



HOLTON-ARMS SCHOOL

TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK
2023 – 2024

Updated September 15, 2023

Welcome to Holton-Arms Transportation

The Holton-Arms Transportation handbook provides information concerning transportation contacts, bus routes, precautions traveling to and from the bus stop or school, behavior expectations while at the bus stop and on the bus, as well as some lifesaving emergency safety practices.

Remember, student safety is our highest priority. Working together, recognizing and understanding each other's responsibilities will help Holton-Arms and our community keep the transportation program operating smoothly.

Please familiarize yourself with the information contained within and direct questions or concerns to:

[Daryl Owens](#)

Transportation Manager Holton-Arms School

(301) 365-5300 (Main)

(301) 365-6486 (Direct)

(301) 767-2726 (Fax)

Thank you for helping us make your students transportation a safe and pleasant experience.

Daryl Owens

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Bus Routes

Bus routes and bus stops are planned annually by the School based on safety, location, accessibility, and interest of families. We continually explore expansion opportunities and welcome suggestions and comments that will assist us in better serving our families.

Routes listed below offer both morning and afternoon service; routes marked with ★ are shared with Landon School. Routes offering late (6 p.m. departure) service are noted.

- Arlington / Alexandria, VA (late option available)
- Bethesda, MD
- Capitol Hill, DC
- Cleveland Park / Spring Valley, DC (late option available)
- Friendship Heights, DC / Chevy Chase, MD (late option available)
- Germantown / Gaithersburg/Potomac Village ★
- Guy Mason / Palisades, DC
- Great Falls, VA ★ (late option available)
- McLean, VA (late option available)
- Olney / Leisure World, MD ★
- Prince George's County, MD (late option available)

A shuttle service runs between Holton-Arms and Landon Schools before and after school for Holton students who need to meet siblings at Landon School.

Annual bus fees vary by location. Families may enroll for one way (morning or afternoon) or round-trip service. Full detail on pricing, specific stop locations, and operating times are available here:

https://www.holton-arms.edu/uploaded/Transportation/Bus_Routes_Rates_SY_2023-24.pdf

Who May Ride the Bus?

For safety and security reasons, only Holton-Arms students who have registered for bus transportation through [CampBrain](#) may board the buses. Students are expected to ride the bus for which they are registered.

Student registrations are for a single seat (of a two-person bench seat) on the bus. Projects, instruments, backpacks, athletic equipment, or athletic bags should be able to fit under the student's seat or on their lap in order to be transported. All items must be secured in order to be transported. If a student needs to transport such items to school as do not fit under the seat, parents must contact the transportation office to make sure space is available, as seating is limited. If a bus is full, with no additional seats available, parents will need to transport these items to school by a different method.

Bus Changes – 24 hours' notice

On occasion, a student may need to ride a different bus than the one for which they registered. Prior authorization is required and notice is requested at least 24 hours in advance, but no later than noon the day of the change.

These requests are subject to space available; therefore, the student must wait for confirmation from the Transportation Office before riding a different bus, and only on the date(s) arranged.

The transportation office reserves the right to deny bus change requests based on space available.

If a bus change requires permission from a second family, as when a registered bus rider changes buses to ride as the guest of a registered bus rider friend on a different bus, 48 hours' notice is required, as per the Guest Rider Policy (see next section).

Submit a Bus Change request here:

https://www.holton-arms.edu/cf_forms/view.cfm?formID=1238

Should a permanent change be required, please contact the Transportation Office.

Guest Rider / Ride with a Friend – 48 hours' notice

Registered bus students may have a guest **who is not a registered bus rider** ride home with them on occasion with prior authorization and if space is available. Notice is requested at least 48 hours in advance, *but no later than noon **the day before the change.***

If a registered bus rider changes buses to ride home as the guest of a registered bus rider friend on a different bus, permission from the host parent is required.

