



**To:** Parents/Staff

**From:** Muncie Community Schools Leadership Team

**Date:** July 20, 2017

**Re:** Transportation

Greetings,

We hope you have all had a safe and enjoyable summer. As we get ready for the 2017-18 school year, we want to communicate to our families of our transportation operations. Below you will find our operating procedures that we utilize to keep our children safe and operate within our budgetary means.

Bus route information will be available online at the Muncie Community Schools website. In addition, your child's portal for Chalkable will also contain bus route information. As always, you can contact Muncie Community Schools for more information!

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to a safe startup.

## **Permanent Bus Stops**

Permanent bus stops will be established and published by the Office of Student Transportation. Students of the Muncie Community Schools are to utilize the bus stop they are assigned.

Permanent bus stops will be established by the office of student transportation. Bus stops will be published annually and made available to the community. Bus stops will be located on public serviced roadways. Buses will NOT load/unload students at businesses, parking lots, or areas deemed unsafe by the office of student transportation.

No additional bus stops will be added to reduce operating expense, maintain consistency, and reduce all risks associated with bus route travel paths.

Bus stops will be established such that bus drivers have adequate time to activate loading lights, approach stop, load students safely, and proceed on to next destination.

Students and parents are required to ensure the safety of all individuals to and from the bus stop and while waiting for the bus.

Students that do not reside in a neighborhood and reside off a main roadway will be picked up at their driveway.

Bus drivers are not authorized to change, edit, or add bus stops to their route. Requests or concerns are handled by the office of student transportation.

Students need to be at their scheduled bus stop at least 10-minutes prior to the time scheduled. Buses will not be sent back to retrieve students that missed the bus.

## **Cul-De-Sacs/Courts/Dead End Roadways**

Muncie Community Schools will not allow its buses to travel down cul-de-sacs, courts, or dead end roadways. Bus drivers cannot see under the bus and in the event the bus may need to travel in reverse the drivers are exposed to an enormous risk of potentially backing over an individual. Muncie Community Schools will not place any individual in a potential fatal position and therefore will not allow the practice of traveling in reverse at any time.

Although areas may allow enough room to turn around there are many instances when parked vehicles, delivery vehicles, or any situation out of the ordinary that places the bus driver in a position to have to travel in reverse. Muncie Community Schools does not want to place any individual in a situation that could have a fatal outcome.

Buses will not use driveways or parking lots to turn around.

## **Bus Routes**

Bus routes will be designed to utilize the maximum capacity rating for each bus. Routes will be designed and built for students to ride to and from their assigned stop based on their home address.

Bus routes will be available online on the corporation website.

## **Bus Route Changes**

In the event a bus route changes and the times are altered more than +/-10 minute's students and parents will be notified via letter indicating the schedule changes. Changes will take place no earlier than three days following the distribution of letters.

There may be times routes may need to be consolidated to account for shortage of drivers or situations unforeseen by the office of student transportation. The corporation will make every effort to communicate to the parents and students of last minute changes.

## **Alternate Bus Stop**

Students that require a bus stop other than to their home residency will must complete an Alternate Transportation Request Form. Alternate Transportation Forms are available at school offices. Services to the new location may take 3-5 business days to complete. Parents/Guardians should have a back-up plan in place until services are altered to accommodate request. Alternate bus stops will only be accommodated if the request is for AM and PM, Monday through Friday, and a permanent bus stop exists in the area being requested. No new stops will be established for alternate transportation requests. Once the request is approved the Office of Student Transportation will notify bus driver and parent of student with start date and proper schedule information. No changes may start until approved, authorized, and scheduled by the office of student transportation.

Changes must be established no less than one week prior to the start date of school. No changes will be granted during the school year unless:

1. *The bus has capacity*
2. *The change is permanent*

Due to bus capacity and routing efficiencies students will NOT be able to use multiple bus stops or day variant scheduling.

Bus drivers are not authorized to change their route, their travel path, bus stops, or student's bus stop. Changes are authorized through the office of student transportation.

No changes will be granted over the phone.

