

THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Spring 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

Cindy Washick

Happy spring! While we had a relatively mild winter this year following the last two brutal winters, in late January we experienced an historic snowstorm of nearly 30" throughout Carroll County forcing us to miss a total of six days of school for the 2015-2016 winter season. Those missed days will push the last day of school for students to Thursday, June 16.

Between now and the last day of school, we have approximately 45 days of school remaining. Let's remember that spring brings with it warmer weather, earlier and later sunshine, and an increased amount of activity in the neighborhoods that we travel. Please keep your eyes focused on your surroundings as you travel along your route and be prepared for the unexpected. More children will be playing outdoors and other activities will be going on that could cause you to have an unexpected event which will require your quick and appropriate reaction. Thank you for your pledge to remind yourselves of the importance of never taking your daily responsibility for granted and being prepared at all times for the unexpected.

Wednesday, April 20, is this year's annual state of Maryland and nation-wide school bus "fly-by" survey day. Drivers are asked to record, on the form provided to them by their contractor, any "fly-by" incident that occurs along their bus route on this date. The survey has provided meaningful data in support of our battle to decrease the number of fly-by incidents and, with the help of local and national media, to highlight this serious issue with the motoring public. The results of the survey will be shared in the next newsletter.

Finally, this year's driver and assistant in-service training will be held on Monday, June 20, 2016 at Winters Mill High School. More details will follow, but please mark this date on your calendars. We expect all drivers and assistants to attend this one day training. Any exceptions must be reported by your contractor and approved by this office in advance.

