



Dorchester School District Two

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

1325-B Boone Hill Rd.
Summerville, SC 29483
(843) 873-6196

Dear Parent / Guardian:

We look forward to providing bus transportation during the next school year for your young students. This year, due to the impact of COVID-19 and new safety protocol associated with it, we are expanding this program to include all 4K, 5K, first and second grade bus riders. Please know this is a safety program and its procedures are designed to ensure a positive exchange of your child from the bus to you. Details follow.

- Parents/guardians of each 4K, 5K, first or second grade student intending to ride the bus must complete a Bus Tag Application. This is done during online school registration and answering a few specific questions
- Participation in the program is mandatory to receive bus service for 4K, 5K, first and second grade students. The parent/guardian must complete the application before the student may ride the bus.
- Upon receipt of the application, the school will: 1) assign a bus ID to your student; 2) issue a number ID tag and tag holder to be attached to the student's backpack/book bag; 3) issue four (4) numbered cards matching the number on the student's ID tag.
- Students must have their ID tags attached to the backpacks in order to ride the bus.
- Parents/guardians may distribute the school-issued, numbered cards to any responsible adult of their choosing, thereby authorizing those responsible adults to receive their 4K, 5K, first or second grade children from the bus. For 5K, First and Second Grade students, we offer the option of a student escort (4th grade, or above) named on the ID tag. Any student escort must be a sibling of the escorted student, ride the same bus and get off at the same stop as the escorted student.
- At the assigned bus stops the driver will check the ID tag of each 4K, 5K, First and Second Grade student preparing to depart the bus. The driver will match the number on the ID tag to a school-issued tag with the identical number being displayed by the parent/guardian/designee.
- If a school-issued card with the identical number is not displayed, and a student escort who rides the same bus is not present on the bus, the student will not be released from the bus and will be returned to the school.
- If student is returned to school, the parent/guardian will be contacted and required to pick up his/her child at the elementary school. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the matter could be referred to the Dorchester District Two Safety/Security Coordinator, local law enforcement, or the Dorchester County Department of Social Services (DSS).

Incidents of the parent/guardian/designee either not being at the bus stop for PM drop-off with the numbered card or being there, but not having the numbered card, will result the following consequences administered by the school:

- First Incident: Warning to parent with review of future consequences
- Second Incident: 3 days' suspension from the bus
- Third Incident: 5 days' suspension from the bus
- Fourth Incident: 10 days' suspension from the bus
- Fifth Incident: Loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year

The school administration will implement the schedule above with or without a bus driver referral and notify the Transportation Department of the effective dates of loss of bus transportation

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services. Please note the above table of consequences and loss of bus privileges is absolute with no discretion on the part of the school administration.

Again, we believe this method of exchanging your child from the bus to you will be the safest means of delivering from school to your home. The intent is to assist you and the bus driver in making a positive transfer of your child from the bus to you. It also allows you some flexibility in designating who may receive your child at the bus stop.

This program is in keeping with South Carolina law concerning safety responsibilities for your child at the morning and afternoon school bus stop. Please see the applicable law below.

South Carolina Law Section 59-67-415

Parents/guardians of a child being transported on a school bus are responsible for the safety and conduct of the child prior to the arrival of the school bus at the child's designated school bus stop for pick up and transport to school, and after the school bus drops off the child and departs the child's designated school bus stop when transporting the children from school. The state's responsibility includes the arrival or departure of the school bus, which is defined as the time that the school bus assigned to the school bus stop activates the required pedestrian safety devices, stops and loads or unloads students, and until the school bus deactivates all pedestrian safety devices.

We expect students to be ready to board the bus upon its arrival at the stop. We recommend being at the stop ten minutes early in the event traffic flows lead to early arrival. Being ready means standing at the bus stop when the bus arrives. Waiting inside the house or inside a vehicle until the bus stops can cause cascading delays that adversely impact thousands of students across the district. This is unacceptable and, therefore, we direct our drivers to wait a reasonable amount of time at stops before closing the doors and proceeding to the next stops. It is extremely dangerous to chase after a bus or run toward a bus that is pulling away from the stop. Please help us ensure the safety of your children by explaining this danger and by having them at the stop as recommended.

Finally, parents/guardians should ensure all contact information at the school is accurate and should update information whenever changes occur.

Thank you for your attention to and cooperation in this very important manner. We look forward to a safe and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Stephan F. Shope

STEPHAN F. SHOPE
Director of Transportation

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