## **Bus Stop Etiquette**

Students and parents are to respect the property where the bus stops are located. Individuals are not to damage or vandalize the property where the bus stops are located. Failure to comply may result in a loss of riding privileges for the remainder of the school semester.

## **Loading/Unloading**

Students are to wait at least 10- feet away from the curb while waiting for the bus. Students are **NOT** to board the bus until the red loading lights and stop arm have been activated.

Students that are required to cross in front of the bus must do so **ONLY** after the driver has activated the red warning lights, activated stop arm, and indicated that it is safe to cross in front of the bus. Students are **NOT** to cross behind the bus. Students that cross behind the bus may lose riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Students are to be at their bus stop ready to board the bus at least 10-minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time. Students that are not at the bus stop and visible to the driver may not be picked up. Buses will not be sent back for tardy students.

If a student misses the bus they may NOT chase or follow the bus to board at another bus stop. This is extremely dangerous and can result in serious injury.

## **Contact**

To maintain bus routes running on time and efficiently we request that all communication be handled through the office of student transportation and not the bus driver. This ensures the bus is not delayed en route. In the event, you need to get a hold of your child's bus driver to discuss a disciplinary concern, bus times, or items related to the bus ride please contact the Office of Student Transportation and a message will be left for the driver.

## **Bus Evacuation Safety Drill**

Throughout the school year students will participate in bus safety drills. The dates will be posted in each building. This program is to help assist students in the education process of understanding their role and what to do in the event the bus needs to evacuate.

Students will be taught how to evacuate, where to evacuate, and how the emergency exits operate.

Students shall dress accordingly on these dates as they will be evacuating out of the bus through the front, middle, or rear exits.

## **Bus Rules**

Students are expected to follow the same rules as in the classroom while riding the bus. In addition, students are expected to follow the rules listed below. Failure to follow may result in a loss of riding privilege

## Bus Rules

1. Follow same rules as in classroom
2. Remain seated always
3. Sit in assigned seat unless instructed differently by school staff
4. No eating, drinking, or consumption of any eatable item
5. No smoking
6. No weapons
7. Windows may be lowered to halfway position after driver authorizes permission
8. Do not touch others
9. Remain seated until bus comes to a complete stop

Failure to follow the bus rules may result in a loss of bus riding privileges.

## Discipline Plan

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Violation- Driver fills out a School Bus Conduct Violation Report, stating the specific bus rule violation, and student signs the violation report. The driver then gives the student a copy for a parent/guardian signature and calls the parent/guardian to ask for his/her assistance in resolving the issue. This call is **mandatory** and a record of the call must be noted on the violation form. Specific information must be included:
  - a. Individual driver spoken with on the phone.
  - b. Date and time of the conversation, along with the number called.
  - c. What the parents/guardians will do to help correct the bus misbehavior of the student.
  - d. Must be done before any referrals are written (other than \*Severe Clause Referrals.)
2. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Referral- When the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Referral is given to an administrator; a copy of the Violation Report must be attached with specific information as slated above (other than for \*Severe Clause Referrals.) The administrator's options are:
  - a. Counsel with student, parent/guardian, and/or driver
  - b. Bus Suspension
  - c. Other
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Referral- Recommended minimum three (3) day bus suspension and contact with parent/guardian.
4. 4<sup>th</sup> Referral- Recommended bus suspension for the remainder of the semester/school year.

**\*Severe Clause:** Fighting, smoking, unauthorized departure from bus, abusive, carrying weapons, or vandalizing the bus are examples of behavior that may result in an immediate referral and/or

suspension from bus transportation and/or school. School administration also has the right to forego the preceding steps and proceed to whatever disciplinary step is deemed appropriate for any severe violation.

### **One-Day Bus Passes**

Bus passes will not be granted for riding an alternate bus.

### **Carry-On Items**

The Office of Student Transportation will allow students to bring items on the bus provided the item:

- Fit on top of students lap
- Do not sit higher than the lower window level
- Do not interfere with students sitting in their seat
- Do not block aisle way or emergency exits per state law