

- Check inside for Outstanding Graduates
- All county schools will start in August.

See page 4.

# parentlink

A newsletter for parents published by the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation • Volume 24, Number 3, July 2009

## Former Transfer Students Use School Experiences As a Model in Their Careers

by Peggy Magee

### Attendance Specialist Pushes Students Similar to Way He was Pulled

Years ago, Charlie Bean, now 40, referred to a tug of war when describing the relationship he had with his teachers at Lindbergh High. "They were on one end pulling and pulling for me," noted the former VICC student, who coined himself the "class clown" because of his antics of not taking school seriously.

And now, some 20 years after high school and his subsequent graduation from Central Missouri State University, he uses a step ladder to explain his role as administrator at Carnahan School of the Future in the St. Louis district. "The rungs of the ladder are levels of achievement for students to climb. I am at the bottom hoisting all the Charlie Bean types up." If they slip down a rung, he's there to catch them and push them back up.

**What Charlie does** now for St. Louis students is fashioned after what was done for him at Lindbergh, he says. As Carnahan's attendance specialist, he walks the hallways chatting with students and

floats in and out of classrooms. Through these day-in, day-out interactions, Charlie is building relationships and working to be that adult who students look forward to seeing each and every day. "I want the kids to feel comfortable talking to me," he explains. "I want to be a person they will listen to and look up to."

He recalls that at Lindbergh, Dr. Don Jones, his 12th grade principal, "monitored my whereabouts," making sure he steered clear of mischief. And teacher Debra Peppers, a friend and mentor to him, had one of those faces that students "always enjoyed seeing."

At Carnahan, Charlie also serves as athletic director and recruiting specialist, a job that involves handling admission applications and enrollment. He is often the first person with whom families make contact. "He is cultivating relationships with students before they ever arrive here," notes Principal Alice Roach. "The students are prepared from day one and then the follow-up begins. People know he cares."

The school's tremendous rise in attendance rates over the last few years is testament to Charlie's caring ways. He reaches out to not only chronically absent students but to those who have a mostly good track record of getting to school and arriving on time. His guiding principle, passed down from Dr. Roach is "what gets monitored, gets done," meaning that students will generally meet expectations if there is someone in their court keeping a close eye on them.

**Charlie's proactive approach**, the extensive data base he relies on and support from social workers, counselors and other administrators have resulted in a significant boost in attendance. So much so that the district's Special Administrative Board allocated monies to adopt the Carnahan prototype by placing attendance officers in 10 other city high schools.

Charlie entered the Lindbergh district in the eighth grade but he wishes he could have been there his whole education. "I loved all the students and developed great relationships with them, adding that he still keeps in touch with some of them via Facebook. He remembers vividly that on his graduation day he had a hard time holding back tears "because I didn't want to leave that school."

Despite Charlie's high praise for his alma mater, he believes students can get what they need from whatever school they attend. "No matter where you go, there are opportunities if you opt to take advantage of them."

### Urban Reformer Works to Bring to the City What She Had in the County

Trina Clark James' education in the Clayton district dates back 25 years and yet it continues to be the driving force behind her professional goals. "The education I received in Clayton set the standard for what I would like to see available in all communities," notes the former VICC student, 37, whose unwavering commitment to urban education helped bring a highly-regarded charter public school model to St. Louis.

**Trina's endeavor** to open KIPP St. Louis (Knowledge Is Power Program) has spanned several years and required her to mobilize her home community, garnering support from civic, corporate and educational leaders alike. In heading up the effort to put together a winning application, she applied the organizational, managerial and analytical skills she has culled over the last 20 years. Her arsenal of tools includes two degrees in engineering (one from Georgia Institute of Technology; the other from Stanford University), successful employment in the software engineering field, as well as an MBA with a concentration in nonprofit management (from University of California at Davis).

