

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL AND RIDING SAFETY

Please share the following guidelines for afternoon dismissal with your child and help them understand why they are important.

When boarding in the afternoon students are required to go directly to their assigned bus. Students need to be safety conscious at all times.

Appropriate behavior is essential for bus safety. Students should speak in a quiet voice and behave in a manner that ensures a safe ride while on the bus.

Approaching a student's bus stop. Students must remain in their seats until the bus has come to a complete stop.

Preparing to exit the bus. Students should check their seat to make sure they have all their belongings. While exiting the bus, students should have their hands free and use the handrails as they climb down the steps.

Getting off the bus. Students should check to the right before stepping outside the bus to make sure it is safe. After exiting the bus, students must walk at least 15 feet away from the side of the bus and go directly into their house. Students should not stop to retrieve the mail when exiting as this creates unsafe conditions for the student and the bus.

If you cross the street. Students must go out ten big steps to the front of the bus and look at the driver to wait for the signal to cross. **Remember: I see you, you see me!**

Watch for the driver's signal before you start crossing. Once the driver gives the signal to cross, the student should walk to the front corner of the bus and look both ways to make sure traffic has stopped before crossing the road. Parents should not assist students at this time. Students will be instructed as to the proper procedures to follow and only the bus driver knows when it is safe to cross. If the driver sounds the horn, it means danger and the student must return to the side of the road they came from. It is estimated that 100,000 cars per day pass stopped school busses with their lights flashing.

Keep your eyes and ears open for hazards.

SCHOOL VEHICLES AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

All busses are equipped with two-way radios for communication with the transportation office, the maintenance facility, and other Schalmont vehicles.

School busses are maintained and inspected on a regular basis. Preventive maintenance inspections are performed once a month. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) requires drivers to maintain daily inspection logs. Buses are inspected by a NYSDOT certified inspector every six months.

Each driver completes a pre-trip inspection before every trip. The pre-trip inspections are performed on the inside as well as the outside of the bus. Any defects are logged and reported to the maintenance mechanics.

Post-trip inspections are completed by the driver at the end of each trip as well. During this inspection, drivers check to confirm that no students are left on the bus. Any defects noted must be logged and reported.

NYSDOT is charged with inspecting the maintenance facilities annually. The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles audits all driver records. The New York State Department of Education audits all transportation monitor records.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

When Schalmont is forced to close or delay schools, or dismiss students early due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, that information is communicated through a variety of ways. This includes through local media, on the district website homepage, as well as through the district's social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) and School News Notifier. **Please do not call the schools or transportation department directly to inquire about closings or delays since this ties up phone lines and can prevent receipt of important calls.**

In the event school is closed due to inclement weather, transportation will be cancelled for all schools, including to out of district programs. In the event of overnight snow falling or icing of road surfaces, the district may delay opening for up to two hours. Transportation will be provided to all schools according to the delayed schedule when road conditions allow for safe transport. On these days, dismissal times will remain the same.

BUS DRIVERS' PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Before getting behind the wheel, drivers must provide at least three credible references. All school bus drivers will also receive a complete background check through state and federal agencies.

Mandatory driver training is provided to drivers upon hire. Drivers must attend a school bus drivers' pre-service course before they are allowed to drive. Within the first year of hire, drivers are required to attend a 30 hour basic course. Each year, drivers attend two 2-hour refresher courses.

A school bus driver must obtain a "CDL" license with both "P" (passenger) and "S" (school bus) endorsements and have a clean driving record.

School bus drivers are required to pass New York State Education Department and Department of Motor Vehicles yearly and biannual exams. These exams are performed by a certified 19-A examiner and school bus driver instructors.

Drivers must pass a yearly physical examination administered by a certified NYSDOT physician.

Other requirements include:

- Annual defensive driving test;
- Driver's abstract review;
- Biannual behind-the-wheel road test;
- Written test;
- Physical performance test; and
- Random drug and alcohol testing.

SCHALMONT TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

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Committed to Excellence & Achievement



Transportation Brochure



**Schalmont
Transportation
Department**
[www.schalmont.org/
transportation](http://www.schalmont.org/transportation)



WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERVISOR

Welcome to the Schalmont Central School District!

A very important aspect of your child's educational experience is riding the school bus. Our entire transportation department strives to make sure every child is transported in a manner that ensures their safety and well-being. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential that all of us—staff members, parents and students—work together as a team. Each one of us has a role in assuming the responsibility for bus ridership that provides students with a safe and positive experience.

