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PRESS RELEASE

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Houston County School District Recognizes the Importance of Transportation Staff and School Bus Safety



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County School District celebrated October 20 as Georgia Bus Driver and Bus Monitor Appreciation Day. Schools throughout the District used this day to say “thank you” to the bus drivers and monitors who play an important role transporting approximately 15,000 Houston County students every day and drive over 3.6 million miles annually.

“Every school day begins and ends with our bus drivers and monitors,” said Dr. Cheryl Thomas, Assistant Superintendent of School Operations. “They do so much more than transport students. They build relationships, provide reassurance, and help ensure each child arrives safely and ready to learn. We are deeply grateful for the heart they bring to this important work.”

Additionally, the District will celebrate National School Bus Safety Week (NSBSW) October 20-24. NSBSW is a great time to remind students and families to observe all safety recommendations while boarding, riding, and exiting a school bus. “Safe Rides, Everyday Heroes” is the theme for this year’s National School Bus Safety Week. Later this year, students throughout our District will participate in the Georgia Association of Pupil Transportation’s statewide Bus Safety Poster Competition with the opportunity to move forward to the national competition. Last school year, Jace Reeves, a current eighth grader at Huntington Middle School, won first place at the state and national level in the Division 4 competition.

MORE

Houston County School District Recognizes the Importance of Transportation Staff and School Bus Safety / page 2 of 2

The District shared these tips from the National Association of Pupil Transportation.

Getting Ready for School

- Have your children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
- Encourage them to wear bright, contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen by drivers.
- Make sure children leave home on time so they can arrive at the bus stop, ideally at least five minutes early. Running after or in front of a bus is dangerous.

Walking to the Bus Stop

- Walk young children to the bus stop or encourage children to walk in groups. There is safety in numbers; groups are easier for drivers to see.
- Practice good pedestrian behavior: walk on the sidewalk, and if there is no sidewalk stay out of the street. If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay as close to the edge of the road as you can.
- Stop and look left, right and then left again if you must cross the street. Do the same thing at driveways and alleys. Exaggerate your head turns and narrate your actions so your child knows you are looking left, right and left.

At the Bus Stop

- Have children wait in a location where the driver can see them while driving down the street.
- Try to avoid waiting in a house or car.
- Do not let children play in the street. Playing with balls or other toys that could roll into the street is also dangerous.

Getting On and Off the Bus

- Warn children that if they drop something getting on and off the bus, they should never pick it up. Instead, they should tell the driver and follow the driver's instructions.
- Remind children to look to the right before they step off the bus.
- If you meet your child at the bus stop after school, wait on the side where the child will be dropped off, not across the street. Children can be so excited to see you after school that they dash across the street and forget the safety rules.

For more information about the Houston County School District's Transportation Department, visit www.hcbe.net/transportation.

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