



Montgomery County Public Schools
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

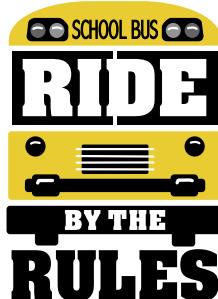
Ride by the Rules: A Parent's Role



Ms. Sheba Ram, MCPS Bus Operator

**Join Ms. S
in telling your
children...**

- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Responsible**
- **Be Safe**



Bus Safety: A Team Effort

Every day nearly 100,000 students in the Montgomery County Public Schools ride a school bus. Their safety is a top priority for the school system. A safe, pleasant ride helps students start and end the school day on a positive note and can have an enormous impact on a student's attitude toward school.

Students, parents, bus operators, principals, and teachers must work together to ensure safe and pleasant bus transportation. A parent's responsibility includes knowing and reinforcing standards of safety and behavior at the bus stop and on the bus. Disorderly students can threaten their own safety and that of others by distracting the bus operator. Disorderly and aggressive conduct also can make the bus ride to and from school an unpleasant and even intimidating experience for students. To help prevent this, buses may be equipped with audio and video recording devices.

An emphasis on safety

Parent responsibility also includes ensuring that your children have a safe and, especially for younger children, supervised place to go if school is closed, opens late, or closes early due to adverse weather conditions or if the bus does not come for some reason.

How parents can help

Every member of the community has a role in fostering safe, positive behavior at the bus stop and on the bus. As a parent, you can help preserve the safety of all students and ensure a smooth beginning and ending to the school day by making sure that your children

- ◆ Know and understand the rules for riding the school bus;
- ◆ Understand that the school bus is an extension of school, and the same standards of behavior expected in the classroom apply to the bus as well;
- ◆ Obey the instructions of the bus operator, just as they would follow the instructions of a teacher or school administrator;
- ◆ Show consideration for other students on the bus and at the bus stop;
- ◆ Speak respectfully to everyone, including their peers, without using vulgar language;
- ◆ Know that fighting and other violence, harassment, bullying, and sexual activity is strictly prohibited;
- ◆ Show consideration for properties around the bus stop, refraining from littering or damaging any property;
- ◆ Know the bus route number and ride the same bus daily; and
- ◆ Understand that riding the school bus is a privilege for most students, not a right, and that this privilege can be revoked temporarily or permanently because of misconduct.

Protecting your children

Elementary school

Parents have a central role in making school bus trips safe for their young children. To fulfill this role, make sure they

- ◆ Know basic principles of traffic safety, such as how and when to cross the road safely;
- ◆ Stay out of the road while waiting for the bus;
- ◆ Are supervised by a parent or other adult while walking to and waiting at the bus stop (at some bus stops, parents rotate this duty, while at others, parents escort their children to the bus stop and remain with them until the bus comes);
- ◆ Move toward the bus only after it stops and the driver has signaled that it is safe; and
- ◆ Understand the importance of following the rules on the bus.



Middle and high school

Even older students need reminders about the rules of conduct and safety on school buses. Reinforcing the idea that they are responsible for their behavior and self-control on the school bus and at the bus stop can save them from making mistakes that could have severe and long-lasting consequences. To help protect your children, make sure they

- ◆ Treat others, including the bus operator, with respect;
- ◆ Have a safe and highly visible area to wait at the bus stop, especially in the winter when the road may be slippery and dark;
- ◆ Know and understand the consequences of certain behaviors, such as smoking and bringing prohibited materials (i.e., alcohol, drugs, weapons, explosives, and glass containers) on the bus. In addition to being against school system regulations, possession of some of these materials is a criminal offense; and
- ◆ Refrain from any violent behavior or sexual harassment, which also may be illegal.

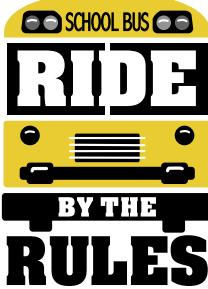
Open communication

Parents need to encourage their children to report any harassing, bullying, or otherwise harmful behavior to the bus operator and/or principal, as well as share this information with a parent. The Montgomery County Public Schools takes all such reports seriously and will take action to resolve these problems.

A parent's responsibility includes knowing and reinforcing standards of safety and behavior at the bus stop and on the bus.

Encourage your children to follow the standards of behavior—for everyone's safety. The privilege to ride the school bus can be revoked if the standards aren't observed.

NOTE: Buses may be equipped with an audio and visual recording device.



For more information, see the
Department of Transportation Web site:
[www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/
departments/transportation](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/transportation)

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