



TRANSPORTATION  
STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2018-2019



**IMPORTANT CHARLOTTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

***TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT (517)543-3400***

Kathy Vance – Transportation Supervisor  
Karen Tomlinson – Administrative Assistant

**Office Hours 8:30-5:00**

Central Office.....	541-5100
High School Main Office.....	541-5600
Middle School Main Office 7-8 grade.....	541-5700
Upper Elementary Office 4-6 grade.....	541-5771
Galewood Early Elementary DK-KG.....	541-5150
Parkview Elementary.....	541-5780
Washington Elementary.....	541-5170
Weymouth Child Development Center.....	541-5181
COMMUNITY ACTIVITY LINE (School delays and closings) ....	541-5746
Aquatic Center Office.....	541-5740
Athletic Office.....	541-5620
Food Service.....	541-5140
Special Education Office.....	541-5571

**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION**

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EILEEN GRANT-BALL – Director of Instruction  
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Kathy Vance, Transportation Supervisor

1101 Mikesell, Charlotte, MI 48813 PH: 517.543.3400

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Welcome to Charlotte Public Schools for the 2018-2019 school year. We hope that you and your family enjoyed your summer.

Every year Charlotte Public Schools' Transportation Department provides safe transportation to more than 1500 students to and from school, not including extracurricular activities, as a service to district families.

The employees who make up the transportation department understand that the ride to school can set the tone for the entire day for your student and the learning process. My staff and I take pride in our safety record when transporting your students. With your help, we can ensure that all of our students become successful school bus riders.

Bus transportation is a privilege and can be revoked if student behavior jeopardizes his/her safety and/or the safety of others. If a student loses riding privileges, transportation becomes the parent's responsibility.

School bus stops are established in accordance with Michigan law, district policy, and Michigan Department of Education best practices guidelines. It is not practical to stop at every student's home. Group stops are established whenever possible. Parents are responsible for their student's safety to and from the designated bus stop. We also ask that parents take responsibility for their student's behavior at the bus stop and we encourage parents of elementary aged students to accompany them to the stop.

Please review this transportation handbook with your student. The answers to many of the questions that you may have regarding transportation can be found here. It is our hope that all students will make positive decisions that will give them an opportunity for success.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (517) 543-3400.

Sincerely,

Kathy Vance  
Transportation Supervisor

# RIDE WITH *PRIDE*

## AT CHARLOTTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**R** – Respect: Treat others as you want to be treated. Be a good role model. Use kind words. Talk quietly. Listen and obey the driver.

**I** – Integrity: Be honest. Make good choices.

**D** – Dedication: We have 16 dedicated full time drivers and combined, they have 240 years of experience transporting Charlotte Public Schools students.

**E** – Excellence: We strive for excellence in transportation services to you.

## **Transportation Registration Form**

Transportation registration forms are available at the transportation office, school offices, and at [www.charlottenet.org](http://www.charlottenet.org). These forms are only necessary if transportation or contact information has changed. We do not require a new form from year to year if all the information is the same. Transportation changes may take up to 5 days to become effective. The addition of a stop and/or rerouting of the bus can affect other students on the bus. The delay allows us time to be sure the stop will be set up according to our safe pick-up practices and that all other parents and students have been notified of the change.

**Parents may register students for only one pick up and one drop off location.** The pick up location and drop off location do not have to be the same, but we will not allow day to day or bi-weekly changes. While we would like to be able to allow parents the convenience of multiple pick up and drop off locations, it is simply impossible for the drivers to keep track of that kind of information for all of the students on their buses. It's especially important for the safety of our riders that we know at a moments notice what bus they are registered to.

If you have an address change, parents must first contact the registrar's office at (517) 541-5742 or your students school. Transportation staff cannot update transportation until the address has been officially changed in the school records. Transportation changes may take up to 5 days to become effective.

When students do not ride for 3 consecutive days, without prior notification, they will be removed from the transportation roster. If parents would like the transportation information to remain active, please call the transportation department at (517) 543-3400. We also appreciate the courtesy of a phone call if a student will not be riding in the morning. This prevents us from sending a bus to a stop when it is not necessary. **A courtesy call is not necessary if the student is assigned to a stop with more than 3 or 4 other students. If you happen to know that we only go down your road or section of road for your student, a courtesy call is appreciated. It is also not necessary to call if your student is not riding in the afternoon.**

## **BUS PASSES**

**Bus passes are no longer allowed.** If you have an emergency or request due to special consideration, please contact the Transportation Department at (517) 543-3400.