Before a **non-registered** guest rider is permitted to ride home with a registered bus rider, **or a registered rider may ride as the guest of a friend on a different bus:**

- Parent/Guardian of the **host registered bus rider** must complete the Transportation Change and Guest Rider Request form
- Parent/Guardian of guest rider **(whether a registered bus rider or non-registered student)** must complete the Transportation Change and Guest Rider Request form
- When all forms are received and availability confirmed, email confirmation will be sent to all parties and School Divisions.

Guest rider requests are subject to space available; therefore, the guest student must **wait for confirmation** from the Transportation Office before riding the bus, and only on the date(s) arranged. The transportation office reserves the right to deny guest rider requests based on space available and timeliness of notice.

Submit a Guest Rider request here:

https://www.holton-arms.edu/cf_forms/view.cfm?formID=1238

Meeting the Bus in a Timely Manner

In the Morning

Students must be present at their bus stop location at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled departure of the bus. The morning time listed on the schedule is the time the bus will depart from the stop. The driver will arrive at the designated stop before the departure time and students should be on board the bus prior to the departure time.

Transportation schedules do not permit drivers to wait at a stop location after the departure time has passed.

In the Afternoon/Evening

Students should know their bus schedule and board the bus at least five (5) minutes prior to the time their bus departs from School. Buses depart on time and will not wait for late students.

Parents/guardians that will meet their student at the bus stop in the afternoon must be present at the bus stop location at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled drop off time. The afternoon time listed on the schedule is the time the bus is scheduled to arrive at the designated stop. Depending on traffic conditions, the bus could arrive (+/- 10) minutes before or after the scheduled arrival time.

Drivers are not permitted to delay bus routes and cannot wait for a student's parent/guardian. School buses will depart the stop after sufficient time for students to exit the bus.

Parents of Lower School students must meet their students at the door of the bus. Lower School Students are not permitted to walk alone from the bus stop.

In an Emergency

If there is an **emergency situation** that prohibits you from arriving at the bus stop in time to pick up your student in accordance with the posted schedule, please **call the transportation office at (301) 365- 6486** so that other arrangements can be made.

If you are unable to speak with anyone, please **call a member of the security team at (301) 365-5300. Be sure to speak with someone** and provide a valid call back number to confirm adjusted arrangements

Bus Behavioral Expectations

For the welfare of all students, safety rules are established, and all students and parents are required to follow them. Failure to comply with the safety rules and/or behavioral expectations could result in the termination of the bus contract and student's privilege to ride the bus. In the event a bus contract has been terminated due to behavior expectation violations, no refund will be provided.

Student Conduct

Holton-Arms School expects each student riding the bus to behave in a manner that is consistent with the School's philosophy, the Middle School and Upper School Statement of Respect, and the Lower School honor code CARES. Each student should seek to exhibit personal integrity and respectful behavior at all times. All students are expected to behave thoughtfully in their actions with fellow bus riders.

Seating

- All students must remain seated while the bus is in motion. Continuous seat switching is not permitted. Assigned seats will be provided if students are unable to remain seated during the bus ride.
- Students are expected to sit facing forward, with their feet on the floor. Students are not permitted to lay across the aisle with their feet on the seat. Students are expected to share a seat if the bus is crowded.
- Students are prohibited from extending any part of their body through the window.
- Students are prohibited from throwing items out of the window.

Talking / Noise

- Conversation volume should be low enough so as not to distract the bus driver.
- Loud, profane, obscene language and inappropriate conversations will not be tolerated.
- Students are prohibited from communicating with the public from the bus windows.
- Media such as smart phones, iPads, laptops, speakers, etc. must be used with earbuds or headphones.

Food and Beverages

Eating and drinking are not permitted unless specifically noted by the Bus Company or driver. If the Bus Company or driver allows food or beverages, students must dispose of their trash properly as they depart the bus or this privilege will be rescinded. Students will not be permitted to dispose of trash while the bus is moving.

