

THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Fall 2016 Edition

410-751-3229



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Director:

Michael Hardesty

Supervisor:

Keith Shorter:

Out-of-County
Special Needs &
South Carroll Area

Area Supervisors:

Byron Moore:

In-County Special
Needs

John O'Meally:

North Carroll &
FSK Areas

Scott Parsons:

Westminster Area

Driver Instructors:

Dena Hozik

Scheneeka Weeden

Angela Williams

Support Staff:

Pat Arnold

Justin Baker

Kristin Ebert

Jill Fulton

Anita
Stubenrauch

Pat Wall

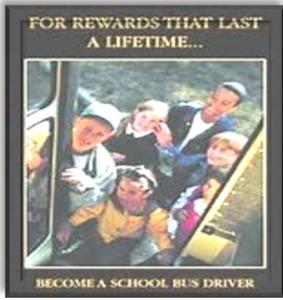
First, let me acknowledge the tremendous job done by all of our bus drivers, assistants and contractors leading to a very smooth and successful opening of school. With the closures of North Carroll High, New Windsor Middle and Charles Carroll Elementary schools, approximately 40 % of all bus routes experienced some amount of change. Many routes had significant changes resulting from new school boundaries and the need to reassign bus contractors and buses to the new bus routes. Drivers had to familiarize themselves with their new routes, new school administrators, new parents, and of course many new student faces. Congratulations to all for a job well done!

Second, now that we are almost one-quarter of the way through the school year, it is time to start thinking about the change in the weather that will be right around the corner. Depending on what you read and who you listen to, this winter could be both mild and severe. Based on a typical Carroll County winter, we will experience some very cold days, some mild days, some snowy days, some rainy days, and some freezing rainy days. Carroll County typically averages about three feet of snow during a winter season! As drivers you should review your winter weather safe driving practices and be sure that your automatic chains are working properly before the need arises. As always, our team of transportation supervisors will be out on the roads early each morning when winter weather is expected. We will do our best to make our recommendation on school closures and delays as early as possible with the safety of bus drivers and students always our primary focus. Please keep in mind that Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate in terms of the timing of the precipitation or agreement with weather forecasters. Unfortunately, our job is mostly one of reaction to whatever the forecasts are predicting and what we are able to observe between 3:00 a.m. and 5:45 a.m. Our deadline for announcing school delays or closings continues to be 6:00 a.m.

Finally, Tuesday, October 18, 2016 was National School Bus Driver and Bus Assistant Appreciation Day with the week of October 17- 21, 2016 recognized as National School Bus Driver Appreciation Week. At the October 19, 2016 Carroll County Public Schools' School Board meeting, the School Board publicly recognized the exceptional job done by our school bus drivers and school bus assistants each and every day. As you have heard many times, school bus drivers and assistants are the first and last persons representing our school system that students interact with each day. Drivers and assistants can and do make a big difference in a child's outlook on the day ahead and their overall perception about our school system. Congratulations to all of our dedicated professional school bus drivers and assistants!



Thank you for your cooperation and for the exceptional job each of you perform for our school system every day.



THE IMPACT YOU HAVE

For many years bus drivers have heard the statement, “You can have a positive impact on a child, your encouragement might be the only positive interaction a child has.” During our summer in-service, dealing with the power of positivity, this statement was proven to me to be oh, so true.

One of the activities in which we participated during the in-service was to have drivers highlight three positive events that have occurred during the year or during their career as a bus driver. The responses were incredible. There were dozens upon dozens of stories about children who came back later in life to tell their bus driver what an incredibly positive impact their drivers had on their lives. In many cases, during their time riding the bus, these children were going through difficult times in their lives. We also heard stories about children who were quiet and reserved all throughout the school year, opening up to their bus driver and becoming comfortable and happy on the bus.

To me the class was extremely uplifting; and, it reinforced to me that drivers do have a huge impact on students. A positive, patient, happy, encouraging bus driver may be uplifting to a child who needs support or inspiration. Keep up the great work and be positive. Remember that you DO have an impact on children. Have a first rate school year and thank you for everything you do for our future generation.