## **Guidelines for Assigning Bus Stops**

While it is the goal of the Charlotte Public Schools Transportation Department to transport each and every eligible student as close to their pick up and drop off locations as possible, it is simply not legally possible or efficient to do so. Route pick up and drop offs are subject to change throughout the school year to maintain the safest and most efficient means of transportation services possible. Our intention is to not be disruptive, but to make sure we operate and function effectively.

School bus stops are established to promote safe and efficient routes. We cannot make illegal bus stops under any circumstances. Where it is illegal to establish a bus stop, we will make every effort to establish a nearby stop that does meet the legal requirements. Designated bus stops are established and evaluated each year. All stops must meet the legal requirements

established by PA 187. It is our responsibility to create efficient bus routes. Limiting the number of stops helps us to control fuel costs and increase mileage by reducing the number of times a bus accelerates/decelerates.

### **Walk/Ride Policy:**

**Students may find it necessary to walk some distance to their designated bus stop or to school. In compliance with the state laws, the Charlotte Public School's Policy is the following:**

\*Only high school students (9-12) who live beyond a 1.5 mile radius are eligible for transportation.

\*Only middle school students (7-8) who live beyond .8 mile radius are eligible for transportation.

\*Upper elementary students who less than .5 radius of their school will not be eligible for bus transportation. Those students beyond .5 of a mile will be directed to the appropriate pre-determined bus stop and then transported to their respective building.

Transportation services may be available for those students who live beyond these parameters.

The transportation department's bus routing software, Poly Plot is the only measurement tool used by our district in determining the distances between locations. This measurement process is with the understanding and support of the Charlotte Public Schools Board of Education.

\*Galewood Early Elementary students (DK-KG) will be shuttled to their home school (Parkview or Washington) in the afternoon to transfer to their home bus.

\*Elementary students (1-3) will be directly delivered to their respective school in the morning and afternoon except for students attending a program at St. Mary School or Weymouth Child Development Center, they will need to be shuttled.

\*High school and middle school students will be picked up and dropped off at a central location both morning and afternoon

### **School of Choice Students**

Under section 105 of the State School Code, Charlotte Public Schools are not required to provide transportation to out-of-district schools of choice students. However, in an effort to cooperate and accommodate our schools-of-choice students, they may utilize transportation from a current stop within the district boundary. We do not establish stops outside of our district boundaries. The only exception to this rule is in the event that the bus must travel past a student's home in the course of its regular route. When that happens, the bus **may** stop, with the supervisor's approval, at a location outside of the district boundary.

## **Special Education Transportation**

Most students identified as special education do NOT require Special Education Transportation. Special transportation is considered for each student at the annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. The Special Education Director will make the final determination whether a special education student needs special education transportation. These arrangements can be made through the Special Education Department (517)541-5571.

## **Bus Stop Safety**

\*All students must be at the stop (not inside of a house, garage, or vehicle) **5 minutes** prior to the scheduled pick up time. Buses cannot wait for tardy students. When a school bus is stopped for any length of time, the wait may cause unsafe traffic conditions behind the bus and cause other students to be late for school. If your child misses the bus, **DO NOT chase after the bus or flash your automobile headlights at the bus!** Bus drivers are not authorized to stop, as this is a safety violation. Take your child to school or go to another designated bus stop where the bus has not yet arrived. Please do not put your own child at risk by sending them running up from behind the bus. Your student's bus privileges may be suspended if you are found in violation of this unsafe practice. If you choose to take your child to another designated bus stop, please call us at (517) 543-3400 so that we can instruct you how to do it safely and radio the driver to expect you.

\*Students must wait a safe distance from the road. It is recommended 10 to 20 feet away from the edge of the road, and to respect private property.

\*Students must wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before boarding the bus. Students who are required to cross the road must wait for the drivers signal before proceeding.

\*When boarding and exiting the bus, students are required to remove earbuds and refrain from using hand held devices to avoid distractions.

\*Students must keep all personal items in their backpacks, ie. Fidget Spinners, Pokemon Cards, toys etc.

\*When more than one student is at a stop, students must wait in line and board the bus one at a time in an orderly manner, preferably youngest first.

\*Students must not engage in any type of horseplay at the stop. We are not responsible for what happens at the stop before the bus arrives.

\*Students must never attempt to retrieve an item that is dropped near the bus without first getting permission from the driver.

\*Students are not permitted to go to the mailbox when the bus is at their designated stop.

\*Students are not permitted to bring animals, weapons, or other potentially dangerous material on the bus. Please use common sense when sending show and tell items to school.

\*Students are not permitted to spray perfume, body spray or deodorant on the bus, due to allergies and asthma concerns.