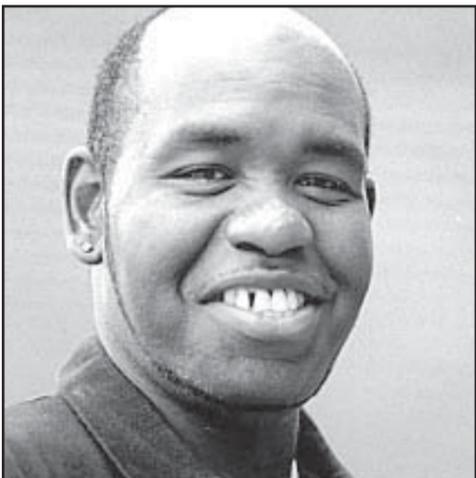
Armed with that MBA, she was accepted in the Broad Foundation residency program in urban education and assigned to the St. Louis school district. The program seeks to improve urban public and charter school systems by using best business practices. She requested serving in St. Louis because "I wanted to come back and be part of what I saw were real reform efforts."

**She worked** on many different projects for the St. Louis school district before changing gears and heading up SUTAK (St. Louisans United To Attract KIPP). Through her visits to KIPP academies in other cities, she was impressed with KIPP's "no shortcuts" philosophy of educating children. As a result of her strong leadership, KIPP St. Louis opened July 13 with 95 fifth graders in the former St. Francis de Sales school building at Ohio and Gravois in south St. Louis. The plan is for it to become a grade 5-8 school by adding a new fifth grade class each year. It is the seed school for a network of KIPP elementary, middle and high schools being planned, eventually serving upwards of 1500 St. Louis students.

Fueling Trina is her strong belief that the quality of education in urban areas should not be compromised. Growing up in the Ville, St. Louis' most

historically significant African-American neighborhood, she resented the fact that she had to travel outside her home community for school. "Why can't I get what I need here?" she wondered, trying hard to stifle her irritation.

**But her drive** to succeed was stronger than her bitterness and so she put forth her best effort at Clayton, taking full advantage of its opportunities. And now her desire is that the major components of her Clayton education exist in all St. Louis schools, specifically academic rigor, resources and a college-focused culture. At Clayton, she says, "Both the variety of courses available as well as the content and instruction provided within the courses were intellectually stimulating and challenging." As for resources, "Every school should have access to information about college, programs that would accelerate and/or enhance learning experiences, as well as basic tangible items such as textbooks for everyone in good condition, equipment for gym, art,



As attendance specialist at Carnahan School of the Future, Charlie Bean greets students each morning and continues to keep an eye on them throughout the day. The former voluntary transfer student says he is building relationships with the teenagers just as his own principal and teachers did with him at Lindbergh High. Photo by Marilyn Zimmerman



Despite initially showing resistance to attending Clayton schools, former VICC student Trina Clark James says she greatly benefited from it and now works to bring that calibre of education to the city. "I wouldn't even know to strive for that had I not experienced a Clayton education," she notes. Photo by Marilyn Zimmerman

shop and other non-core classes." Finally, she believes all schools should possess a culture "in which the expectation to attend college is the norm."

While Trina presently serves as acting executive director of KIPP St. Louis, once a permanent director is hired, her work for KIPP will be completed. But her work for St. Louis school children will not be. She intends to start her own K-8 charter public school that will incorporate "the best practices of everything I've seen." She recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Walton Family Foundation toward the planning of the school, to be located in her old neighborhood, the Ville. About her contributions to urban education in St. Louis, Trina reveals, "What has driven me from day one is my interest in making sure there is quality education in the Ville."

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## Advice for Voluntary Transfer Families

### from Trina

- Whether you are happy or not about attending your school, focus your attention and energy on making the most of the situation. Later in life, you'll see the benefits especially if you check your attitude at the door and view the experience as the opportunity that it is.
- Enroll in advanced placement courses if you qualify. You might place out of some college courses or have an edge in others. "I tested out of History and English which saved me time and money."
- The interactions you have with people of other cultures and backgrounds will serve you well in life so be open to those relationships.

### from Charlie

- School attendance and punctuality are imperative. "It's that simple, if kids aren't there, they can't benefit."
- Students are best served if they get involved in after school activities. It's a chance to get to know other students better and to discover what interests them. Also, they must be open to other people. It may be hard at first for them to step outside their comfort zone, but once they acclimate, it's all good.
- Parents should get to know who is working with their child. Stop in at the school, observe what is going on, talk to the teachers. Education is a partnership between the student, the school and the parents.

# Outstanding Graduates

This issue of the Parent Link is dedicated to those transfer students who are members of the

## Class of 2009—

hardworking students who have left behind an enviable record of accomplishments. For each student who is mentioned, there are scores of others also deserving of recognition. Our congratulations go not only to the students, but their parents and teachers as well. You are at the heart of this program and an important part of the success it has achieved.

