



Dear SCS Family,

As the new school year begins, providing your child with safe and reliable transportation is our top priority, especially given the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic continues to present new and unique challenges, which we are actively working together to solve.

Our full focus this summer has been developing and implementing new safety and operating procedures to help reduce and prevent the transmission of COVID-19 on our school buses. We recognize that for parents, students and drivers to feel confident about the safety of school buses, we must ensure we are adopting the best operating protocols possible.

First Student collaborated with various government agencies, health care organizations, university research teams and school bus manufacturers to test and share information about virus dwell-time, reaction and bus decontamination methods. From this collective and extensive research, we developed our Start Safe program.

Through Start Safe we will share, promote and practice these steps to stop of spread of COVID-19. We encourage you to review school bus safety tips with your children to make the journey to and from school even safer. For additional downloadable back-to-school safety tips, please visit firststudentinc.com/start-safe-parents.

School buses are the safest way for students to get to and from school. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, school buses are 70 times safer than passenger cars and 10 times safer than walking.

In addition, your child's First Student bus driver has undergone extensive training and testing. Our drivers typically complete more than 50 hours of training before driving student passengers.

Because students start and finish their school days with us, we recognize the opportunity we have to positively impact each student's day. We are looking forward to a safe and successful school year together.

If you have any questions about your child's transportation, please call **SCS Transportation at 901-416-6077**.

Sincerely,

Stephen Wherry
Deputy Chief of Business Operations
Shelby County Schools

Adam Clary
District Manager
First Student

FAQ

Q: When will this change take effect?

A: First Student will start providing bus transportation services for SCS on Friday, July 16, 2021. This means Summer Learning Academy (SLA) students will see First Student's buses at their bus stop starting the morning of Friday, July 16, 2021.

Q: What changes will students experience?

A: First Student is replacing the district's entire fleet of buses. SCS students will be riding brand new, state-of-the-art school buses equipped with the latest technology. All 373 buses will have air conditioning, GPS tracking systems, six cameras and flashing LED stop arms with 8-way warning lights, exceeding Tennessee state specifications for yellow school buses.

Q: What should I do if my child's bus is late for pick-up or drop-off?

A: If there is more than a 5-minute delay in picking up or dropping off, contact SCS Transportation, 901-416-6077 or scstransportation@scsk12.org and/or your child's school. A single delay for any reason along a route leads to delays for all additional stops and routes. Buses may be delayed for several reasons, including but not limited to construction, traffic delays, weather, mechanical issues, and students boarding the wrong buses.

Q: Where can I learn more about First Student?

A: First Student has partnered with school districts for more than a century to deliver tailored student transportation solutions. The company is the most chosen student transportation provider in North America. Visit www.firststudentinc.com for more information.

"Safe, reliable transportation is critical to our mission to educate, empower and inspire our students," said Shelby County Schools Superintendent Dr. Joris M. Ray. "We are confident First Student will deliver the high-quality transportation services we expect, so our students arrive at school on time and ready to learn."