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians are responsible for supervision of their students until the students board the school bus. Likewise, when students exit the school bus in the afternoon or evening, supervision is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for instructing their students in what to do in case their parent/guardian is not able to meet them at the bus stop. Bus drivers are unable to wait for students whose parent/guardian is not at the bus stop. Please make sure there is a back-up plan.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for having the students at the bus stop five (5) minutes ahead of the scheduled departure time. Parents and/or Guardians are responsible for driving safely and courteously in the designated bus stop area.

Progressive Discipline Practices

In the event of misconduct by any bus rider, the driver **MUST** tell the bus rider to correct his/her misbehavior on the bus.

The bus driver will report the student name and conduct to the Transportation Manager.

The Transportation Manager will:

1. Talk to the student and remind them of the bus conduct expectations.
2. Report the bus rider's misbehavior to the appropriate School Administrators.
3. If misbehavior is reported again, the bus rider may be suspended from using the bus service for up to two weeks.
4. If misbehavior persists after a suspension period is over, the bus contract will be cancelled without reimbursement.

Contact and Emergency Information

Information Sources

In the event of a widespread or weather emergency, School information will be available on the [School's website](#), via recorded message and through the School's emergency alert system.

Recorded Message dial 301-365-5300, #2.

BUSWHERE Messaging

The Transportation Office uses BusWhere messaging as its primary method of communication with families during the school year. Registered families will be provided a link to enroll. During the BusWhere secure signup, parents must provide a current email address and/or mobile phone number that they check regularly. Parents should add support@buswhere.com to their safe senders list to ensure that BusWhere messages are not blocked by their spam or content filter.

Emergency Alerts

It is essential for the School to maintain an up-to-date list of email addresses, cell and home phone numbers, and mailing addresses for each parent so that we can contact families in emergency situations. Please review your contact information periodically and update it promptly should any details change. To do so, log in to the [parent portal](#) and click on the "Update Family Profile" link on the right-hand-side of the page.

Delayed Openings and Early Dismissals

Throughout the school year, there are scheduled delayed openings for students. Bus transportation will operate on a modified schedule when the whole school is delayed (Landon included). When specific Divisions have a delay, and not the whole school, transportation will operate on a normal schedule.

Likewise, on scheduled early dismissal days for students for the whole school (Landon included), buses will operate on a modified schedule. When a specific division has an early dismissal, and not the whole school, transportation will operate on a normal schedule.

Weather Related Delays or Closings

On snow days where weather may be a factor (school closing, late opening, early closings), updated information is available through all emergency information channels. Every attempt is made to have a decision by 5:15 a.m.

School Closings

If the School is closed there will be no bus service.

Delayed Opening

If the opening of School is delayed two (2) hours, buses will also run on a two-hour delay and will pick up students at the normal stops two hours later than usual.

Early Closing

Should a weather event begin after students arrive at school, the School administration may need to end the school day early. Decisions will be made at that time about the operation of buses.

Non-Weather Emergencies

If the bus is unable to reach its final destination due to mechanical failure or any other incident that prevents the normal bus route to be completed, the school or bus company will dispatch another bus to pick-up the students and continue the bus route.

The driver is responsible for the students' supervision and/or dismissal to their parents/guardians when the bus is stopped due to mechanical failure or any other incident. The students MUST remain inside the bus at all times, unless an imminent dangerous situation requires the students to disembark.

Bus Evacuation Procedures/Drills

Maryland law requires that all schools conduct school bus emergency evacuation drills twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Every precaution must be taken to see that the procedures and behavior for leaving a school bus in case of an emergency have been discussed and practiced with all students, not just those who use the bus for home to school transportation.

Students must have practice in leaving the bus through the emergency door as well as the front door.