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

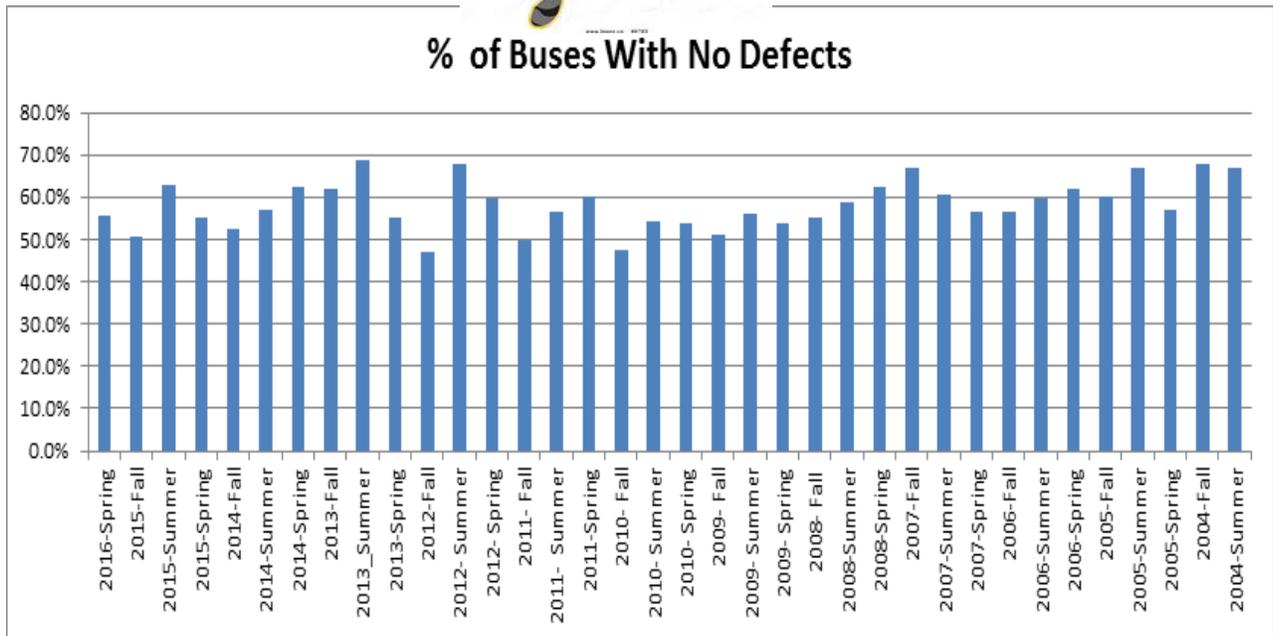
SPRING BUS INSPECTION

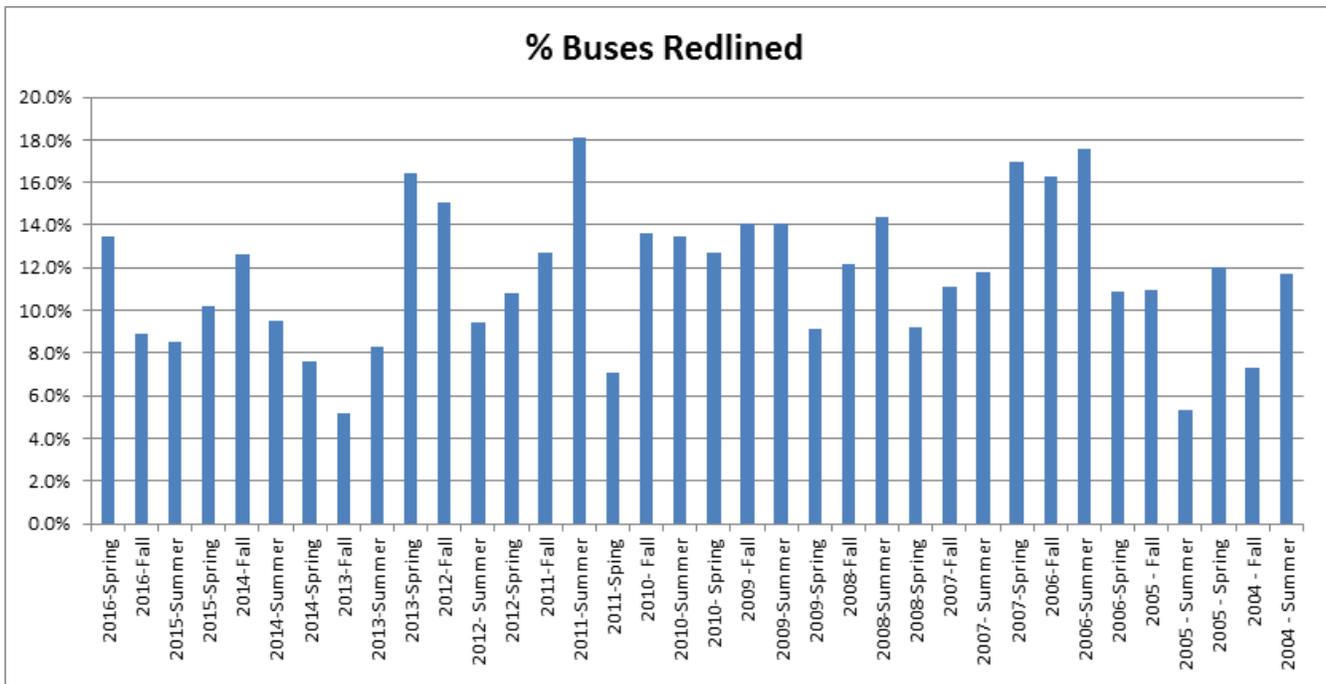
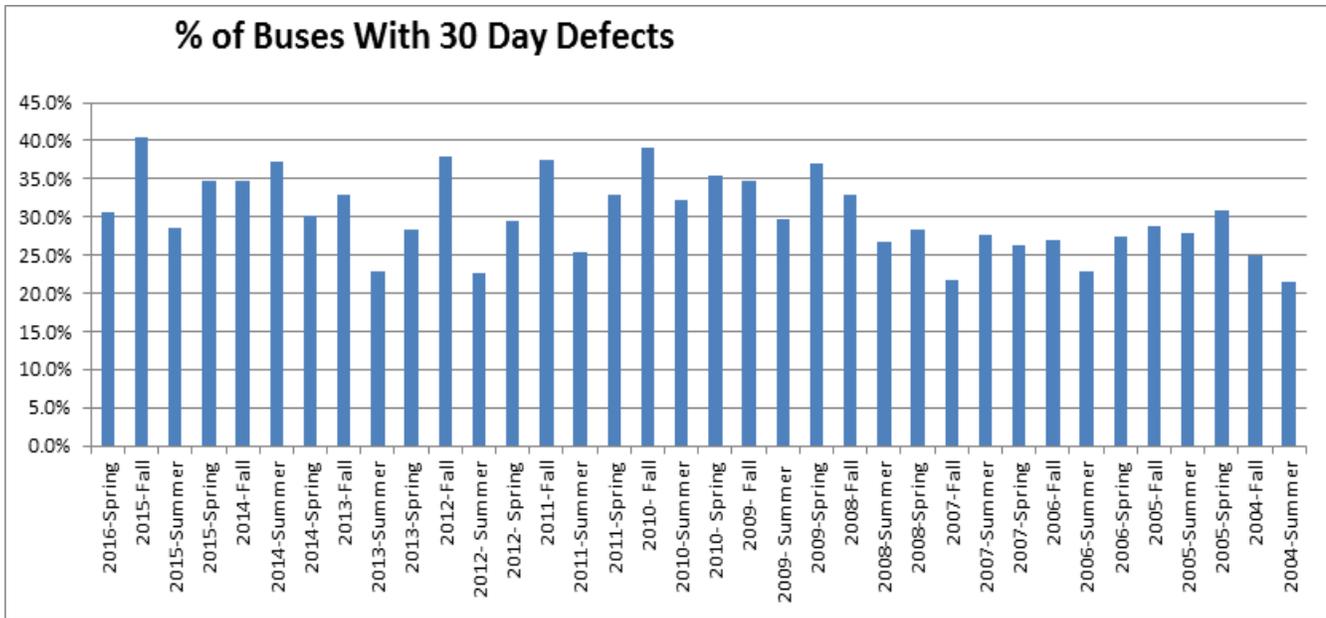


