

Dear Parents,

The Transportation Department of the Richmond County School System is continually searching for safety-oriented individuals with high moral character for bus driving positions. All applications are carefully scrutinized to help ensure that the children of Richmond County are afforded the safest transportation possible. If you are interested, please read the information which follows. Also, if there is an acquaintance you would recommend, please share this notice with him/her.

Requirements:

- Good driving record
- Dependability
- Good verbal and written communication skills
- Good moral character

Benefits available include:

- Health insurance
- Paid sick and personal leave
- Free life insurance
- Pension benefits
- Driver training program

37.5 hour work week
180 work days per year

All training provided by the Richmond County School System Transportation Department. To apply, contact:

Richmond County School System
Transportation Department
2950 Mike Padgett Hwy
Augusta, Georgia 30906

*The Richmond County School System is an
Equal Opportunity Employer*

Safety Is For Everyone

Currently, a combined total of over 23,000 students are transported daily to and from school on Richmond County school buses. These buses make over 1000 runs and travel 18,000 miles each day. Accordingly, much effort and great care are given by our school system to safely transport Richmond County's most precious commodity, our children. School bus drivers in Richmond County are required to complete an extensive training program before they begin transporting students. In addition, they attend mandated safety meetings and participate in activities designed to help them improve their professional skills. Buses are inspected by drivers prior to each trip, and preventive maintenance inspections are performed by school system mechanics each month. Additional spot checks and annual inspections are conducted by the Georgia Department of Public Safety Motor Carrier Unit. Parents/Guardians, teachers, and students must also take an active role in school bus safety. The actions of children could affect their safety and the safety of others at the bus stop and on the bus are of great concern to everyone. The entire community must take the responsibility of securing an optimum level of bus safety for our school children.

Everyone Has A Role

MOTORIST

- Watch out for children at bus stops and as they get off the bus.
- Use special caution during school hours. Obey school bus stop arms.
- Always watch for the unexpected.

PARENTS

- Parents, please be aware our drivers often have the numerical equivalent of two or more classes of students on a bus. The driver is in a 40-foot vehicle, in traffic, with various weather conditions, with his/her back to the students. Please encourage your children to obey **ALL** the rules and not cause distractions.
- Have students at the bus stop on time... with about ten minutes to spare and never late. Haste increases the chance of accidents.
- Remind children, while on the way to the bus stop, to walk on the shoulder of the road, and where possible, not on the traveled portion of the road.
- Remind students to wait in a safe place, well off the road, until the bus stops.
- Periodically remind children of the importance of mannerly and orderly behavior at the bus stop.

• Periodically check on the children at the bus stop. **Policy is for Parents/Guardians to accompany very young (8 years of age or younger) to the bus stop and meet them upon their return. (unless older siblings ride the same bus)**

• Remind children not to move toward the bus until the bus and all traffic have stopped. Students should stop and look before crossing the road when boarding or departing the bus. The most important thing is to LOOK. Expecting cars not to stop.

- Review bus safety rules with your children and the necessity of observing them.
- The driver is a member of your school system and merits the respect and courtesy all school personnel receive. Teach your child to obey the bus driver.
- Actively cooperate with school officials and the school bus operator regarding the appropriate conduct of your child at the bus stop and on the bus.

• **No parents are allowed on the school bus.** O.C.G.A. 20-2-1181 (2010)

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS/TEACHERS

- Instruct students on proper bus behavior and school bus safety as a part of classroom instruction and activities.
- The school should assist the student in developing attitudes of respect and courtesy toward the driver.
- Assure that students are supervised when boarding and departing the bus within the school loading zone.
- Investigate bus safety rule violations and deal with them fairly and firmly.
- Inform parents in writing when rule violations are reported by the bus driver.

BUS DRIVER

- Receive students with warmth and care.
- Maintain a consistent time schedule.
- Provide supervision of students and the safest possible transportation to and from school.
- Assign seats to students.
- Investigate rule violations and file bus misconduct reports with the school administrators as deemed appropriate.

RULES YOUR CHILD CAN LIVE WITH: School bus riding is a privilege which may be limited or revoked by school officials.

All students shall conform to bus rules and guidelines. Those not conforming will be referred to the principal. In all cases of disciplinary referrals, parents shall be notified by the school administrators.

Please refer to Rule 19 in Student Code of Conduct.

Prior to the office referral, the bus driver will issue two warnings to the student, unless the violation is severe.