\*Students are not permitted to bring any item that is too large to be safely transported while held in the student's lap or placed under the seat. (I.E. skateboards, rakes, snow shovels, sleds, large fundraiser boxes etc...)

\*Students are responsible for observing appropriate behavior in order to protect their riding privileges. Being courteous to others and demonstrating responsible citizenship through positive social interactions while on the bus. Improper student behavior on a bus or at a bus stop can cause a driver to be distracted and endanger the bus and all its passengers. Proper behavior is required at all times. The following guidelines and procedures have been established to assist bus drivers in maintaining discipline and ensuring safe travel. ***The list is only a sampling and is NOT intended to cover every incidence or example of unacceptable behavior.***

\*Students are expected to follow the same code of conduct when exiting the bus as when being picked up.

\*Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion and until the bus comes to a complete stop. This means sitting erect with both feet on the floor at all times. Standing on the bus while the bus is in motion is NOT permitted.

\*Students being transported are under the authority of the bus driver. The drivers are authorized to assign seats and students must comply with the arrangement.

\*Students are to be courteous to the bus driver, fellow students and others passing by the bus. There will be no swearing or teasing allowed on the bus.

\*Students will use emergency exits only when there is an emergency or when directed to do so by the driver. Violation of this may result in suspension of bus privileges.

\*Students are not to engage in fighting, wrestling, or other boisterous activities while on the bus, students will not extend their hands, arms, head, hair or other parts of their body out of the windows.

\*Students are not allowed to throw anything inside or outside the bus.

\*Students are not allowed to get out any musical instruments and play them on the bus.

\*Students must maintain an acceptable noise level while riding on the bus. There is absolutely **NO** talking at the railroad tracks. This is a safety violation and will not be tolerated.

\*Students are not allowed to eat or drink on the bus. Water may be allowed at the discretion of the bus driver. If a student has a special health need please contact the transportation office.

\*The school dress code applies on the bus.

\*The use of any tobacco in any form, alcohol or any controlled substances is not permitted on the bus.

## **Student Drop Off**

\*Elementary students (K-3<sup>rd</sup>) will be returned to the transportation office if there is not a parent/guardian present to receive the student at his/her destination. Parents will be required to pick-up their child at the transportation department, 1101 Mikesell St., Charlotte, MI. In the event that your child is returned to the bus garage, after the initial attempt to contact, if we have not heard from the parent or guardian within 30 minutes we will contact the Charlotte Police Department and request a well family check to your home. If they are unable to make contact with you, your child will be turned over to the appropriate agency.

If you fail to be at the stop to receive your child more than 2 times, your transportation privileges will be suspended. First offense will be 5 days suspension, second offense 10 days suspension and a meeting with parent/guardian before returning to the bus. If there continues to be an ongoing issue, transportation privileges may be permanently suspended. You may contact the Transportation Office at 517-543-3400, or visit our website at [www.charlottenet.org](http://www.charlottenet.org) to request a permission form if you are planning on having an older sibling or designated adult meet your child at the stop.

**Please understand once your student is on their assigned bus, they will not be allowed to exit the bus to engage with other students or enter other buildings during transfers.**

## **Cell Phones**

Cell phones and other lighted electronic devices are extremely distracting, especially when it is dark. ***They are not allowed to be on during hours of darkness.*** If you choose to use your cell phone as a listening device, you must use earbuds. You are prohibited from using your cell phones as a video device, taking photos of other students or viewing inappropriate material. Any violation of this policy may result in time off the bus/and or your phone being confiscated by the driver, and will need to be picked up by a parent at the Transportation office.



Charlotte Public Schools Transportation Department has also chosen to align our discipline with the Grades K – 3 and 4 – 12 Code of Conduct. Based on the severity of the offense, the Administration reserves the right to suspend the students from the bus and school. Violation #1 - #6 will result in across the board suspensions. This policy will be included in this handbook.

## **Bus Discipline**

The transportation department follows a progressive discipline policy and restorative practices. Consequences may range from a written warning to a bus suspension for the rest of the school year, depending on the severity of the offense. When students riding privileges are suspended, they are not permitted to ride any bus. This includes buses for athletics or field trips. The following list is meant to serve as examples of the various levels of offenses. ***The list is not meant to be all inclusive.***

### **Level I Offenses**

The first occurrence of a Level I offense will result in a written warning. Subsequent occurrences could result in loss of riding privileges.

Sitting improperly/failure to stay seated  
Failure to be at the stop on time when the bus arrives  
Eating/drinking on the bus  
Failure to use inside voices

### **Level II Offenses**

The first occurrence of a Level II offense could result in a bus suspension for up to 3 days; subsequent occurrences will result in additional suspensions up to and including the remainder of the school year.

