

## Transportation Department

**To:** UCPS Parents

**From:** G. Scott Denton, Director of Transportation

**Date:** May 22, 2023

**Subject:** 2023-24 Transportation Information

As the 2022-23 school year comes to an end, the information contained in this memo will help to prepare families for transportation during 2023-24 school year. The following information and reminders will help to ensure a smooth start to a new school year.

- **Bus Driver Update** – Our bus driver shortage continues and will impact operations as we open school. We will continue to practice the same strategies deployed during 2020-21 to combat this challenge, including:
  - **Double Runs** – Although not popular to offload students early or hold students in the afternoons, the strategy is a necessity again this school year. We will minimize the use of double runs where possible and adjustments should be expected after school begins. *(It should be noted that double runs are planned with the shortest runs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> load in the a.m. and on the 1<sup>st</sup> load in the p.m.)*
  - **Bus Stop Consolidation Continued** – Consolidated bus stops will continue to be utilized to shorten bus routes and allow buses to cover additional runs. Parents are encouraged to escort their student(s) to/from the assigned bus stop locations.
- **First week of School** – Please plan for delays the 1<sup>st</sup> week of school, particularly in the afternoons. Ensuring that all students are safely transported home is our priority #1. Loading times at schools typically take longer; drivers learning their students and checking them off at bus stops lengthen ride times, which spill over to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier schools; and dealing with unplanned issues that pop up all require additional route time. It is not uncommon for a few of our buses to park well after 6 p.m. during that first week of school. Your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated as we work thru our 1<sup>st</sup> week challenges.
- **Parent Portal App** – The most up to date information regarding school bus assignment, stop time and location will be available on the Parent Portal App. Parents that do not have the App will need to load it (Parents of Kindergarten students, new enrollees or those that did not ride the bus during the 2022-23 school year). Information will be available August 23, 2023 for traditional calendar students. The link to the app is here: <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/domain/5583>
- **Bus Stop Reminders** - Students need to be at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to scheduled pick-up times in the a.m. Parents of Pre-K/Kindergarten/Students with Special Needs must be at the bus stop to receive students in the afternoons unless a Parent Consent to release a student is completed and on file with Transportation.