- Students are to wait at the bus stop in an orderly manner.
 - Students shall be courteous and obedient to other students and the driver.
 - Students will be permitted to carry books and other items related to school work which can be held in the lap.
 - Sports equipment, fishing rods, skateboards, small umbrellas, animals, glass jars, weapons and other objects which distract the driver or jeopardize the safety of students will not be transported. Students may transport certain band instruments on the bus if space is available. No wooden objects or fishing equipment. The largest band instrument would be a trumpet. All items, including a book bag, must be your child's lap and cannot extend into another passenger seating area. Items cannot be stored or left in an empty seat.
 - Students should take a seat quickly and remain in the seat facing the front with their feet and legs out of the aisle.
 - **Tobacco, Vaping, drugs, and alcohol are prohibited.**
 - The ignition of matches, lighters, etc. is prohibited.
 - Students must not extend their hands, arms, head or objects through bus windows.
 - No object is to be thrown into, or out of, or inside the bus.
 - **Students must not use obscene language or gestures.**
 - Willful destruction or defacing of school system property is prohibited. Any damage must be reimbursed to the school system immediately upon being billed.
 - **Fighting or physical play is prohibited and cause for bus privileges to be revoked.**
 - Students must remain quiet enough not to distract the driver. Students must remain absolutely quiet at railroad crossings.
 - Food and drinks are not allowed.
 - The emergency door is to be used only at the direction of the driver.
 - Students should move immediately away from the bus after exiting.
 - When crossing a street, students should cross twelve feet in front of the bus in full view of the driver only after the bus has stopped, the stop arm has been displayed, and all approaching vehicles have stopped. Students should look both ways before they cross and as they cross the street.
 - Pupils will ride on assigned buses, board, and unload at their designated stop. Parents must request in writing any exception from this rule. Requests shall be made to the school principal. In case of emergency, the principal may authorize a student to ride a different bus or change bus stops.
 - Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; audible radios, without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.
 - Richmond County School System is not responsible for any electronic devices or other personal items left / lost on school buses.
 - Obey the bus driver at all times.
 - (a) No request shall be approved for social activities or projects.
 - (b) No child shall be delivered outside his school attendance zone.
 - Students shall follow all other related Board policies and Administrative Procedures concerning student discipline, as stated in student's Code of Conduct handbook
 - No student will be dropped off at a bus stop other than their assigned stop unless prior approval has been made with the Transportation Department. A note that states your child has permission to go home with anyone else must be signed by the parent and the school administrator and given to the bus driver.
 - Please read the school bus discipline section of student handbook.
- The following items are considered severe violations (zero tolerance):
Assault and battery against employee and/or other student; possession, transmission, use of illegal substances; Tobacco, Vaping, alcohol weapons; bomb threats; ignition of matches, lighters sexual misconduct;
destruction/vandalism of property; and other criminal law violations.

Safe Student Riding Instructions

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year. We look forward to transporting your child this school year. To ensure that your child will have a safe riding experience this year, we ask that you review the safe riding instructions with your child now and periodically during the school year

Statistics show children riding a school bus are much safer than in their parents personal vehicle or any other type of transportation on the roadways. The Richmond County Board of Education believes the school bus is an extension of the classroom; therefore, the same rules of "Respect to Self", "Respect for Others", and "Respect for Others' Property" will apply en route to the bus stop, departing from the bus stop, and while on the bus. Safe riding begins before your child ever leaves the house or arrives at the designated bus stop. In order to keep your child safe, your child needs to arrive at the bus stop ten minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. These ten minutes allow your child to arrive at the bus stop without the need to hurry. These ten minutes will also limit your child's time near roadways and out in a variety of weather conditions for any longer than necessary.

While Waiting For The Bus:

Students should wait near their stop, but away from the roadway at their designated stop (not in one's house). There should be no horse playing, pushing or shoving while coming to the bus stop or while at the bus stop. Students who do not live on the same side of the road as the bus pick up must wait on their side of the road until the bus arrives. If your child has to cross the road, they must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and then wait for the driver to give instructions for when it is safe for them to cross.

While Loading The Bus At The Designated Stop (same side of the road)

Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the entrance door to open, and look to be sure the red stop lights are flashing before ever approaching the bus to load. When more than one student loads at the same stop, they must line up in a single file line just prior to the bus's arrival. There should be no pushing, shoving or horse playing while loading the bus. Students should always use the handrail when stepping up on the bus. Students should get seated in their seats as carefully but as promptly as possible and remain there until they reach their school or destination.

While Loading The Bus At The Designated Stop (opposite side of the road)

When a student has to cross the road to board the bus, they must stand on their side of the road. Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, wait for the entrance door to open, and look to be sure the red stop lights are flashing before ever approaching the bus to load. Students must wait for the driver to give a verbal or physical sign that it is ok to cross the road. Even after all the above, students must quickly look both ways to be sure the road is still clear and all other vehicles have stopped. Students must always cross in front of the bus and should always use the handrail when stepping up on the bus. There should be no pushing, shoving, or horse playing while loading the bus. Students should get seated in their seats as carefully but as promptly as possible and remain there until they reach their school or destination.