This brochure will help you and your child gain a better understanding of the district's transportation program and our expectations and guidelines. Please take a moment to review this information with your child in preparation for their bus ride, and to help foster a greater understanding of each child's role and responsibility in making their trip to and from school a safe one.

Further information may be found on our school district website and in school newsletters published throughout the year. Please feel free to contact us with questions or additional information regarding your child's transportation needs.

Sincerely,

Joseph Hills, Transportation Supervisor

518-355-9200, ext. 4201 or (518) 631-6568, jhills@schalmont.net

STUDENT GUIDELINES WHILE RIDING ON BUS

The following guidelines are provided to help ensure students have a safe and positive ride to and from school programs.

Students should find a seat and sit quickly. The bus will not move until students are seated. (Please note students are required to share seats when necessary. A driver may also have assigned seats on their bus to help with student management and supervision.)

Students may talk to who they are seated with quietly.

Students are not allowed to eat or drink on the bus.

At no time should students have their arms or any objects out the windows.

Noise and inappropriate behaviors are distracting to the driver. If he/she has to look up in the overhead mirror while driving they are not watching the road. This is very dangerous. Drivers are required to submit student conduct reports to the school principal whenever student behavior creates an unsafe environment.

If you see something, say something: If you see or hear about anything suspicious or anything that makes you feel uncomfortable, please tell the driver.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND EVACUATIONS

During the school year, the driver will hold an emergency drill to review safe evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency. Drills are administered a minimum of three times per year, and prior to field trips and sporting events. Drills will cover the following:

- Location of the first aid kit, fire extinguisher and emergency exits.
- Instructions about how to properly exit the vehicle and use the radio to request to help.
- Strategies an older student may use to assist with emergency evacuation procedures.
- The procedure to follow in order to secure the vehicle in the event a driver becomes ill or unable to take control.
- The procedures for ensuring student accountability and safety while waiting for help to arrive.

BUS ROUTE ASSIGNMENTS

Bus stop assignments take several considerations into account, such as traffic, speed limit, road surfaces and elevation. Both bus drivers and motorists need adequate visibility and stopping distance in both directions of the bus stop.

Bus stops may be made at the individual student's residence. In more populated areas designated bus stops are assigned at a centralized location within a reasonable walking distance.

The school district and its employees are responsible for providing safe and reliable transportation for all students to and from school. Parents are responsible for getting their children to and from the bus stop safely.

Students are expected to be waiting for the bus five minutes prior to their scheduled pickup time. Routes are not designed to allow drivers extra time to wait for students.

Schalmont provides bussing to all students attending our schools as well as all students attending private or parochial schools within 15 miles of the student's residence or designated pickup assignment. Parents requesting specialized transportation to a private or parochial school must submit a "Request for Transportation form" by April 1 of the prior school year. This form may be found on the district website.

Parents requesting transportation to a babysitter or alternate location (e.g. daycare) must complete and return the request form outlined above by June 30 of the prior school year.

If a student needs to go to an alternate stop on an infrequent basis, the parent must submit a note to the school office with the day and time requested.

Bus drivers must follow assigned routes provided by the school district. Drivers will complete a dry run prior to the start of the school year to familiarize themselves with their run and designated stops. Drivers are not permitted to make any unauthorized stops or deviate from their designated route.

MORNING ROUTINES

In order to ensure a safe and orderly routine to prepare for the arrival of the bus and getting on the bus in the morning, students should:

- Arrive at the bus stop five minutes before pickup time.
- Stand back from the road at least 15 feet, but be in view of traffic.
- Refrain from playing and wait at their stop in a quiet and orderly fashion.
- Wait for the bus to stop and the door to open.

Students may be required to cross the street with the exception of kindergarten students. However, kindergartners may be allowed to cross the street with siblings with parent approval and authorization by the transportation office.

Students who must cross the road to enter the bus should wait for the bus to stop, the driver to give the signal to cross, and look both ways before walking across the street. **If the bus driver blows the horn, it means danger and the student must go back to the side of the road.**

Students and parents should not distract the driver when loading or unloading the bus.

Students should keep all personal items inside their backpacks as any loose or dangling items could get caught in the bus doors. Large items, such as skateboards or skis, present a hazard and are prohibited on the bus. Students should never retrieve an item that falls close to or under the bus. Instead, they should inform the bus driver who will take care of the situation.

Bus drivers are not responsible for "lost and found" items. However, every effort will be made to retrieve such items. Labeling your child's belongings and clothing is very helpful in guaranteeing their return. Please contact your child's school directly to inquire about any "lost and found" items.

Instruct your child to never run after a missed bus. The driver may not see your child and tragedies may result.