### Affton

#### Affton High School

Active in varsity sports and the student newspaper, **Nicholas Henderson-Meekins** plans to enroll in Ranken Tech and hopes to join the military or work at a major automotive company. With a love of cars and a talent for repairing them, he would like to start his own automotive customization shop some day.

### Bayless

#### Bayless High School

**Michael Loseille** has been in the honors program at Bayless High School since his freshman year. His dedication to his school work and future has consistently placed him in the top of his class. He participated in the World Quest Trivia competition at the University of Missouri-St. Louis and was part of the Diversity Club, which he takes pride in as the only Haitian student at Bayless High. His honors include being named outstanding senior in math and in German, being recognized for four years of perfect attendance and receiving the college prep certificate, the Presidential Award and Cum Laude honors. Michael will pursue a degree in engineering at Saint Louis University this fall.

### Brentwood

#### Brentwood High School

**Jamil Noble** will graduate with a 3.78 grade point average, ranking 12 out of 59 in his class. He earned a 26 on his ACT, and plans to major in accounting at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The recipient of the business school's most prestigious scholarship, The Pettus Scholarship, which covers full tuition, room and board along with a stipend for five years, Jamil was also selected as a Brooks Scholar, which will involve him in minority leadership activities and community outreach to minority students still in high school. His high school activities included the National Honor Society, the Diversity Club, community service activities and he served as senior class treasurer.

### Clayton

#### Clayton High School

A genuine scholar-athlete, **Adam Banks** successfully combined a rigorous curriculum, including both honors and AP courses, with active involvement in football, as the starting quarterback. Adam consistently earned A's and B's in every class he took and earned a spot on Clayton's TEAMS competitors and was inducted into the National Honors Society as a junior. He will be majoring in pre-med at Washington University this fall with the help of a full scholarship.

A well-rounded academic leader, **Fontasha Powell** served as senior managing editor of Clayton's award-winning Globe newspaper, drum major in the symphonic band, performed with the jazz band and played four years on both the basketball and soccer teams. The recipient of a full scholarship, she will be majoring in pre-med at Duke University this fall.

### Hancock Place

#### Hancock High School

Student Council president **Brittany Conners** was selected to give the student address at commencement and will enter the honors' program at Saint Louis University this fall to study bio-medical engineering. Her goal is to build artificial limbs, pacemakers and other life saving medical devices. Graduating with a 3.6 grade point average, Brit was a member of the varsity basketball and volleyball for four years, and competed for two years in soccer and one year in cross country. She was a member of HiSteps, DECA and the A+ program.

### Kirkwood

#### Kirkwood High School

An honor student with a 3.86 grade point average, **Traonna Clark** has been a star in the classroom and on the playing field. She challenged herself with honors and advanced placement courses and earned the Gold K Academic Honor Award for students who have maintained a 3.5 or higher grade point average while shining on the baseball field, basketball court and track. Chosen as a member of the friendship and prom courts, she plans to continue her education at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she will major in engineering.

### Ladue

#### Horton Watkins High School

**Chris Trotter** has thrived at Ladue Horton Watkins High School. A standout in the classroom, he followed a rigorous curriculum each year, including the challenge of three advanced placement courses. Outside the classroom, Chris has been a four-year member of Ladue's orchestra and an active leader of the Ladue African-American Student Association. Chris had his choice of many colleges, and will attend Morehouse College in Atlanta this fall. He plans to study biology.

### Lindbergh

#### Lindbergh High School

**Latifa Robinson** plans to attend college after graduation, and will major in nursing. She graduates with a 2.7 grade point average and was very involved in school and community activities – including RAD (Reaching Adolescent Drivers), ABC (Attitude, Behavior, Character) Club, I Choose Success, Green Machine Spirit Club, Character Council and served as a volunteer in the library and at her church.

### Mehlville

#### Mehlville High School

A leader on and off the athletic field, **Tyrone Clark** will head to the University of Northern Illinois this fall to play football for the NUI Huskies with the help of a full scholarship. Respected by his peers and someone who leads by example, Tyrone graduates with a string of athletic awards, including second team all-state running back in 2007, all-metro linebacker in 2007 and 2008. In track, he won all-state track honors on the 4 X 100 relay team in 2007. He was also a member of Mehlville's DECA Business Club.

