

## School System Announces New Procedures for Bus Transportation

August 1, 2017

According to the Georgia Division of Family and Children's Services, children eight years old and younger should never be left alone, even for brief periods of time. With this guideline in mind, the Douglas County School System will implement a new procedure for school bus drop-off in the afternoon. The procedure will be enforced beginning with the first day of school, August 7.

A parent or guardian must be present at the bus stop for children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and below to disembark the bus. If a student in grades K-3 has a sibling on the bus who is in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade, the younger sibling will be allowed to exit the bus with the older sibling. If a parent, guardian, or parent/guardian designee is not present at the bus stop to receive the child or if the child appears to have no appropriate supervision, the student will be taken back to the school.

The bus driver must be able to see the parent/guardian so that proper identification can be made. The parent should be at the bus stop five minutes prior to the expected bus arrival time and outside of the car. Photo identification may be required. Parents must come to the door of the bus to present proper identification as drivers are not allowed to leave the bus.

"Safety is our first priority, and we feel it is imperative that young children are properly supervised at all times," said Superintendent Trent North. "We hope parents will understand and appreciate the extra precautions we are taking this year."

A provision has been made for parents who would like for their child in grades K-3 to exit the bus at their designated stop without a parent/guardian, sibling, or authorized adult at the stop. Parents must sign a form indicating that this is their preference and that they absolve the school system of any responsibility once the child leaves the bus. Forms will be available at the elementary school Sneak-a-Peek open houses on August 3, 4:30-6:00. Forms will also be available at each elementary school.