

SUMMER 2021 GUIDE TO REOPENING



# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION BUS SAFETY KIT

#REOPENS SAFE

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 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 2020-2021 school year and extended school year. In addition, we 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 rebranded all of 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.***

As the 2020-21 school year is concluding, we've learned many lessons to prepare us for the extended school year. We remain optimistic and continue to operate with an amplified sense of understanding, compassion, and warmth. In collaboration with staff, students and families we will continue to remain resilient, and 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 kit are in accordance with and guided by recommendations set forth by the CDC and local partners as of May 2021. OSSE DOT will continue to comply with all guidance if at all possible under the guidance from the CDC and local partners. Latest updates/guidance can be found on the OSSE DOT website at [www.osse.dc.gov](http://www.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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local partners. Here is what we are doing to be better equipped for your return.

### **BUS CLEANING**

- Frequently touched surfaces and seats on buses in use will be wiped down daily at the end of each tour.
- 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 coronavirus (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**

- Standard bus capacity will be reduced in accordance with CDC recommendations. 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 or the seat in the best location 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 must wear a face mask while transporting students. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) to include a face shield and gloves may also be worn in addition to the face mask.




# 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 mask exemption(s). A parent must submit documentation of mask exemption to the student's school/LEA. The school/LEA will then notify OSSE DOT regarding the exemption.*



**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. To screen your student(s) for symptoms, complete OSSE's Health Screening Tool prior to boarding the bus. The tool can be found on the outside of the bus and at [osse.dc.gov](https://osse.dc.gov).




**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](https://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](https://ddot.dc.gov/page/school-transit-subsidy-program)**.

### STAY INFORMED

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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://cdc.gov)**.



