

- 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 25, Number 3, July 2010

## Parkway Shapes Life of Transfer Student: *Back Then and Now as a Teacher*

by Peggy Magee

*For Ericka Webb, 28, the Parkway district is a gift that keeps on giving.*

The former voluntary transfer student who describes her childhood as “tumultuous,” says she was a “terror” at school and always in “lots and lots” of trouble. But thanks to an educational environment that she was drawn to and understanding faculty who helped her take control of her life, Ericka not only graduated from Parkway Central High but headed to college. From Lindenwood University she received a degree in French, a subject she was introduced to at Parkway Central Middle School.

She still uses her French in a volunteer capacity, but now possesses a greater calling as a result of reconnecting with Parkway. In

August, 2008 she was hired by the district as a teacher assistant, in charge of the in-school suspension program at Parkway Central Middle. That job, she says, has fulfilled her “in a way that is almost inexplicable.” Her purpose in life now is to help struggling youth change the direction of their lives.

Ericka vividly remembers how torn she was moving between her two contrasting worlds—her dysfunctional home life in a “bad news” neighborhood and a far away school life, which presented a nagging reminder of her unlucky lot in life. She draws from those experiences in her work with the VICC students at her school. It is her ability to connect with them that has made her such a valuable staff member, according to assistant principal Randy Eikel. “Ericka can get real with her students because she has walked in their shoes. She doesn’t allow them to use their home life as a crutch or an excuse. Instead, she works with them on strategies to improve and does so in such a caring way. She has found great satisfaction in her role of helping turn kids around.”

So much so that Ericka hopes at some point to pursue a master’s degree in counseling. (Currently she is working on a second bachelor’s degree, in secondary education.) Among the school staff who has encouraged her to do so is counselor Mary Allhoff. “Ericka has a gift for developing relationships with students and coaching them through their problems. She would make a remarkable counselor.” In meetings that Allhoff has with her students from the city, she sometimes includes Ericka in the conversation. “Ericka understands their experiences in a way that I can’t.”

Ericka knows now that as a troubled youth, she needed to separate her home life from her school life and not bring to school the negativity and anger she felt at home. She encourages her own students to open up about their problems and helps them draw that boundary. “I tell them to gravitate to what is good in their lives and use it to their benefit,” she explains. “I remind them what an opportunity they have here.”



Ericka Webb, a teacher assistant at Parkway Central Middle School, draws on her own experiences in the VICC program to build relationships with city students and help them succeed. Here she chats with Melia Ballard who describes Mrs. Webb as “the best.” Photo by Marilyn Zimmerman

## Keys to Success for Parents from *Ericka*

- Get involved with the school from Day ONE. Attend all orientations and meetings.
- Get to know the teachers, counselors and administrators who work with your child. Putting a face to a name leads to more effective communication.
- Make routine visits to the school, at least one per semester. This will allow you to see a typical day in the school life of your child and equip you with information necessary to offer suggestions to the teacher or address concerns. (Be sure to talk to the school secretary about visiting policies.)
- Communicate with your child. Ask about their daily experiences such as bus ride, social interactions, changes in routine, upcoming tests, future goals, etc. Talk with them about your expectations and what you can do to help them achieve their personal goals. Remember, your child’s success is not just the responsibility of the school; YOU share in that responsibility. Your child needs YOU most of all.
- Encourage your children to get involved so that they develop a sense of belonging at the school, critical for a positive experience. If it doesn’t appear that your child is interested in any school related activities or programs, ask the school counselor for a copy of the programs offered and make a few suggestions.
- Support your child. Be present at awards ceremonies, athletic competitions, plays and other school programs. When children see you supporting their activities, they feel a sense of pride which causes them to work even harder.

As a student at Parkway Central High, Ericka got involved with the step team. “I was the team captain. I loved it!” Last school year she started a step team at Parkway Central Middle, one of only a couple middle schools in the area to have one. Originally a troupe for females, the buzz about it at school has escalated to the point where some males have expressed an interest, so it may be open to all seventh and eighth graders next year. After joining the club, grade, behavior and citizenship standards must be maintained. About her step team, Ericka notes, “It builds

self-confidence and makes the kids want to keep their grades up. It’s another way for me to connect with them.”