DON'T GET COMPLACENT

You have had a great start to the school year; a couple of issues with discipline here and there, but the kids have settled down and you have your times down pat now. Avoid the temptation to relax too much and or have the feeling that you are invincible. There is an old saying, “When life looks like easy street, there is danger at your door.” It is true that we, as a team, should be proud of our record and performance; but, to avoid complacency we must constantly look to improve. Here are some useful tips to avoid complacency:

- Do a thorough pre-trip at the beginning of each run, morning and afternoon.
- Keep track of the number of students on board the bus.
- Know your students names and USE them.
- Control your students' behaviors; a small leak can lead to a flood.
- Notify school administrators when you are having a problem by using a referral or just a quick word with someone on duty.
- Always remain alert while driving; you should never be in a hurry to get somewhere, there can always be a hazard on the road that wasn't there earlier.
- Check and double check the parking brake — *especially at school.*
- Adjust your mirrors regularly, as improperly adjusted mirrors have no purpose and result in accidents.
- Check your bus at the end of each run. Child checks should be done as soon as possible after your last drop off for each school. Remember to record this information on your manifest. Your next school or contractor lot is too late in most cases. Discuss these unusual situations with your area supervisor.





SEATING CHARTS

Seating charts were due into your school administrator after the second week of school. It is your responsibility as the driver to ensure the charts are kept current and that the students are made to comply with their seat assignments. If you have not submitted a chart, or it is not current, please correct this today.

A Few Seating Chart Suggestions:

- Have your youngest students sit near the front of the bus.
- If you do not have a full load on board, the last two seats on the bus should remain empty. You can avoid a lot of arguments if you do not allow the back seats to be occupied.
- Once a seat has been changed for disciplinary reasons, allow students to redeem themselves with good behavior and return to their originally assigned seat.
- Remember each child's name. Study your seating chart and in a couple of days you will know everyone's name by heart. Use this to your advantage



FALL 2016 BUS INSPECTION RESULTS

The fall 2016 bus inspection was just completed and the results are charted on the following page. This inspection resulted in the highest percentage of buses that passed with no defects during a fall bus inspection since 2007. You should be extremely proud of that outcome. In addition, the buses came through clean, both inside and out. We were extremely pleased to also note the number of 10, 11 and 12-year old buses passing through inspection whose interior looked brand new; and hopefully, one of our staff made a positive comment to the driver who brought the bus through inspection or wrote a positive note on the inspection sheet.

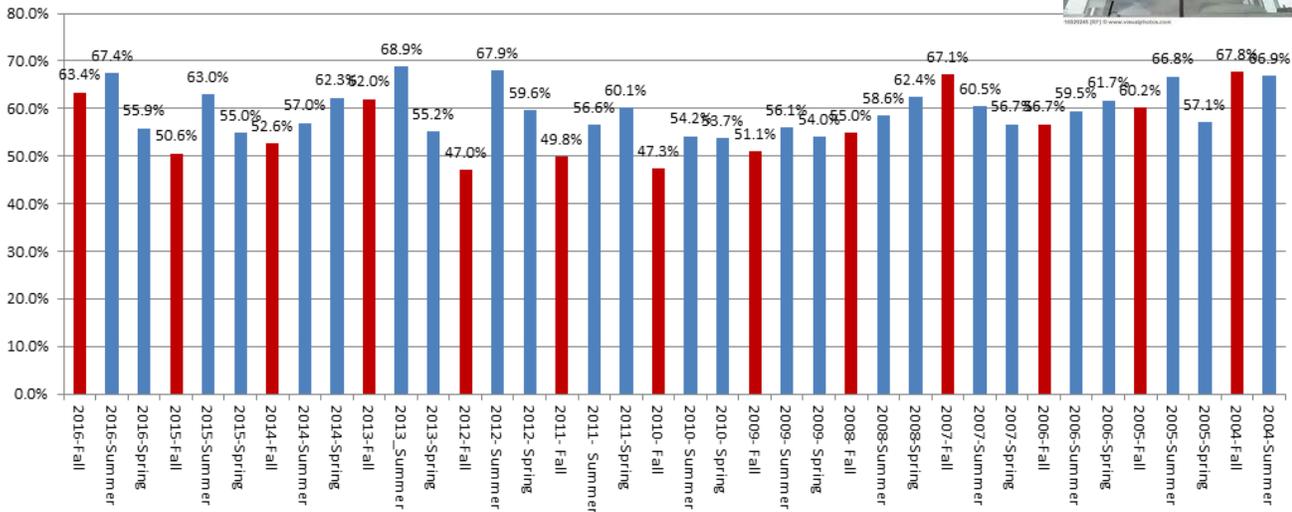
Please be assured that, as a staff, we notice and appreciate the majority of contractors who really go above and beyond when it comes to cleaning the buses for inspection. Your pride in ownership shows and makes us proud as well. Keep up the great work that you do in striving to make our fleet the best. Give yourselves a well-deserved congratulations.