The 2016 spring bus inspection was held March 14th through March 18th and, fortunately, except for Monday morning; the weather was dry and the inspection ran smoothly. Our most successful day was at Century High School on March 17th, when 60.6% of the buses passed the inspection. The charts below compare the results of the spring 2016 inspection with past inspection results; sorted by the percentage of buses passing, the percentage of 30-day defects and the percentage of red-line defects:

Spring 2016 Bus Inspection Results

Location-Date	Pass(#)	Pass(%)	30 Day (#)	30 Day(%)	Red Line(#)	Red Line (%)	Total Inspected
WMHS 3-14-16	44	55.7%	26	32.9%	9	11.4%	79
MVHS 3-15-16	39	60.0%	15	23.1%	11	16.9%	65
WMHS 3-16-16	37	50.0%	27	36.5%	10	13.5%	74
CHS 3-17-16	40	60.6%	16	24.2%	10	15.2%	66
FSK 3-18-16	22	52.4%	16	38.1%	4	9.5%	42
Total	182	55.8%	100	30.7%	44	13.5%	326





Further review of the spring 2016 bus inspection shows the following issues as the top five recurring 30-day defects:

- Oil leaks,
- Clearance lights, headlights and turn signals
- Coolant leaks
- Brake issues
- Power steering leaks



The top five recurring redline defects were:

- Major oil leaks
- Emergency equipment
- Major brake issues
- Tires
- Fuel leaks



Most Frequently Occurring 30 Day Defects

Type of Defect	Number of Buses with Defect
Oil leaks	45
Clearance lights, headlights, turn signals	20
Coolant leaks	18
Brakes	15
Power Steering leaks	11

Most Frequently Occurring Redline Defects

Type of Defect	Number of Buses with Defect
Major Oil Leaks	9
Emergency Equipment (stop arms, school lights, emergency door and window alarms)	8
Brakes	8
Tires	7
Fuel leaks	6

The spring inspection highlighted areas for improvement for future inspections. Regular maintenance and cleaning of your buses will ensure success in future inspections. More importantly, regular maintenance, repair and cleaning of your buses will ensure they continue to be safe for the children of Carroll County.



School Loading and Unloading Zones

Data published from across the nation indicates several accidents involving pedestrians in bus loading and unloading zones at schools in recent years. According to the latest National School Bus Loading & Unloading Survey, this data includes two fatalities. One fatality occurred when a pre-kindergarten student disembarked from his bus, crossed his school's parking lot, and was struck by another bus. The second fatality occurred when a fourth grade boy was struck after running out of his bus, and darting between rows of parked cars and was struck by a second bus that was departing the school. These events serve as a reminder that just because you've done your process for umpteens years, there is always a possibility for the unexpected.

