidance to the bus driver and the student when the student's behavior is unacceptable. 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. At the school administrator's discretion, various consequences 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 supervising students riding the bus, maintaining practical cooperation and communications with the school administration, and carrying out the instructions from the Transportation Department.

THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

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

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Webpage: www.ccps.org

"Transportation">"Parents/Guardians">"Student Conduct">"Parent Guide for Student Transportation"

Email: 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: _____