Ericka jokes that she has come “full circle” from when she started her education at Parkway’s River Bend Elementary School more than 15 years ago. She is now happily married with a young daughter enrolled in the gifted program of another district. “I love the work I do, helping students create a plan to change their lives,” she says. “Parkway blessed me to become the person I am today. I am glad that I help the next generation.”

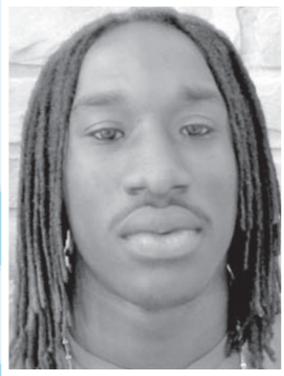
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### Follow VICC on Twitter and win great prizes. [twitter.com/VICC\\_StLouis](https://twitter.com/VICC_StLouis)

- Be follower #100 and win a **\$25 gift card to Best Buy.**
- Be follower #500 and win an **I-Pod Shuffle.**
- Be follower #1,000 and win an **I-Pod Shuffle and an I-Tunes gift card.**

VICC/Transpar employees and their families are not eligible for prizes (but please do follow along to see what’s new with VICC.) Anyone found to use multiple accounts to enter will be ineligible.



**Markus Golden**  
Affton High School



**Dominique Lucas**  
Brentwood High School



**Essence Carter**  
Clayton High School



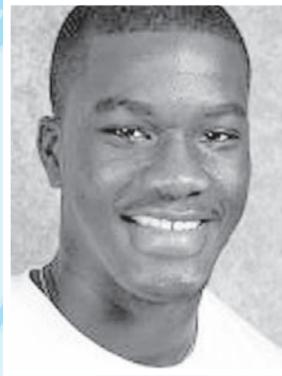
**Alozie Onwumere**  
Clayton High School



**Shyniece Ferguson**  
Kirkwood High School



**Halston Hutchison**  
Parkway South High School



**Elijah Jackson**  
Eureka High School



**Christie Holland**  
Lafayette High School



**Ariel Peterson**  
Marquette High School

## Affton

### Affton High School

Graduating as the holder of numerous athletic records and honors, as well as the respect of his teachers, coaches and peers, **Markus Golden** will major in business at the College of the Sequoias in California this fall, with the help of a football scholarship. Named to All-Conference, All-State and All-Metro as both a linebacker and running back he set numerous Affton High records for rushing yards, tackles and career points. Markus was also honored as the Suburban East player of the year, named the U.S. Army Ironman of the Week and one of the St. Louis Rams Top 25 athletes in the area. He maintained a 3.0 grade point average for the last two years and served as a leader both on and off the field.

## Brentwood

### Brentwood High School

As a result of pursuing a rigorous math and science curriculum in pursuit of her dream to become a forensic pathologist, **Dominique Lucas** earned a competitive academic scholarship to Avila University in Kansas City. A dynamic student leader at Brentwood, she was involved in many clubs and organizations, including National Honor Society, Student Council, the diversity club, the book club, Art Works, Friends of Rachel

and theatre. Dominique also served as captain of the softball team and donated countless hours in numerous school and community service projects, while maintaining a 3.5 grade point average. A project she is most proud of was the powerful black history month assembly held this year.

## Clayton

### Clayton High School

With plans to major in forensic and biomedical sciences, **Essence Carter** will attend Barry University in Miami, Florida this fall. The recipient of an award from the State of Missouri for equality, Essence was involved at Clayton High and in her community as vice president of the Black Student Union, a cheerleader, president of her class during her junior year and she served as homecoming princess.