Throwing objects around the bus or out the window  
Improper cell phone use  
Failure to sit in assigned seat  
Failure to remain quiet at the railroad tracks  
Standing/changing seats when the bus is moving

### **Level III Offenses**

The first occurrence of a Level III offense could result in a suspension from 5 days up to the remainder of the school year.

Insubordination/refusal to follow driver's directions – defiance  
Use of tobacco, alcohol or other controlled substances  
Carrying a weapon on the bus: guns, knives, firecrackers, etc...  
Fighting/hitting/spitting  
Bullying/harassment/intimidation  
Inappropriate language and or gestures  
Failure to identify oneself

## Vandalism

Recently vandalism on our buses has become an issue and very costly to our district. Vandalism is considered anything that causes permanent damage to the bus. This can range from poking holes with a sharp object into the seat, (I.E. pens, pencils, paper clips, etc...) to cutting and tearing the seats, to drawing on the seats with permanent markers, crayons, ink pens, or nail polish. Therefore we have had to put in place a discipline policy specifically geared for vandalism.

### First Offense

Parents will be contacted and a fine of \$35 will be assessed, which is due within 10 days. Full restitution must precede a return to the bus.

### Second Offense

Parents will be contacted, an \$85 fine will be assessed, which is due within 10 days and students will be suspended for 1-3 days. Full restitution must precede a return to the bus.

### Third Offense

Parents will be contacted, a \$100 fine will be assessed, which is due within 10 days and students will be suspended for 5-10 days. Full restitution must precede a return to the bus.



## **MALICIOUS MISCHIEF AND DESTRUCTION OR INTENTIONAL DAMAGE TO SCHOOL BUSES AND OTHER TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES**

Anyone found causing damage to Charlotte Public Schools property will be billed for costs to repair or replace the damaged equipment or article. Please be advised, that Public Act No. 13, H.B. No. 4155 Regular Session of 1995, Penal Code – Malicious Mischief and Destruction – Intentional Damage to School Buses, Sec 377c states the following:

- 1.) If a person intentionally damages, destroys, or alters a school bus without the permission of the entity that owns the school bus and that damage, destruction, or alteration creates a health or safety hazard to any individual occupying that school bus or who may occupy that school bus, the person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or a fine of not more than \$5,000 or both.
- 2.) As used in this section, “school bus” means that term as defined in section 57 of the Michigan vehicle code, Act No. 300 of the Public Acts of 1949, being section 257.57 of the Michigan Compiled Laws. School bus includes a school transportation vehicle that term is defined in section 57c of Act No. 300 of the Public Acts of 1949; being section 257.57c of the Michigan Compiled Laws, if that vehicle is clearly marked as a school transportation vehicle.



## **Lansing Shared Time Students**

Students attending shared time classes at Lansing Community College may ride a school bus to and from those sites. Students who choose to drive understand the school is not responsible for those students.

To clarify any confusion that may exist regarding bus departure times for off-campus students, please note the LCC bus will leave and return at the following times:

FOR STUDENTS WITH 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 2<sup>ND</sup> BLOCKS AT LCC: BUS LEAVES AT 6:35 A.M.  
RETURNS AT 10:10 A.M.

FOR STUDENTS WITH 3<sup>RD</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> BLOCKS AT LCC: BUS LEAVES AT 11:15 A.M.  
RETURNS AT 2:50 P.M.

In order to avoid any misunderstandings, concerning our school policies regarding bus transportation, please read the following carefully.

**BUS BEHAVIOR** - All students are expected to behave cooperatively, respectfully, and responsibly. **Failure to do so may result in removal from your vocational program.**

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY FOR OFF-CAMPUS/SHARED TIME EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** – Per the Career Preparation Center Parent/Student Handbook. Juniors are not permitted to drive to the Career Preparation Center programs if their home school provides bus transportation. Juniors and seniors that do not have bus transportation provided **must receive permission from their home school BEFORE THEY BEGIN DRIVING**. The Career Preparation Center and Lansing Community College reserves the right to deny or suspend driving privileges. Parking is restricted to the street, parking ramps, or school parking lot based on availability. Students must pay all their own costs related to driving their own vehicle. The driving privilege will only allow the driver to drive his/her own vehicle – it does not allow other students to ride in that assigned vehicle.

Auto Body and Auto Mechanics students must obtain a “driving request” from their program instructor to drive when their vehicle is being repaired. The form is available from their program instructor and must be completed and signed by all parties before the work/repair begins.

## **Development Kindergarten/Kindergarten Student Information**

This section is to help new development kindergarten and kindergarten parents and daycare providers to familiarize themselves with our busing system.