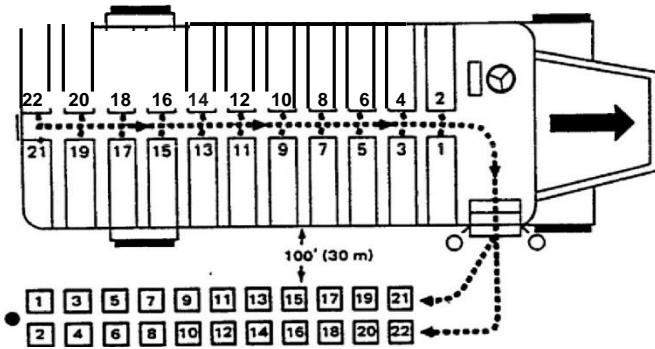
The drills must be conducted with all. Students should practice leaving the bus in an orderly manner without pausing to gather books or other personal belongings.

The emergency evacuation drill is to be conducted on Holton-Arms campus grounds. It should be noted that in a true emergency many hazards would exist on the roadways that cannot be replicated in a practice drill on campus.

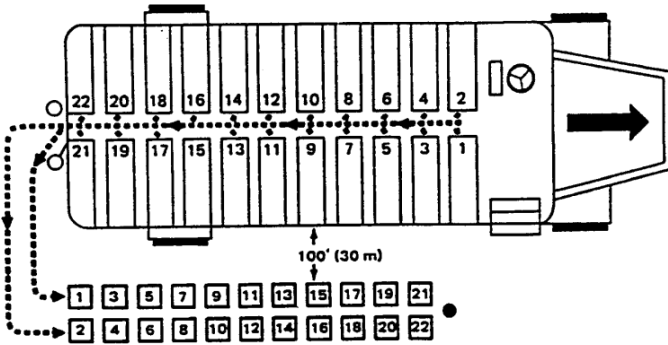
Therefore, it is extremely important to stress that appropriate conduct is expected of students once they have departed the bus.

Bus drivers will train students and conduct the drills. In order to prepare for an actual emergency, each child is encouraged to exit the bus without the aid of the bus driver. Students are instructed how to use the emergency exits, seek help, find a safe location away from the bus, and locate and use emergency equipment.

FRONT DOOR EVACUATION

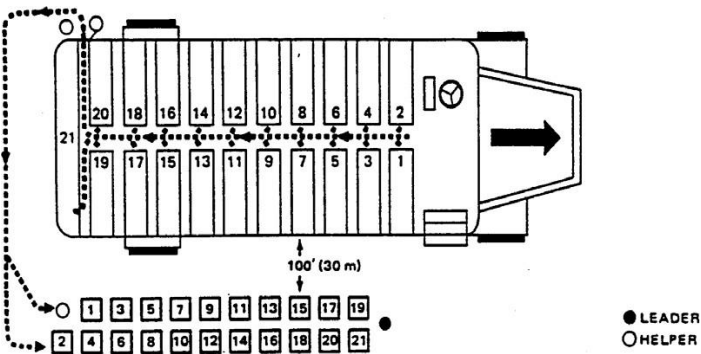


REAR DOOR EVACUATION



● LEADER
○ HELPER

SIDE DOOR EVACUATION



● LEADER
○ HELPER

Safety Guidelines

As students walk to and from their bus stop or school, it is important to be aware of, and follow some sound safety practices:

1. Be observant of your surroundings and reduce or eliminate distractions.
2. Students should make every effort to not walk alone
3. Students should walk opposite the flow of traffic.
4. If there is no sidewalk, stay as far away from the roadway as possible.
5. Do not be involved in horseplay which could allow someone to be accidentally pushed in to traffic.
6. When walking at dusk, dawn, or dark, wear light colors or reflective clothing.
7. When crossing streets, always use crosswalks when they are present.
8. Make sure drivers see you.
9. Remember to stop, listen, and look left, right, and left again, before crossing.
10. Allow plenty of time to get from home to the bus stop or school. Plan to be at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to bus departure/arrival time.
11. Wear proper clothing for weather conditions

Boarding the Bus

Arrive at the bus stop no more than ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled departure/arrival time. You must wait for the bus in a place that is safe. Board the bus in single file. Don't push or shove. Use the handrails (if equipped).

