2020-2021 GUIDE TO REOPENING

OSSE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION BUS SAFETY KIT

#REOPENSAFE

Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Division of Student Transportation

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE's) Division of Student Transportation (DOT) provides safe, reliable, and efficient transportation services that positively support learning opportunities for eligible students in the District of Columbia. We are committed to protecting the safety and well-being of our students, staff and the school communities we serve. To support this commitment, we have worked in parallel with internal and external stakeholders to identify key indicators and lessons learned in aiding with developing a robust transportation plan to guide us through the 2020-21 school year. In addition, we have increased our stakeholder communication efforts and developed a Bus Safety Kit focused on providing content and information related to internal measures our agency is taking to create a safe transportation environment. Highlights include:

- **Student and Staff Safety** – Student and staff safety remain our top priority; we're focusing on the avoidance of infection while students and staff are in transit and at work and implementing specific bus cleaning and disinfecting processes.
- **Parent, School and Stakeholder Communication and Education** – DOT is utilizing internal and external resources ensuring all stakeholders are educated and informed on division, agency, local and federal information as we navigate through our new normal.
- **Division Rebranding** – DOT recently rebranded our buses to read "District of Columbia Student Transportation." This rebranding effort is a small reflection of the changes we've made to better communicate stakeholder representation and serve you.

All school buses are now named, "District of Columbia Student Transportation," to be more inclusive of all educational programs supported by transportation services.

We are entering the 2020-21 school year optimistically with an amplified sense of understanding, compassion and warmth. In collaboration with staff, students and families, we will have a safe return to school, we will remain resilient, and we will tackle challenges together. As we look forward to the future, we are excited to serve and support your needs, listen to your concerns, and provide a safe transportation system for your student(s).

Sincerely,

Gretchen Brumley
Director, Division of Student Transportation

**Disclaimer: Contents of this guide are as of August 2020. Latest updates/ guidance can be found on OSSE DOT website at osse.dc.gov*

BUS

Better Equipped for Your Return

The Division of Student Transportation is committed to ensuring student safety while on school buses. All updated processes for transportation services are in accordance with and guided by recommendations set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Here is what we are doing to be better equipped for your return.

BUS CLEANING

- Buses will be cleaned daily at the beginning and end of each tour. This process will include wiping down frequently touched surfaces and seats.
- Electrostatic sprayer machines will be incorporated into bus cleaning to provide an additional level of disinfecting on the buses.
- In the event that an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19 and had entered the bus in the prior seven (7) days, the bus would immediately be taken out of service and deep cleaned by a specialized deep cleaning vendor.

ON THE BUS

- There will be single row, "Z style" seating for students, meaning every other seat from left to right.
  - Siblings (students exiting and returning to the same residence) will be permitted to sit next to one another.
- Standard bus capacity will be reduced in accordance with CDC recommendations. Wheelchair accessible bus capacity will be reduced by half. Bus capacity is contingent on vehicle manufacturer.
- **Morning Commute:** Students will board the bus based on pick up location. Students will be seated on the bus based on visible markings, starting in the rear.
- **Evening Commute:** Students will board the bus based on drop off location and will follow the same seating requirements as the morning commute.
- When unloading the bus, students in the front of the bus will get off first; following a last one on, first one off model.
- Bus attendants will sit in the seat closest to the rear to monitor seating and bus safety.
- All required student accommodations will be provided as needed.

STAFF SAFETY

- All staff will complete the District Government employee COVID-19 Self Awareness Screening Form each day prior to boarding the bus.
- All staff will wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when passengers are on the bus including a face mask, face shield and gloves.

BUS

Understanding Your Responsibility

FACE COVERINGS: Students must wear a face covering while onboard the bus and in school. If a student does not have a face covering, a non-surgical mask will be provided as they enter the bus. A face shield may be used in addition to, but not in place of, a face covering. Consider practicing how to safely wear a face covering with your student.

* Does not apply to students with medical exclusion(s)

STAYING HOME WHEN SICK: If your student is ill, experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or any other contagious illness, please keep them home. If your student must stay home due to illness, please be sure to contact the DOT Parent Resource Center to suspend transportation services at (202) 576-5000.

BUS SAFETY REMINDERS: Be sure to frequently remind your student of appropriate behavior on the bus to include following the instructions of the bus driver and attendant, remaining in their seat for the duration of the ride and refraining from physical and close contact with staff and students.

CONTINUE TO TEACH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT PREVENTION: To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious viruses, continue to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water is not available use hand sanitizer, cough or sneeze into the elbow and do not touch your eyes, nose and mouth.

HAVE AN OPEN CONVERSATION WITH YOUR STUDENT: OSSE DOT encourages you to have open conversations to prepare your student for their new normal during transportation. Consider talking about each student wearing a face covering, the driver and attendant using PPE, the importance of social distancing and new seating requirements.

BUS

Safety Resources

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

The Division of Student Transportation has worked diligently to provide a safe and reliable transportation system to the population we serve. Please see alternative methods for school transportation:

1. Parent Transportation Reimbursement Program

OSSE DOT will reimburse parents who transport eligible students with disabilities to and from school. Please find additional information related to the Parent Transportation Reimbursement Program at: **osse.dc.gov/service/parents-transportation-students-disabilities.**

2. Kids Ride Free Program

The Kids Ride Free program allows students to ride free on the Metrobus, DC Circulator, and Metrorail within the District to get to school and school-related activities. To find out more about this program and eligibility please visit: **ddot.dc.gov/page/school-transit-subsidy-program.**

STAY PLUGGED IN

For questions/concerns regarding your student's bus or bus route, call the Parent Resource Center at (**202) 576-5000**.

For access to all COVID-19 related guidance from OSSE and OSSE DOT, visit OSSE's website at **osse.dc.gov.**

For information about the District of Columbia Government's COVID-19 response, recovery efforts, testing and local resources; visit **coronavirus.dc.gov**.

For real-time District updates and notifications via text and/or email, sign up for the District's official communications system, AlertDC at **hsema.dc.gov/page/alertdc**.

GET THE FACTS: COVID-19

OSSE DOT encourages you to learn more about COVID-19 and other infectious diseases by visiting cdc.gov.