### Oakville High School

The recipient of a full ride athletic scholarship to Missouri State University in Springfield, **Keith Pickens** earned numerous athletic recognitions while a student at Oakville, including being named first team all-state by the coaches and the media, recognized as a McDonald's All-American nominee, named first team all-conference, all-district and academically eligible with the NCAA Eligibility Center in basketball and track.

### Parkway

#### Parkway Central High School

**Veon Harris** was recognized as a student leader at Parkway Central High. A member of the varsity basketball team, Veon held himself to a high standard of honesty, trustworthiness and kindness.

#### Parkway North High School

**Denae Williams** has been a leader at Parkway North – serving as a peer teacher, member of the marching band, steppers, High School Hero and Life Quest participant at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Despite the demands of her many activities and community volunteering, Denae maintained a 3.6 grade point average. She plans to become a nurse.

### Parkway South High School

**Deonte Pierson** is an excellent young man and student who worked hard throughout high school, selecting challenging classes each year. His quiet passion for learning earned him a 3.1 grade point average. With a strong interest in business, Deonte plans to major in accounting in college.

#### Parkway West High School

**Ericus Williams** epitomizes all that is good with young people today – he is kind, responsible and respectful of his peers and adults. He was a member of West's boys volleyball team.

### Pattonville

#### Pattonville High School

A member of the Ameren UE Program at North Technical High School, **Joel Hunt** will earn a welding certificate and hopes to be hired by Ameren UE upon graduation and/or join the Iron Workers Union. A hard working student, Joel earned the citizenship award both his junior and senior years, perfect attendance his junior year and an English award his senior year.

### Rockwood

#### Eureka High School

**Antonio Evans** earned an athletic scholarship to Arizona Western College in Yuma this fall. As the recipient of the all-conference recognition for football, Antonio also received awards for perfect attendance and academic achievement. He prepared for his future through courses in law and justice that have steered him toward his college major of criminal justice.

#### Lafayette High School

**Di Ann Anderson** has earned high academic honors, while taking challenging science courses such as human anatomy, physics and biology. This outstanding senior plans to attend Saint Louis University to become a physical/recreational therapist. Her goal is to become the best in her field, and she has proven that she has the drive with four years of consistent placement in the high school's Renaissance program.

### Marquette High School

A student leader, **Jaronda Williams** served as president of her senior class and vice-president her junior year. Active in many sports and clubs, including track and field, Marquette Renaissance, Teens for a Cure and the Successful Women's Group, Jaronda selected challenging courses, including advanced placement classes. She plans to attend Truman State University to major in political science as she advances her plan to become a lawyer and a future president of the United States.

#### Rockwood Summit High School

**Charmekque Harbert** prepared for her college and future career through her cadet teaching experiences. Accepted at Southeast Missouri State University, she plans to major in early childhood education. Her goal is to become a kindergarten teacher. Her high school accomplishments include the Falcon Flight Award, along with other academic recognitions. She was an active leader in the TREND group, Teenage Health Consultants and track and field.

### Valley Park

#### Valley Park High School

With plans to major in business administration, **Kaylin Deloney** will be attending St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, with the help of a basketball scholarship. Named the best offensive player in 2008, Kaylin was a member of the student newspaper staff.

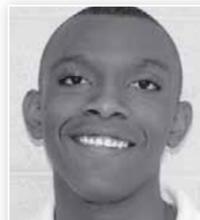
### Webster Groves

#### Webster Groves High School

**Makayla Davis** spent her entire academic career in Webster Groves and enjoyed the focus on academics. She successfully completed the A+ School program. She loves children and did several hours of volunteer service with kindergarten students at Avery School. Her goal is to become a pediatrician and to accomplish that she plans to begin college at the St. Louis Community College at Meramec and then transfer to either Southeast Missouri State University or Elmhurst College.