While On The Bus:

Once students board the bus, the driver is in full charge of the safety of your child. Students must follow the listed "Bus Regulations" found in "Code of Conduct" to ensure a safe ride, whether it is from home to or from school or on any school-sponsored trips.

While Unloading The Bus At The School Or Destination

Students should unload the bus in a single file from front to back with no pushing, shoving, or horse playing while unloading the bus. Students should use the handrail as they depart the bus until both feet are on the ground. Students should check for an approaching bus on the door side before stepping off the bus while unloading. Students should look both ways before crossing the traffic area and should clear the area as quickly and safely as possible. Students should never return to the bus without the supervision of an administrator.

While Loading The Bus At The School

Students should wait for buses in a safe area designated by the school. The bus should come to a complete stop, and your child must wait for the driver to open the entrance door before approaching the bus. Students should look both ways before leaving the curb and crossing the traffic area to approach the bus. Students must watch for other buses pulling up by the door side while loading the bus. Students should line up in a single file in the order they

While Unloading The Bus At the Designated Stop

Students should unload the bus in a single file from front to back with no pushing, shoving, or horse playing. Students should use the handrail as they depart the bus until both feet are on the ground. Students should exit the bus, clear the roadway, and continue to move until they are safely away from the bus. Students who live on the opposite side of the road must cross in front of the bus while the bus is at their stop. When a student must cross the road, they should stop at the front of the bus and look both ways before continuing to cross. When all is clear, students should clear the roadway as quickly as possible. Students should go directly home and never return to the bus for any reason. Please instruct your child to never retrieve an item that is dropped and goes under the bus. Students who have permission from parents to check their mailbox (that lives on the same side of the road as their mailbox) must clear the roadway and wait for the bus to depart and traffic to clear before returning to the roadway to the mailbox. If your child lives on the opposite side of the road of their mailbox, they must cross over to their side of the road while the bus is at their stop. If your child has permission from you to check the mailbox and you live on the opposite side of the road from your mailbox, your child must also wait until after the bus has departed their stop and traffic has cleared before crossing back over the road to check their mailbox.

Railroad Crossing

History has shown that more lives are lost in school buses at railroad crossings than at any other location. Every time a school bus and a train collide, the train wins! This is why it is so important for the driver to have their full attention at the railroad crossing. There is no other time when a driver's distraction can cost the loss of so many lives. Please reinforce with your child the importance of being "Silent At All Rail Road Crossings"

Bus Evacuation

Due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the bus driver's control, your child may have to evacuate a bus at some time during the year. The decision to evacuate may be solely because we have the best interests of the students in mind. When evacuating a bus is necessary, students are placed in a safer location while waiting for assistance.

Most evacuations are due to breakdowns, which may leave the bus in questionable surroundings. Not all breakdowns result in an evacuation; several factors are taken into consideration before the decision is made to evacuate a bus. The location of an inoperative bus is the greatest factor when deciding to evacuate a bus. (Some locations we feel necessary to evacuate, maybe, but not limited to a high volume roadway, high speed limit roadway, on or near a bridge, on a steep hill, in a curve, or near water.)

When any type of evacuation occurs, students must follow the instructions of the driver to safely unload and relocate to a safe location away from the hazard. On a rare occasion, the driver may not be coherent, so we depend on the older, mature students to help without placing them at any more risk. This type of evacuation is practiced with all students during each new school year, so all students are aware of the safe evacuation practices with or without the driver's assistance.

There are several reasons a bus may have to unload from one bus to another bus without it being an emergency. We ask you to periodically remind your child to stay calm whenever it is necessary to unload from one bus to another bus for any reason, and to always use their "While Loading And Unloading The Bus" directions found on page 5.

All buses are designed with several "Emergency Exits"; these locations are the entrance/Exit door, rear door, emergency exit windows, and roof hatches. Students should always use the front entrance/exit door during all evacuations when possible. When the service door is not available, the second choice should be the back door. All other exits should be used only when the loading door and the back door are not practical. When the rear door is the chosen exit, selected older and mature-sized students are instructed to assist students to the ground. All students are instructed to leave all personal belongings on the bus and to exit from the front to the back of the selected exit location. Students are instructed to walk away from the bus at least 100 ft. in the direction away from the recognized hazard or hazards.

School bus transportation is such an important part of the education system in Richmond County. We appreciate your assistance as we try to provide the safest and most efficient transportation for our precious cargo, your children!

Richmond County Schools Transportation Department

**2950 Mike Padgett Hwy
Augusta, GA 30906
PHONE 706-796-4777
FAX 706-796-4692**

I have read and understand the contents of the Safe Student Riding Instructions handout. Please keep the Safe Riding Instructions found in this handout for your future reference to go over with your child during the course of the school year. Please sign and return this page to school.

Student Signature Date

Parent Signature Date

SIGN AND RETURN