**Alozie Onwumere** plans to attend Cornell University and will major in biological sciences to help him toward his goal of attending medical school. Among his activities at Clayton High are the Impact Leadership Team and both the track and football teams. He received the Scholar Athlete Award, participated in the 2008 Missouri Scholars Academy and earned the Cornell Book Award.

## Hancock Place

### Hancock Place High School

Ranking in the top ten percent of her graduating class with a cumulative grade point average of 3.69, **Adrienne Thomas** plans to join the Marine Corps and then pursue a college degree. She had outstanding attendance and earned an A+ scholarship. Among her high school activities was the National Honor Society, Future Business Leaders of America and the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America.

## Kirkwood

### Kirkwood High School

**Shyniece Ferguson**, who attended Kirkwood schools since second grade, is considered a shining star both in and out of the classroom. With a 3.87 grade point average, she challenged herself with numerous advanced placement classes and earned the Gold K award which is presented to students who have maintained a 3.5 or better grade point throughout their four years of high school. She was involved in a myriad of activities, serving as a leader in most, including serving as president of Empowering Women and the Black Achievement and Cultural Club. Shyniece will attend the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio where she received a major scholarship

## Lindbergh

### Lindbergh High School

**Kristina Daniels** has been a leader throughout her four years at Lindbergh High, serving as corresponding secretary and community service chair for Student Council, and as a volunteer on Link Crew, an organization that pairs upperclassmen with freshmen to help them transition to high school. She also danced on Lindbergh's Flygirls dance team for four years and was team captain. Kristina also volunteered in the community for the Mehlville Fire Department Christmas gift wrapping, Lindbergh's Big Spring Cleanout clothing drive, Homeless for a Night clothing drive and MoDOT road cleanup. Following graduation, she plans to begin her studies in nursing at Forest Park Community College and then transfer to the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

## Mehlville

### Mehlville High School

An accomplished student musically and academically, **Shawn Bowers** sang and performed with multiple groups at Mehlville, including choir for four years, earning recognition in Orlando, Florida, with the Maestro Award during the 2009 Heritage Festival. He was a member of the Missouri All-State Show Choir and earned honors at the district and state level. Other school activities included varsity volleyball, Student Council and volunteering with the Special Olympics and Panther Friends Club. With a cumulative grade point average of 3.0, Shawn followed a college preparatory schedule. He plans to attend a four-year university, majoring in musical theatre with an emphasis in business. He has been accepted to the University of Central Missouri, but has not made a final decision, awaiting acceptance decisions for music performance.

# Outstanding

*This issue of the Parent Link is dedicated to those transfer students who are members of the Class of 2010 – 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.*

# Class of 2010

# Message from the CEO

Beginning something new. Taking our first step. Embarking on a new challenge. For most of us these are frightening events. Since I began my current job about a year ago, I can still remember the fear and uncertainty of change. When we begin walking down a new path, the sky is sometimes dim and the path hard to see. It's been said that standing on the starting line, we are all cowards. At the same time, the first step toward getting somewhere is to decide to not stay where you are. According to W. Clement Stone, "So many fail because they don't get started. They don't go. They don't overcome inertia. They don't begin."

As the school year begins, all of us—students, parents, and teachers—are faced with the uncertainty of beginning something new and the fear that often accompanies a new beginning. However, it is only by beginning something new that we can ultimately have success. A baby only makes progress when he or she gathers up the necessary courage to stand up, loosen the grip on Mommy or Daddy's leg, and take the first step or two across the room. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

As the school year begins, many students and parents will have new teachers, a new school, and, for some of you, even a new district, riding a new bus with a new driver and new students on the bus. You will arrive at your new school and be faced with meeting new students and new teachers and making new friends. While these new beginnings can certainly be challenging, often times they provide great opportunities for new successes. Carl Bard has stated, "Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending."

Indeed while you are facing a new beginning, this beginning represents the end of where we have been and the start of something new. In many cases, our new beginnings result in endings which, in turn provide additional opportunities for new beginnings. Certainly that is the case for the former VICC student highlighted in this newsletter who returned to her county district and now works together with students to positively influence their beginnings and their time in the transfer program. This reminds me of a quote from Henry Ford who said, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."