Nicholas Henderson-Meekins  
Affton High School



Michael Loseille  
Bayless High School



Brittany Conners  
Hancock High School



Chris Trotter  
Ladue Horton Watkins High School



Latifa Robinson  
Lindbergh High School



Tyrone Clark  
Mehlville High School



Keith Pickens  
Oakville High School



Deonte Pierson  
Parkway South High School



Joel Hunt  
Pattonville High School



Antonio Evans  
Eureka High School



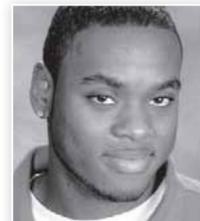
Di Ann Anderson  
Lafayette High School



Jaronda Williams  
Marquette High School



Charmekque Harbert  
Rockwood Summit High School



Kaylin Deloney  
Valley Park High School



Makayla Davis  
Webster Groves High School

## Message from the CEO

### Differences... Great and Small

I had a rare opportunity on a recent weekend to fly from St. Louis to a distant mid-western city.

Indeed, I was even fortunate enough to snag a window seat assignment. It was like soaring with the eagles, but without the wind in your face! What a view!

I peer from my portal and behold the beautiful brown and green squares and rectangles and infinite other geometrical shapes passing below, stretching in every direction as far as the eye could see. Every shape is different, some large and some small, some long and some squat, some curved and some straight, some dark and green and lush and others barren and brown, some tamed and shaped by human encroachment and some still stubbornly remaining wild and untouched.

Yet, for all these differences, each one is part of God's earth and each one is connected to all of the others. Some linked directly, like to the ones right "next door" and some linked indirectly, hundreds or even thousands of miles apart. Not one stands completely alone. In fact, each one is ultimately connected to ALL others by virtue of roads and streams and utility lines and even the air. Each one different and unique and beautiful in its own way and yet all similar in other respects.

And from my perspective, passing 25,000 feet above at 600 miles per hour, I can't help but think how people are much the same way. Sure, each one of us is different and unique – people come in all various shapes, sizes, colors, personalities, interests, abilities . . . But we are also the same in many ways too. We all share this planet. We all breathe its air, drink of its water, eat of its harvest. We all love our children, and we all want to feel like we make a difference.

Whether this difference is big or small isn't the point. Small differences today tend to turn into BIG differences tomorrow. Small differences 25 years ago at the Lindbergh School District prepared Charlie Bean to make a BIG difference in student attendance at Carnahan School today.

Small differences 25 years ago at the Clayton School District prepared Trina Clark James to make a BIG difference in the educational opportunities for students in the "Ville" neighborhood of St. Louis City today.

And if that's not enough to convince you, try this. Take a penny and double it every day for just 30 days. That's starting pretty small, isn't it? The progression would be 2¢, then 4¢, then 8¢, then 16¢, then 32¢, then 64¢. You get the idea. Want to know how much you will have just 30 days after starting with a "small difference" of one cent?

Over \$10 million!

Hmm . . . that's enough to easily be seen even from five miles above traveling at near supersonic speed, don't you think? ! ? !



Bruce Ellerman  
CEO

# VICC Staff

## Ready to Assist Transferring Families

The Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) staff includes five full-time counselors/social workers who can assist families with issues related to their school transfers.

Counselors are happy to respond to concerns and/or questions from parents or students regarding any issue that would interfere with the success of a child in the school setting, such as attendance, disciplinary issues, curriculum, achievement or other concerns. They can also provide counseling assistance for students and help parents understand their educational rights.

Counselors generally are assigned according to the first letter of the student's last name. They can be reached by calling 314.721.8422, and dialing the extension number below, or via email.



**A-D Vickie Williams**  
ext. 3011  
vwilliams@choicecorp.org



**E-H Laverne Mitchom**  
ext. 3020  
lmitchom@choicecorp.org



**I-M Jennifer Christy**  
ext. 3021  
jchristy@choicecorp.org



**N-R Mildred Scott**  
ext. 3027  
mscott@choicecorp.org



**S-Z Mary Schafer Meehan**  
ext. 3016  
mmeehan@choicecorp.org

The counselors will begin a parent help column, "Ask the Counselor," which will be included in regular VICC parent publications. Please call or email any questions that you would like to have answered to any of the counselors. If you are emailing, please include "Ask the Counselor" as your subject line.

## Contact Persons for Voluntary Student Transfer Program Families

Each of the districts accepting voluntary transfer students has a designated contact person. Contact persons coordinate the district's administrative responsibilities for the transfer program, and serve as the liaison between the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) and the district.

