



COLUMBIA SCHOOL SYSTEM

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Dear Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

When school is in session, please show extra caution during school traffic times, where students may be walking to/from bus stops or school or getting on or off of their school bus. Please be highly aware on neighborhood streets and in school zones during these times.

When approaching a bus, yellow lights signal an upcoming stop where students will be entering or exiting a bus. Red flashing lights signal that this stop is in process. Young children are still learning the rules of road safety, so please stop when you see yellow lights flashing. Failure to follow these critical rules of the road put our children at risk.

We will reinforce these rules in school, and we ask that families discuss with their children the importance of road and bus safety. Below you will find tips for families from the CT Department of Transportation to support your conversation.

Tips for Parents:

If your child is one of the more than 330,000 Connecticut children who ride a school bus, remind them of these safety tips:

- » Stay away from danger zones around the bus. The blind spots where drivers cannot see. Always be sure you can see the driver, that means the driver can see you.
- » When getting on or off the bus be very careful. Watch out for cars. Remind children to look to the right before they step off the bus. Drivers in a hurry sometimes try to sneak by buses on the right.
- » Help your children get ready for school:
 - » Have your children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
 - » Have them wear bright, contrasting colors so that they will be more easily seen by drivers. Better still, attach a piece of high visibility fluorescent and reflective material to their clothing or backpack.
 - » Make sure they leave home on time so that they can walk to the bus stop and arrive before the bus is due. Running can be dangerous.
- » Teach your children to secure loose drawstrings and other objects that may get caught in the handrail or door of the school bus as they are exiting.
- » Warn children that if they drop something near the bus they should never ever pick it up. Instead, they should tell the bus driver and follow the driver's directions. If they bend over to

pick up a dropped object, they might not be seen by the driver and could be hurt if the bus pulls away from the stop.

- » Go to the bus stop with a young child and have older children walk in groups. There's safety in numbers because groups are easier for drivers to see.
- » Don't let pre-school children or pets go with your school child. They can be dangerous near traffic.
- » If you decide to meet your child at the bus stop after school, wait on the side where the child will be dropped off, not across the street. Children can get so excited at seeing you after school they might forget safety rules and dash across the street.

As a reminder, there are crosswalks and stop signs in the school parking lot area. Students and adults are getting out of cars and are walking and crossing; drive slowly and be extra vigilant in this area. Only buses are to be in the bus lane that is closest to the school.

Maria Geryk,
Superintendent