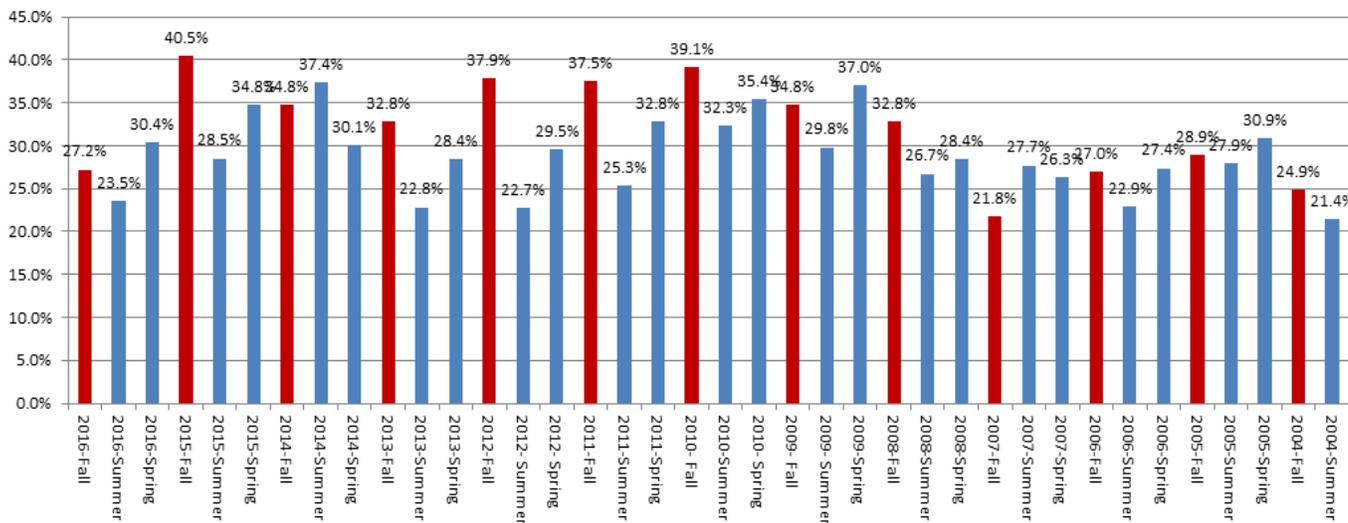
FALL 2016 INSPECTION



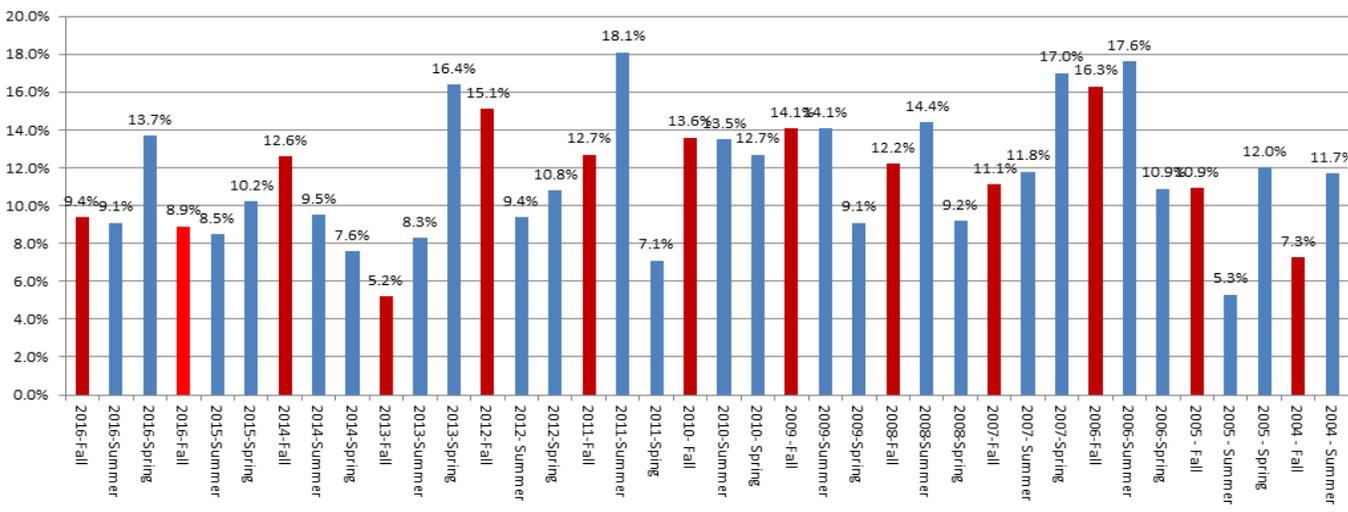
% of Buses With No Defects



% of Buses With 30 Day Defects



% Buses Redlined



THE DRIVER'S SEAT



SPECIAL NEEDS

The special education school bus drivers and assistants have many unique challenges for them on a daily basis. Some drivers and assistants have a Pre-K route and a route with students who attend the Gateway Program. Each group has different personalities and needs which require different bus management strategies. All students need consistency and understanding. It is important to identify the needs of the population and how and when to react to situations that occur during the routes.

Special needs students have a variety of needs and circumstances and it is our job to transport them to their respective schools in a safe environment. Our buses are the first and last contact of the school day for most of these students. The bus ride to and from school should be well supervised and free from any negativity. Like in our classrooms, it takes time for guidelines and routines to click. Effective drivers and assistants are the ones who show a caring and friendly attitude while being firm and fair.

Q. & As.

Q.: Why does a special education bus have to keep an attendance record when the regular education buses do not?

A. Special equipment is often used specific to the needs of the individual student, (i.e., car seats or vest straps.) Every day the route could accommodate different students with different equipment needs. Daily attendance records assist the driver and assistant with equipment preparation.

AA. Since many of the routes are based on door-to-door service, time and money is wasted if a student is not riding, but the stop is still made. If a student has not ridden for five consecutive days, the driver needs to inform the Transportation Services Department. The TSD will then check up on the status of the student.

AAA. The M.S.D.E. requires verification that the special education students are riding, the bus and attending school. Funding is dependent of these records.



VIDEO CAMERAS EVERYWHERE!

Do you have a face for radio or television? Regardless of your answer, video cameras are everywhere and are here to stay. The vast majority of students on your bus carry them and they can be seen surrounding school parking areas and driveways, roadways, and, of course, on your buses. Someone is always recording us, usually for future reference.