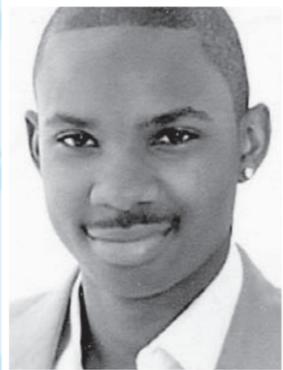
This former student tangibly demonstrates how staying involved in the program and working together with future generations of students can lead to a fulfilling career, giving back for the many benefits she received. She considers herself blessed to have participated in the program and is now returning those blessings to new generations of students. Let's all endeavor to follow her example and begin the new school year by giving back to others in response to the many gifts that we have received.

**David S. Glaser**  
CEO

[dglaser@choicecorp.org](mailto:dglaser@choicecorp.org)  
314.721.8422, ext. 3013



**Kristina Daniels**  
Lindbergh High School



**Shawn Bowers**  
Mehlville High School



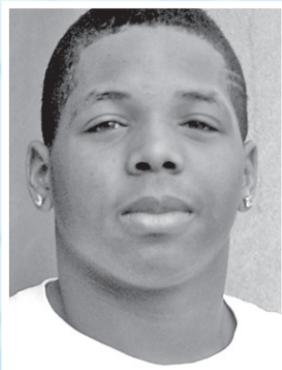
**Anthony Alonzo Gooch**  
Oakville High School



**Nasra Aaden**  
Rockwood Summit High School



**Cherrie Donaldson**  
Valley Park High School



**Tarrence Clark**  
Webster Groves High School

## Oakville High School

While weighing multiple college offers including the Missouri Leadership Award from Southeast Missouri State University and the Tower Scholarship from Northwest Missouri State University, **Anthony Alonzo Gooch** plans to attend St. Louis Community College at Meramec and then transfer to a four-year university to earn his bachelor's degree. Anthony's strength of character, level of maturity and academic achievements earned the respect of both staff and his peers at Oakville. He earned the Outstanding Academic Achievement award and was named to the honor roll every year in middle school as well as high school. He also was awarded the Glory of Missouri pillar of Charity by the Missouri House of Representatives and the President's Citation by the Rotary Club of St. Louis County. Active in speech and debate, and many clubs, Anthony was voted Mr. OHS and Mr. Popularity.

## Parkway

### Parkway South High School

Involved in numerous high school activities while maintaining high academic achievement, **Halston Hutchison** plans to attend Southeast Missouri State University to major in forensic chemistry with a minor in psychology with the help of a Renaissance Scholarship. A violinist since the age of eight, she was a member of the Symphonic Orchestra and served as concert master of the Chamber Orchestra. Other activities include track and field, Special Olympics, Excel Leadership and Mock Trial Club. Among her awards are the Spirit of Excellence award, the College Preparatory Studies certificate and the South Star award. She also volunteers with several community organizations.

## Rockwood

### Eureka High School

With plans to attend Southeast Missouri State University on a football scholarship, **Elijah Jackson** believes high school provided him the opportunities to work hard in the classroom and prove himself on the field. Elijah spent his four years at Eureka High preparing for the future. He received the Gold Standard award during

his sophomore and senior years. In addition, he earned recognition in track and field in the All-State hurdles as well as All Conference. Academically, he achieved status on the school honor roll and was selected as student of the month this year.

### Lafayette High School

Recognized as the outstanding senior for Lafayette High, **Christie Holland** plans to attend Texas Christian University to major in chemistry or engineering and minor in religious studies. Christie received the Glory of Missouri Award of Equality, the Choice Award and earned the Pearl Hacker Minority Scholarship. She is a participant and instructor with the Anointed Feet Christian Dance Academy of Arts, and a dance instructor with the Mathews-Dickey Boys' and Girls' Club. Her future plans include a career as a chemical engineer, as well as a youth minister where she can create recreational centers, camps and dance ministries in order to positively influence youth.