While on the Bus

1. Please have a free hand and use the handrail while boarding and/or exiting the bus.
2. Be mindful of the following items that can be stepped on, caught in the handrails, doors, etc.
 - a. Jackets or sweatshirts
 - b. Backpack, instrument or athletic bag straps
 - c. Drawstring bags
 - d. Accessories hanging onto the backpack
 - e. Scarves or other loose clothing
 - f. Untied shoe laces
3. No items can remain in the aisle of the bus.
4. No items/athletic equipment or instruments can block the emergency exit door.

Exiting the bus

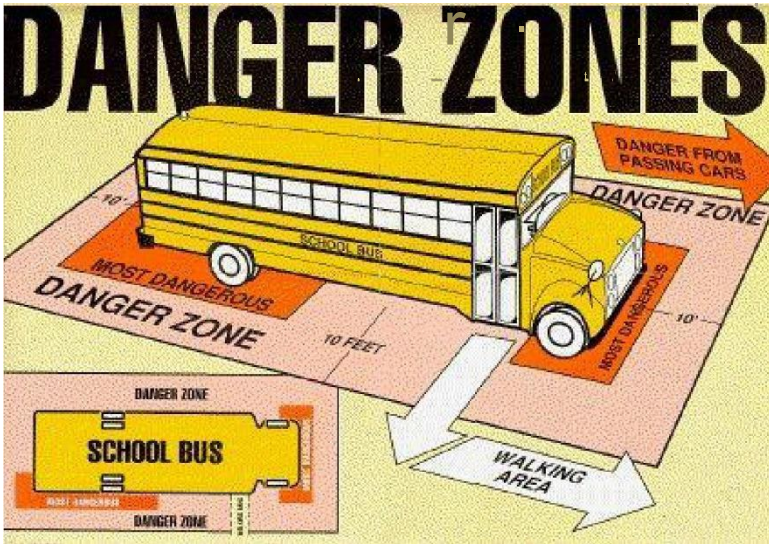
Exit the bus in single file. Don't push or shove. Take ten (10) steps away from the bus. Stay away from the bus as you head for home.

If you have to cross the road, walk to the front of the bus and remember these things:

1. Look at the driver. You should always see the driver.
2. Make sure the driver sees you.
3. To be sure that it is safe, look left, right, and left again, before crossing.

NEVER CROSS BEHIND THE BUS!

Avoid the DANGER ZONES



The Danger Zone is the space all around the school bus. It goes out ten (10) feet. The school bus driver may not see students in this zone or around the wheels, either. It is very dangerous to be in this area. It is VITAL that students be very careful when they get on or off the bus.

Children have been injured or killed playing around or reaching under buses. If something drops under the bus, **leave it there**. Let your school bus driver or another adult get it for you.



Holton-Arms School Buses

Holton-Arms School buses meet or exceed federal and state regulations. The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration - School Bus Section-Vehicle Inspection Services Department inspects them three times annually.

Unannounced random safety inspections are also conducted throughout the year by their inspectors. Our buses have high-backed, energy-absorbing seats to provide compartmentalized protection giving students a confined, cushioned area in the event of an incident or collision. Tests have proven that children are safer in school buses **when sitting properly** in these seats than in seat belts of any other vehicle. Our buses are all of high-quality construction and maintained to provide the safest ride possible.

Holton-Arms Bus Drivers

Holton-Arms bus drivers and contractors must complete a state-required training program, including classroom and behind-the-wheel training. Drivers must submit to an FBI and CJIS fingerprint background check, have a commercial driver's license, and meet Federal Department of Transportation physical requirements. They must pass pre-employment drug tests and submit to random drug and alcohol tests on a regular basis. In addition to the first aid and CPR training, mandatory classroom, behind-the-wheel school bus defensive driving and safety training courses are required.

Many students begin and end their day with a school bus ride. Student safety is the driver's primary concern. Proper loading, unloading, and enforcement of bus riding rules, are the driver's tools for maintaining student safety.