Pupil transportation industry professionals have numerous suggestions for how drivers can maximize student safety in loading zones:

- Ensure policies and procedures in loading are followed.
- Do not back buses in loading zones or anywhere on school property.
- A maximum speed limit of 5 mph in loading zones gives drivers time to respond to pedestrians.
- Check your mirrors thoroughly before moving the bus to leave and regularly during the route. (improperly adjusted mirrors have no purpose)
- Turn the bus radio down to avoid adding a distraction.
- Watch the bus in front of you and behind you.
- Leave enough space in the bus line-up for the emergency exits to be opened if necessary.
- Prior to unloading at the school, students should be seated and quiet.
- Control your students behaviors, a small leak can lead to a flood.
- Always remain alert while driving; you should never be in a hurry to get somewhere, there can always be a hazard on a road that wasn't there earlier.
- Check and double check the parking brake, especially at the school.



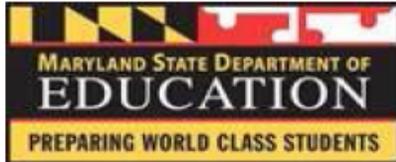
School bus drivers are not the only individuals who need to follow rules to maximize safety in loading zones. The students themselves must understand how they should behave in and around this area to prevent injuries and fatalities. Buster the School Bus has been a popular tool for teaching students about school bus safety and has been used at most elementary schools in the county.

Given the dangers motorists can present around school sites, pupil transporters and school officials also share a responsibility to communicate loading zone, parent pick-up, and parking policies with parents who transport their children to school.

Thank you for your careful attention within the school loading/unloading zones at all times.

Carroll County Public Schools	2015 – 2016 Transportation Services Calendar
April	
26	Schools/Offices Closed – Primary Election
May	
30	Schools/Offices Closed – Memorial Day
June	
14	Last Day for Pre-Kindergarten Students
16	Last Day for Students, Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes Early Dismissal System-wide

Wednesday, April 20, 2016, marked the 6th annual statewide and national “fly-by” survey conducted by school bus drivers. As the chart below indicates, the number of fly-by incidents remains a most serious issue within Carroll County and throughout the state. We thank our school bus drivers who have completed the prior years surveys and those that participated in this year’s survey. The data collected from these surveys serves as the basis upon which our school bus industry can bring local and national attention to this most serious problem.



Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Interim State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • MarylandPublicSchools.org

ONE-DAY STOP ARM VIOLATION SURVEY COMPARISON: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015

County	2011	% of Buses 2011	2012	% of Buses 2012	2013	% of Buses 2013	2014	% of Buses 2014	2015	% of Buses 2015
Allegany	4	100	4	99	5	100	11	78	8	100
AACPS	859	95	360	60	338	97	375	96	407	93
Balt. City	897	67	80	18	59	100	428	59	224	100
Balt. Co.	1,723	54	1,143	88	499	52	419	49	269	100
Calvert	102	100	100	98	26	91	46	96	39	95
Caroline	4	100	13	100	10	100	9	100	4	100
Carroll	160	99	115	87	113	100	112	83	101	99
Cecil	49	100	57	100	42	100	22	100	54	100
Charles	213	57	169	64	128	82	139	67	155	99
Dorchester	1	98	1	100	1	98	0	100	2	100
Frederick	102	94	238	66	24	30	39	59	63	78
Garrett	1	7	10	81	6	81	0	100	1	100
Harford	172	89	115	42	159	75	116	75	86	62
Howard	65	11	100	42	115	40	41	100	114	98
Kent	1	98	0	100	0	100	0	100	1	81
MCPS	864	72	1,494	91	1078	83	893	98	883	80
PGCPS	816	32	417	49	599	53	669	58	230	51
QACPS	0	100	23	85	0	100	9	82	12	67
St. Mary's	86	44	67	55	85	54	0	68	36	47
Somerset	1	100	3	100	0	100	78	94	1	100
Talbot	12	100	11	100	0	82	0	100	0	100
Washington	88	65	74	79	81	64	58	61	54	68
Wicomico	26	54	58	36	6	43	24	47	21	45
Worcester	11	78	5	100	18	100	21	100	30	50
TOTAL	7,011	65%	4,657	63%	3,392	71%	3505	72%	2,795	80%