To some, this is an intimidating thought, while to others, the thought is reassuring. For students who exhibit safe behaviors on the bus, the video recordings are added security. For students who exhibit unsafe behaviors on the bus, the video cameras represent evidence of their unsafe behaviors. The video recording helps to ensure that the truth will be learned, one way or another.

Our bus cameras are durable but do require maintenance from time to time. Our contract with Angeltrax provides for repairs throughout the year, whenever a problem is discovered. As bus drivers, it is imperative that you check the camera system indicator lights on your dashboard prior to each run and throughout your route. If these lights are not lit, please inform your contractor who will send us an email to alert us of the issue.

And always remember -- SMILE-- "you're on candid camera!"



Carroll County Public Schools 2016 – 2017 Transportation Services Calendar



November

4 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal/System-Wide / Closed for Pre-K and Prep Students
 7 Schools Closed for Students
 8 Schools/Offices Closed – General Election Day
 23 Schools/Offices Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
 24-25 Schools/Offices Closed – Thanksgiving Holiday
 28 Schools/Offices Re-open

December

23-30 Schools/Offices Closed – Winter Holiday



January

1-2 Schools/Offices Closed – Winter Holiday
 3 Schools/Offices Re-open
 13 Regular Education Route Stop Sheets and Regular Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services
 16 Schools/Offices Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
 20 Special Education Manifests due in Transportation Services
 27 Schools Closed for Students



February

20 Schools/Offices Closed – Presidents' Day



March

10 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
 10 Regular Education Route Stop Sheets and Regular Education Route Manifests; Special Education Route Manifests due in Transportation Services
 20 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
 21 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.) Francis Scott Key High
 22 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Manchester Valley high
 23 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Winters Mill High
 24 Spring Bus Inspection (8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) Century High



April

5 Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide; Schools Closed for Pre-Kindergarten and Prep Students
 13-18 Schools/Offices Closed – Spring Break
 19 Schools/Offices Reopen



May

29 Schools/Offices Closed – Memorial Day



June

13 Last Day for Pre-Kindergarten Students
 14 Last Day for Students, Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide

