

As The Wheel Turns

Mr. Johnson's August 2024 Newsletter



Team –

Welcome back! I hope you had a wonderful and restful summer break. As we gear up for another exciting school year, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks for your hard work and dedication to ensuring our students' safety and well-being.

Your commitment is the driving force behind our success, and I'm thrilled to have you back!

See you on the road,
Mr. Johnson

SAFETY REMINDERS FROM MR. JOHNSON

Safety Reminders

- As a reminder, it is crucial that we all remember and prioritize our safety steps, which are outlined in the Transportation Handbook. If you need to deviate from your assigned route for any reason, please radio your bus office and ask for permission. This includes situations such as heavy traffic delays or when students are not on board.
- Please remember that unauthorized stops are strictly prohibited while operating a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) bus. If a stop is not listed in your bus route description, it is not authorized and should not be made. Additionally, it is not permitted to transport any unauthorized passengers on any CMS bus, especially non-CMS students or employees.

Student Stops

- I also want to remind you of the importance of ensuring that students are dropped off at the correct stop. I understand that sometimes there may be changes to a student's regular drop-off location, but it is crucial that you verify the correct stop with the student or their parent/guardian before dropping them off. The safety of our students is our top priority, and we cannot risk any student being dropped off at the wrong location.
- Additionally, if you have to return any student to any school for any reason, please ensure that an adult and/or staff member is present to receive them. Leaving students unattended is unsafe, and we must do everything we can to ensure their safety while under our care.

Air Conditioning

- As the cooler autumn weather sets in, it's a great time to open your bus windows and let in some fresh air. Not only is it a more natural way to regulate the temperature, but it can also help reduce the spread of germs. Let's do our part to keep things comfortable and healthy on the bus by skipping the air conditioning and allowing the fresh air in. We are working with our maintenance team to address air conditioning concerns.

Safe Schools and Attendance Incentive

- This year, please remember that completing your SafeSchools training is mandatory to qualify for the attendance incentive this year. This training is crucial for maintaining our high safety standards and ensuring the well-being of our students. Only drivers who have completed their SafeSchools training by the deadline will be eligible for the attendance incentive. If you have questions, please speak with your manager.

FIRST WEEK FAST FACTS

839 school buses

184 CMS schools

112,000 assigned students

199,000 daily miles driven

7:41 pm avg. last drop-off

83.7% avg. afternoon OTA

92.3% avg. morning OTA

SUMMER 2024 RECAP



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Grant Program is awarding \$26.7 million in federal funds to purchase 114 electric school buses for school districts across North Carolina. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools will receive 55 buses by the end of the 2025-2026 school year. [See the video here.](#)

Our Transportation team enjoyed an enriching week at the North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association conference in Asheville. Adam Johnson, Executive Director of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Transportation, and Kristi Harden, Executive Director of Cumberland County Schools Transportation, led an insightful session on accident safety, prevention, and preparedness. The session also emphasized the importance of delivering exceptional customer service to all stakeholders — even in times of crisis. [See the video here.](#)



Great progress has been made at our new transportation garages at Downs Road and Northpointe! This garage pictured will service the Ardrey Kell/Ballantyne Ridge, South, and Olympic offices! [See the video here.](#)

Take a look at the 2024 CMS Transportation Conference! This week, our bus drivers have been attending professional development led by our transportation managers and leaders! Our drivers are ready to serve our students, families and community with excellence – and we're excited for endless possibilities this school year! [See the video here.](#)



AREA NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

The **Harding Transportation Area** kicked off the holiday weekend strong and celebrated with a Fun Day Friday! Drivers were able to wear their jeans and favorite football socks.



Looking to purchase additional CMS Transportation swag? Our online store will be open through Tuesday, September 10! [Order here.](#)

CHARMS AND RED ROVER

CHARMS – **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Modernization Systems** – will deliver an all-in-one, cloud-based system designed to streamline operations and enhance the work experience for staff across the district. Red Rover is the new time tracking software for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

Red Rover will:

- Provide time and labor, absence and substitute management in one system for the first time.
- Accurately track absences.
- Eliminate robocalls with Substitute Finder.
- Eliminate Request for Absence forms.
- Improve timeliness and accuracy of paychecks to staff each payroll period.
- Improve accountability for all staff.
- Provide additional safety by recording who is at a facility or school campus each day.

If you have questions regarding clocking in and/or out on Red Rover, please speak with your manager.



Shenequa Thomas, a Winston-Salem State University graduate with a Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling, is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. With over a decade of experience in mental health, wellness, and community leadership & advocacy, she is dedicated to making a positive impact. Shenequa has experience in providing individual, couples, and group therapy to diverse populations.

Available Services Include:

- Individual appointments (free for CMS Transportation employees)
- Behavioral and mental health screenings
- Referrals to other behavioral health professionals

On-Site Schedule:

- Mondays: 3901 Craig Avenue
- Tuesdays: 3101 Wilkinson Boulevard
- Wednesdays: 11751 Downs Road
- Thursdays: 4400 Northpointe Boulevard
- Fridays: 6520 Orr Road

**SPEAK WITH YOUR MANAGER ABOUT
BOOKING AN APPOINTMENT.**



SOCIAL + EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

CMS Transportation has partnered with Atrium Health to provide social and emotional well-being support to all our employees. This service, whether virtual or in-person, will be available at no cost for all transportation area offices and central office support staff.

We understand the importance of mental health, and this partnership is a significant step toward ensuring the well-being of our CMS Transportation family. [Learn more about the offerings here.](#)

What concerns can the behavioral health services address?

You are encouraged to contact the behavioral health provider for whatever may be causing you any level of emotional distress. Feel free to reach out to discuss any of the following:

- Relationship and parenting issues
- Overcoming feelings of being stuck
- Developing coping strategies
- Goal setting and making action plans
- Anger, grief and stress
- Anxiety and depressed mood
- Substance use and additions
- Managing life's changes

2024-2025 WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS

1

We will maintain or exceed our morning on-time arrival rate from 91% to 93% and afternoon on-time arrival rate from 87% to 89% by June 2025.

2

We will maintain or continue to reduce our annual DPI inspection score from 48 points to 42 points by June 2025.

3

We will maintain or exceed our hiring and retention rates more than the previous fiscal year. (9% technician staff, 5% bus driving staff).

2024-2025 WIDLY IMPORTANT GOALS MONTHLY AVERAGES

1

**Average August Morning OTA: TBD
Average August Afternoon OTA: TBD**

2

Average August DPI Score: TBD

3

**Drivers Hired (August): 41
Technicians Hired (August): 0**

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR UPDATES

Monday, September 1: Labor Day (CMS Holiday)

Wednesday, September 25: CMS Early Release Day

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS AND UPDATES!

Want to be featured in the CMS Transportation Newsletter?

Email Tom Miner for more details and information!

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