TOTAL VIOLATIONS 2011: 7,011 reported by 4,658 school bus drivers



SPECIAL ED TRANSPORTATION

Back in my early school days we often heard this time of year that, “March winds blow in the April showers, and the April showers bring the May flowers. What did the May flower bring? Pilgrims.” This little joke was always amusing. April now has a more serious arrival. April now is recognized as Autism Awareness month. The month of April is used to educate the public about autism. Autism is a lifelong disability with no known cure and can affect a person’s communication and interaction skills. A person with autism may have many characteristics and ranging from slight to severe. Below is a list of a few of these characteristics that may be credited to:

* What Health @ www.whathealth.com/awareness



***Social Skills-** People with autism have problems interacting with others: autistic children do not have adequate playing and talking skills. Mild symptoms on one end of the spectrum may be displayed through clumsy behavior, being out of sync with those around them and inappropriate or offensive comments being made. At the other end of the spectrum an autistic person may not be interested in others.

Empathy- empathy is the ability to recognize and understand the feelings of another person. People with autism find it harder to show empathy to others although they can be taught to acknowledge the others feeling.

Physical Contact- in some cases, autistic people do not like physical contact such as hugs, tickling, or physical play with others.

Sudden Changes to Their Environment- a sudden change in the surrounding environment may affect a person with autism. This could be a loud noise, a change in intensity of lighting or even a change in smell.

Speech- speech can be affected in people with autism. ‘Echolalia’ is a typical speech symptom in which the person repeats words or phrases that they hear. The speech tone of an autistic person may be monotonous. Where symptoms are more extreme the person may not speak.

Changes to Behavior and Routine- people with autism often display repetitive behavior in which they repeat the same actions over. For an example, a person with autism may repeatedly pace around a room in a certain direction. Any change to their behavior or routine can be unsettling for them.





Spring Heating

As temperatures rise outdoors, anxiety levels seem to rise as well. The end of the school year often brings new levels of anxiety to parents, students, and even bus drivers. Parents develop increased stress resulting from planning summer vacations, camps, day care, etc. and students worry about their grade changes, school changes, summer plans, job prospects, etc. These factors combined can create an environment conducive to flaring tempers and volatile student interactions.

As bus drivers, you are required to report improper student interactions and threatening statements made by students that are directed to other students, to drivers, or to the school staff. Be alert for interactions between students and report your observations that could lead to fighting on or off the bus. Report the incident to the school via the referral system in place and to the Transportation Department via telephone and email. If students engage in a fight upon exiting the bus, call the Transportation Department immediately (410-751-3229) and we can assist with contacting the appropriate school or law enforcement personnel.

Remember, you are the eyes and ears of the community and ambassadors for Carroll County Public Schools. Students, parents, and school personnel rely on you to make observations and report those observations for the benefit of everyone involved.



DRIVER INSTRUCTOR CORNER

As we get closer to the end of the year, we need to stay on top of our driving skills. Bus drivers are skilled and professional drivers and nothing but the best is expected. Remember that you are transporting “precious cargo”, and the students and parents are always counting on you to keep them safe.

Bus drivers must comply with the law. They must not speed or try to control traffic; no waving traffic on or straddling yellow lines. This is prohibited by law.

All of our Carroll County bus drivers and assistants are among the best in the State of Maryland. Our drivers are top notch and the buses they drive overall are a clean fleet; all of us can take pride in representing Carroll County Public Schools. Thanks for all you do.

DOT PHYSICALS:

As of April 20, 2016, there will be a new DOT physical form that is mandated from FMCSA. Please speak with your contractor regarding the new form.

As you obtain your physicals, please submit the **original** to: The Transportation Services Department to the care of Dena Hozik. Do not hold onto them until the end of the summer. We must have current information in our file system. Please remember to submit to MVA a copy of your DOT Card and self-verification form that you received from the MVA.

