

Staying Safe On the Road

All motorists are required by law to stop when the red lights on buses are flashing. To pass a bus when the red lights are on is, by far, the greatest threat to the safety of students. The refusal to stop for a school bus when the flashing red lights are in operation is punishable by a traffic ticket and fine of up to \$1,000. All drivers should decrease their speed and be prepared to stop when they see a school bus beginning to slow down and when students are present on the roadside.

DRIVERS:

1. **Always STOP for school buses.** Drivers in both directions are required by law to stop at least 20 feet from the front and rear of the school bus and remain stopped until the bus is put in motion.
2. **Obey the speed limits.** Leave on time or allow extra time during school “rush hours” (6:30-9:15 a.m. and 2:10-4:20 p.m.).
3. **Treat every intersection as a crosswalk** and do not “roll through” stop signs. Yield to walkers when making a right turn on red.
4. **For the sake of all children . . .** slow down; avoid using mobile devices; be prepared to stop for school buses.

No matter the location—whether it’s in the classroom or on the street—HCPSS values safety as a priority for everyone. Safe Kids Worldwide reports that high-school students age 15-19 make up half of all underage pedestrian fatalities. Often in these accidents, it is because the teens are distracted by texting, handheld games, music or talking on the phone while they are walking. Statistics show that 1 in 5 high school teens cross the street while engaged in a distracting behavior. Maryland is in the top 10 states with the greatest number of pedestrian fatalities among youth 12-19 years old.

STUDENT PEDESTRIANS:

1. **Heads and eyes up;** devices down when walking.
2. **Make eye contact with drivers** before you cross the street; this will ensure that you see them and they see you.
3. **Watch for vehicles** at every driveway, intersection, and crosswalk.
4. **Don’t walk distracted.** Friends don’t let friends text and walk.

FACTS:

The number of Maryland drivers who illegally passed school buses that were stopped to let children on and off increased more than 50% in the past year. Nationally, more school-aged pedestrians sustain injuries between the hours of 7-8 a.m. and 3-4 p.m. than any other hours of the day. In Maryland over the last 5 years, 1,000 school-aged children were injured and another five were killed during these time periods.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/big-jump-in-number-of-maryland-drivers-who-illegally-pass-school-buses/2016/09/06/53634398-7443-11e6-b786-19d0cb1ed06c_story.html

MORE INFORMATION about staying safe on the road is available on the HCPSS Transportation website at <http://www.hcpss.org/schools/transportation/road-safety/#motorists>