### Marquette High School

**Arial Peterson** is the VICC outstanding senior at Marquette High School. During her four years there, she was an active participant in the Marvelous Mustang program, along with Renaissance, Teenage Health Consultants and the UMSL Bridge program. Arial has completed advance placement courses in biology and psychology, and was named a student of the day her final semester. While she excelled academically, she also participated on Marquette's varsity girls track team. This fall, she will attend Mississippi State University and major in biological sciences in preparation for a master's degree in physical therapy.

### Rockwood Summit High School

Following graduation, **Nasra Aaden** plans to attend Truman State University majoring in English with a focus on law

school after earning her bachelor's degree. To prepare for her post-secondary education, she's taken a variety of advanced placement classes to earn college credit, along with law and justice classes. She participated in Rockwood's SAGES program, speech and debate clubs and S.M.I.L.E., which stands for Students Who Motivate, Involve, Learn and Educate. Community service has been a focus for Nasra who volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and the Green Team.

## Valley Park

### Valley Park High School

The recipient of the Ray and Katherine Dains Scholarship through the Valley Park High School Greater Community Scholarship program, **Cherrie Donaldson** will be attending St. Louis Community College for one year and then transfer to the University of Missouri-St. Louis, to major in biology and chemistry in preparation for a career in pediatrics. She had a unique opportunity to explore her interest in the field of health by serving as a Teen Health Consultant. In this role, she mentored middle school students, leading discussions about important issues and encouraging healthy decision-making. While excelling in academics, Cherrie was also a member of the Student Council and played on both the basketball and volleyball teams.

## Webster Groves

### Webster Groves High School

**Tarrence Clark** is a scholar, an athlete and a musician. Captain of the Missouri State Champion Statesmen football team this year, he holds a 3.87 grade point average and received the George C. Brooks full-tuition, four-year academic scholarship to the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he plans to study computer engineering. He was a member of the high school marching band as well as the symphonic band, the volleyball team and the National Honor Society. He recently received the Top Hat Award for leadership and academic abilities. He graduated with 11 college credits for three college prep classes he took in high school. In community service, Tarrence volunteered with the Special Olympics and at a local retirement home where he played board games with seniors and helped out in other areas.

# Graduates

## 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  
msscott@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. Rose Davis  
314.842.1238

### Bayless

Ms. Jayne Jackson  
314.256.8664

### Brentwood

Ms. Colleen Lohbeck  
314.962.4507

### Clayton

Ms. Sharmon Wilkinson  
314.854.6028

### Hancock Place

Mrs. Lisa Charles  
314.544.1300, ext. 199

### Kirkwood

Dr. Shirleas Washington  
314.213.6100, ext. 7813

### Ladue

Dr. Marsha Chappelow  
314.983.5300

### 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  
636.733.2177

### Valley Park

Mrs. Vickie Pardeck  
636.923.3614

### Webster Groves

Ms. Gayle Hennessey  
314.961.1233

### Special School District

Mrs. Mary Lee Burlemann  
314.989.8125

## 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:

<b>Affton</b>	August 18, 2010
<b>Bayless</b>	August 25, 2010
<b>Brentwood</b>	August 12, 2010
<b>Clayton</b>	August 18, 2010
<b>Hancock Place</b>	August 19, 2010
<b>Kirkwood</b>	August 18, 2010
<b>Ladue</b>	August 16, 2010
<b>Lindbergh</b>	August 17, 2010
<b>Mehlville</b>	August 18, 2010
<b>Parkway</b>	August 17, 2010
<b>Pattonville</b>	August 16, 2010
<b>Rockwood</b>	August 17, 2010
<b>Special/Tech</b>	August 16, 2010
<b>Valley Park</b>	August 17, 2010
<b>Webster Groves</b>	August 16, 2010

## 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.

## 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 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, 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.

## 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, please 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 county 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."

**Be sure to review the transportation section 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)