Contact persons' responsibilities may include enrolling transfer students, conducting orientations for new students and parents, processing applications and submitting transportation requests.

Contact persons are often the first individual from the district that a new transfer family meets, and they are a valuable resource for transfer families. They can answer specific questions about district policy and procedures and can refer parents to the proper school administrator if necessary.

### Affton

Ms. Marcie Burkemper  
314.849.5566

### Bayless

Mr. Bill Smith  
314.256.8664

### Brentwood

Mr. David Faulkner  
Ms. Colleen Lohbeck  
314.962.4507

### Clayton

Ms. Dorothy Kelly  
314.854.6404

### Hancock Place

Mrs. Lisa Charles  
314.544.1300, ext. 411

### Kirkwood

Dr. Shirleas Washington  
314.213.6105

### Ladue

Ms. Barb Myers  
314.983.5333

### Lindbergh

Mr. Chuck Triplett  
314.729.2400, ext. 1815

### Mehlville

Dr. Brian Lane  
314.467.5220

### Parkway

Ms. Michelle Wiley  
314.415.8065  
Dr. Charlotte Ijei  
314.415.5063

### Pattonville

Dr. Donette Green  
314.213.8090  
Ms. Helen Weissler  
314.213.8075

### Rockwood

Mr. Terry Harris  
636.861.7715

### Valley Park

Mrs. Vickie Pardeck  
636.923.3614

### Webster Groves

Ms. Gayle Hennessey  
314.918.4378

### Special School District

Mrs. Mary Lee Burlemann  
314.989.8125

## New Emergency Communication System

To improve communication with parents regarding transportation and their child's participation in the St. Louis Student Transfer Program, the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation has instituted a telephone broadcast system, similar to ones used in many participating school districts.

This system, provided by School Reach, allows VICC to quickly send all households and parents a pre-recorded message by phone within minutes of a transportation emergency or unplanned event that could significantly delay a child's pick-up for or drop-off from school. These emergencies include traffic jams, bus breakdowns, inclement weather, accidents, Highway 40 construction delays, etc. The service may also be used from time-to-time to communicate general program announcements or reminders.

This system will simultaneously call a home and one additional emergency number for each student's family who needs to be contacted and will deliver a message from Tami Webb, transportation operations manager, or another official with the transfer program. Calls will be delivered to both live (in person) responders and answering machines. Calls not answered and busy signals will be automatically retried by the system two additional times in 15 minute intervals after the initial call.

Your child's school will also continue to separately announce school closings due to snow or weather, via the media or their own phone system. However, in the event your child's district is open, but road conditions are such that VICC's transportation department feels it is not safe to transport students to school, VICC would use this separate system to notify families attending the affected districts in addition to making the standard media announcements.

For this notification system to best operate, it is imperative that you keep your school aware of any future changes in your home and/or emergency phone numbers. Your school then updates VICC's parent contact records so a separate notification to VICC is not necessary.

## Starting Dates for County Schools

Classes will begin soon in your county school. Make plans now to be at school every day, beginning on the very first day. Watch your mailbox for your bus card about one week prior to the beginning of classes. The first day of school for each county district is listed below:

Affton	August 19	Mehlville	August 18
Bayless	August 25	Parkway	August 17
Brentwood	August 13	Pattonville	August 13
Clayton	August 17	Rockwood	August 18
Hancock Place	August 20	Special/Tech	August 13
Kirkwood	August 19	Valley Park	August 18
Ladue	August 17	Webster Groves	August 18
Lindbergh	August 18		

## Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) complies fully with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a law that affords parents and students 18 years of age and older with certain rights with respect to the student's educational records.

A copy of VICC's FERPA statement is included in VICC student handbooks, which can be requested by calling 314.721.8422, ext. 3012. The handbooks are also available on the VICC website at [www.choicecorp.org](http://www.choicecorp.org). Click on the link for "City Residents Currently Enrolled in County Schools," and then click on "Voluntary Transfer Program Handbook." The full policy will be published in the next issue of the *Parent Link*.

## Transportation Information

Transportation to and from school is provided by the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation so long as your child goes to a school in the correct attendance area. The phone number for the transportation staff is **314.721.8657**.