**Teaching a Child Bus Crossing:** During the first weeks of school, bus drivers are teaching children how to cross the road safely. We try to set up our bus routes so that we can minimize the need for this practice. If a parent is by the road, children tend to want to run to the parents instead of watching the bus driver for direction. Please be aware of this. Parents should wait on the door side of the street and cross with their student upon the driver's signal.

**The First Two Weeks of School:** Please attach the busing information tag to the outside of your child's clothing or backpack until they feel comfortable enough with riding the bus, at least the first month of school. If your child is going to be transported by bus and you have not received a transportation tag by the time school starts, please contact the transportation office at (517) 543-3400. If you transport your child or your child walks to school, you will NOT receive a transportation tag.

**Enrollment:** Please call the district registrar at (517)541-5742 with any registration/enrollment questions.

### **Video Camera Policy**

Transportation staff may use a monitor camera mounted on the interior of the school buses as a teaching tool for the bus drivers to learn and improve safety and behavior management techniques. The cameras are also useful for investigating incidents that the driver was not able to directly observe. A school bus driver's first responsibility is the safe operation of the bus. As a result, he/she is not able to constantly monitor student behavior. Cameras can help provide a clear understanding of the actual sequence of events. However, due to student privacy concerns, parents are not permitted to view the video. Videos are confidential and are the property of Charlotte Public Schools. The driver, transportation supervisor, or other school administrators are the only individuals permitted to view the videos.

**Lost and Found** - Items will be removed from the bus and brought into the Transportation Department. You may call the Transportation Department for lost items. Unclaimed items will be kept at the transportation office until the end of the school year. At that time, any items left unclaimed will be donated. We encourage you to write your students name inside jackets, lunch boxes, backpacks etc.

### **Field and Sport Trip Policies**

Students are expected to follow the same school bus rules on field and sport trips as on regular bus runs. When children are suspended from their regular bus, they are also ineligible for transportation to and from field trips or sporting events.

**Prevent Danger at School** – Our buses park “bumper to bumper” to stop students from walking between the buses. Parents, DO NOT cut between the buses when dropping off or picking up your students as this is extremely UNSAFE! Our children learn by example.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER – SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

When schools are closed due to inclement weather, all families with a current phone number on file at school will be notified via the School Messenger system. Unless you heard a statement on the radio or television, school IS scheduled to be open, even when it is foggy, snowing or other circumstances. Please DO NOT call the Transportation office. If you need to, please call the Community Activity Line for a school closing recording or their informational message at (517)541-5746. You may also check on the District Facebook page, Twitter feed, or District website. Additionally, announcements will be reported to local radio and television stations.

School closing decisions are made prior to 5:30 a.m. whenever possible. However, the unpredictability of Michigan weather may make it necessary for a last minute decision to be made. Please discuss with your children an emergency or alternate plan if an unexpected school closure should occur.

If there is a two hour delay, your students will be picked up 2 hours later than normal and if there is a half day of school, they will arrive home 4 hours earlier than normal.

### **Family Emergency Plans**

Students and parents/guardians should develop family emergency plans. Does your child have a house key or know where to find one? Does your child have a neighbor to go to in case no one is home? Have you discussed several possibilities so your child knows what to do? Do a drill or at least a periodic verbal check to be sure your child knows what steps to take. Keep the procedure updated as personal circumstances change.

## ***RIDE WITH PRIDE***

### **BE SAFE**

- \*Keep everything inside the bus
- \*Sit bottom to the bottom, back to the back
- \*Keep hands and feet to self
- \*Keep aisle clear
- \*Leave all belongings in your backpack
- \*Eat and drink somewhere other than the bus

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

- \*Be on time to the bus stop
- \*Go directly to your seat
- \*Follow all the bus rules

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

- \*Treat others as you want to be treated
- \*Be a good role model
- \*Use kind words
- \*Talk quietly
- \*Listen and obey the driver



toonclips.com #4375 service@toonclips.com



I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Charlotte Public Schools' Transportation handbook. I understand that Charlotte Public Schools can, at its sole discretion, modify, eliminate, revise, or deviate from the guidelines and information in this handbook as circumstances or situations warrant.

I accept responsibility for familiarizing myself with the information in this handbook and will seek verification or clarification of its terms where necessary.

Furthermore, I understand that I should contact the Transportation Supervisor (517) 543-3400, if I have any questions that are not answered in this handbook.

School Year: 2018-2019

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus# or Symbol \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Transportation Handbook may be viewed on our website at [www.charlottenet.org](http://www.charlottenet.org)