Transportation cards with the bus stop location and time are mailed to all transfer families about two weeks before school begins in the fall. If you do not receive your card by one week before the start of school, contact the principal at the school your child will be attending. Please do not call the transportation staff. After the regular school year begins, new cards will be mailed only if it is necessary to make a change to the bus/cab route. Please review each new card carefully, including the effective date, stop location and times and destroy all old cards.

Any day-to-day transportation problems or concerns you may have should be addressed by first calling the bus (or cab) contractor.

These include normal operating issues, such as the following:

- ▶ Checking time of bus/cab pick-up or drop-off
- ▶ Looking for lost items left on the bus
- ▶ Checking on activity bus location
- ▶ Checking to see if child is on bus/cab.

Refer to your child's bus card for the appropriate bus/cab company.

If the contractor is unable to resolve a concern, or if you have one of the following issues, then call the VICC transportation staff at 314.721.8657:

- ▶ Overall routing issues or concerns
- ▶ Pick-up or drop-off location concerns
- ▶ On-going concerns with driver or contractor that you could not resolve by working directly with them.
- ▶ Requesting taxi or other alternative transportation service in the event your regular bus does not show.

## Student Responsibilities

Students are to board their bus/cab only at their assigned stop. They **must arrive at their designated pick-up location 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time, and remain at least 15 minutes after the pick-up time**, before calling the transportation staff at 314.721.8657 for advice on alternative transportation. If your children are not at the bus stop a full 10 minutes before the scheduled arrival time and do not wait the full 15 minutes after the scheduled time and they miss the bus, it will be your responsibility to get them to school. The transportation staff does not send alternative transportation in such instances.

For the safety of all children, students must obey general safety rules as well as those established by the school district they are attending. You should obtain a copy of your district's bus regulations and review them with your child. Violations of bus rules can result in a student being removed from riding the bus either on a temporary or permanent basis. If a bus suspension occurs, it becomes the parents' responsibility to transport the child to and from school for the duration of the suspension.

## Parent Responsibilities

Transportation may run late and/or routes may not be firmly in place during the first few weeks of school. Please make sure your child knows exactly what to do if his or her bus does not arrive. This includes knowing where to go and whom to call. Also make sure your child knows what is expected when he or she is dropped off at the end of the school day. If you normally meet your child at the bus stop, be sure your child understands what to do if you are not there.

If the transportation route to which your child is assigned does not operate in a timely manner, or other problems arise, please communicate individually with the building principal where your child attends.

It is important for parents to keep the school as well as the district contact person informed of **any changes in either the home phone number or the emergency phone number** for your child. Also, be sure to request that this information be forwarded to the transportation staff.

## If You Move

If you move during the summer, call the principal at the school your child has been or will be attending, or that district's contact person immediately. All districts have central office personnel who work during the summer to handle such situations. Please remember, **it takes up to 10 working days to make a transportation change**. If you are going to move during the academic year, be sure to notify your building principal or district contact person at least two weeks before you move. If you move outside of your school's attendance area, you will need to request a transfer to a school in your new attendance area, or else provide your own transportation in order to remain at your original school.

## General Safety Rules

Please review the general safety rules with your student. These can be found in your transfer program handbook. Please refer to the box below if you need a copy of the handbook.

## Student Safety

Help us protect your children as they travel to and from school. Certain types of children's clothing can create a hazard as your child exits the bus. Especially dangerous are jacket and sweatshirt drawstrings, long backpack straps, long scarfs or any other loose clothing. Such clothing could become caught in the bus handrail, door or other bus equipment as the child exits the bus. Please take the time to check your children's clothing. Also talk with your child about the behavior and safety rules.

## Trespass Policy

To bolster the safety of students riding busses to school, the VICC Board adopted the following trespass policy:

"Trespass occurs when anyone boards a school bus without prior approval from VICC. Any VICC-designated person (including students), contractor or school staff whose job responsibilities require him/her to be on a school bus shall be authorized and not be considered trespassing. Only with prior approval from VICC or a contractor may any parent, guardian or member of the general public be allowed on a bus at any time."

**Review the transportation sections in the Voluntary Transfer Program Handbook (pages 9 - 19) with your child before the start of school.**

*If you need a handbook, please call 314.721.8422, ext. 3012, or visit our website: [www.choicecorp.org](http://www.choicecorp.org).*