

parentlink

A newsletter for parents published by the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation • August, 2017

COLLEGIATE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND BIOSCIENCE Graduates Its First Class

Sixteen VICC participants were among 44 graduates of the first class of the Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience magnet school in St. Louis. Their commencement ceremony on May 21 was the kickoff of their journey toward medical or science careers.

The VICC graduates of Collegiate's Class of 2017 are bound for universities both near and far, including Washington University in St. Louis, Saint Louis University, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, University of California at Davis, the Kansas City Art Institute, University of Missouri-St. Louis, Loyola University and Emory University.

"I really enjoyed the diversity at our school," said graduate Suhaira Ahmad, a VICC participant who came to Collegiate from the Rockwood district. "We had students from all over St. Louis. It was nice to get outside of my community and meet others from all over St. Louis."

The Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience opened with a freshman class in fall 2013, led by founding principal Chip Clatto, in a temporary location in the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood. Just before the 2015-16 school year, the school moved into its current location at 1547 S. Theresa Ave., the old Wyman Elementary School. The building has plenty of room for growth, said Principal Frederick Steele, who encourages parents to look into enrolling their middle school students.

Steele joined the school as principal in July 2015, after spending three years in Las Cruces, New Mexico, as an assistant principal and a turnaround shepherd. He began his career with St. Louis Public Schools in July 2001 as a teacher at Vashon High School, then served as an assistant principal at Gateway STEM for four years and at Blewett Middle for one year before going to New Mexico.

The Class of 2017 met stringent standards to get into Collegiate, including a minimum 3.0 GPA; excellent attendance in sixth, seventh and eighth grades; high seventh-grade standardized test scores; Algebra I; two recommendation letters; an entrance essay; and a parent and student interview. Only St. Louis City residents and VICC-approved county residents may apply.

Admission requirements are a harbinger of standards expected of students. In addition to standard high school classes, they must take two science classes at a time, plus electives in humanities, arts and athletics. Seniors must serve a 90-hour internship or complete a capstone research project.

The innovative school was conceived as a "private school education for a public school cost." It has its own college admissions specialist and offers lectures by college professionals.

In addition to developing strong academic habits by learning how to learn, Collegiate students internalize core values including respect, compassion, ethics, integrity, self-discipline and intellectual curiosity.

This fall, Suhaira Ahmad is beginning a six-year bachelor and medical degree program at University of Missouri-Kansas City with the goal of becoming a surgeon. For her, one of the best advantages of the school was the opportunity to connect with medical and health care programs at the Washington University and Saint Louis University medical schools. She served her internship in the BJC HealthCare surgery department.

Graduate Amanda Arbuckle was attracted to the science offerings of the school, excited to take three science classes a year. An elementary alumna of Brentwood Schools and now a resident of the Webster Groves district, she came to Collegiate as a sophomore from California, where she was involved in the Be Wise STEM program for girls. "I knew I wanted to pursue something in science," she said.

The senior internship was another selling point for Amanda, and it turned out to be "the best part of my senior year," she said. "It was a break from school, and I got out into the community." Her internship with a clinical psychologist inspired her to consider becoming a clinical psychologist herself. She will attend Washington University this fall with a double major in English and neuroscience.

"I had a really great experience, and I wouldn't have made a different decision for the world," Amanda said. "I met some really great people."

The other VICC students who earned their diplomas from Collegiate are: Cayleigh Abercrombie, Samuel Goodman, Ayesha Ghumra, William Henry, Hamza Jalal, Ibrahim Javid, Mohammad Khalaf, Reheequa Khan, Alena Mehta, Neil Mehta, Sumaiya Mohsin, Kainat Niazi, Seth Sieving and Prem Yesudian.

The school is actively supported by Washington University, Saint Louis University, BJC Healthcare, University of Missouri-St. Louis and the Missouri Botanical Garden. A 14-member advisory board includes executives from those institutions plus Dennis Lower, CEO of Cortex; Maxine Clark, founder of Build-A-Bear; Bob Fox, founder of NewSpace Inc. and Casa de Salud; and others.

Those board members and sponsors also help students secure internships at science-heavy institutions such as the St. Louis Zoo, Danforth Plant Science Center, SLU and WUSTL medical schools, Cortex and more. Board members have been known to donate money for students who may need it for PSAT and college application fees, field trips, bus passes and other incidentals.

Interest in the school increases as demand for talent in the STEM careers expands, said Dennis Lower of Cortex. Enrollment has more than tripled since 2013, and school officials aim to continue to expand.



Amanda Arbuckle



Suhaira Ahmad



The Class of 2017

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Outstanding GRADUATES

2017

Each spring, the participating VICC school districts choose an outstanding graduating senior from each high school to represent the students' achievements and the schools' exemplary efforts in preparing them for the future. These are the 2017 outstanding graduates.



Gerald Barton
Affton High School



Faiza Mohamed
Bayless High School



Nyiah Thompson
Brentwood High School



Brooke Jones
Clayton High School



Malik Gordon
Hancock Place High School



Khalea Edwards
Kirkwood High School



Kailey Thompson
Mehlville High School



Shaun Lamar
Oakville High School



Nathan Okpara
Parkway Central High School

AFFTON Affton High School

Gerald Barton was the well-deserving recipient of the 2017 Outstanding VICC Graduate for Affton High School. Gerald was a goal-driven athlete and student. He participated in Affton High School's track and field program as well as in swim and wrestling activities while at Affton. Gerald was known as a very courteous, respectful student and was well-liked by his peers and faculty. Gerald will pursue a nursing degree at the University of Missouri–St. Louis in the fall.

BAYLESS Bayless High School

Faiza Mohamed is a graduate of both Bayless and South Technical High School. Upon graduation, she attained Certified Nurse Assistant certification based on her work at South Tech. Faiza was active in clubs such as DECA and HOSA and participated in the Skills USA competitive events. Her grades were good and her attendance was outstanding during her four years at Bayless High School. She has been successfully employed for several years and volunteered for multiple organizations within her community. Fluent in three languages, Faiza represents her family and Bayless in a positive light.

BRENTWOOD Brentwood High School

Nyiah Thompson demonstrates leadership qualities sought in tomorrow's change agents. She has been an advocate for diversity awareness and has made it her mission to have courageous conversations about cultural norms and struggles. She participated in Brentwood cheerleading, volleyball, basketball and track. While representing Brentwood, she strove to be a positive representation of how much impact one person's voice can make. Nyiah was a member of the Brentwood High School choir and was choir president as a senior. She will attend Clark University in Atlanta, Georgia, majoring in theater.

CLAYTON Clayton High School

Brooke Jones was a focused, driven and charismatic student who set high standards and pushed herself to achieve her goals. Throughout her high school career, Brooke challenged herself with a rigorous honors curriculum. Teachers described her as a dynamic student who was the first to volunteer an opinion on tough topics. Her peers described her as witty, enthusiastic and fun-loving. Brooke also was a star basketball player, who was sought out for her leadership on and off the court. Brooke plans to attend Xavier University in New Orleans, on her path to medical school.

HANCOCK Hancock Place High School

Malik Gordon was an outstanding leader and one of Hancock's finest. He is an honest, genuine, charismatic and respectful young man who always strives to do his best. Malik actively participated in the Gay Straight Alliance, Varsity H, cross-country, cheerleading and FGA and was Hi-Step president as a senior. Volunteering for Special Olympics was one of the highlights in his high school career. Malik will pursue his associate's degree at St. Louis Community College in the fall. He plans to transfer to Dominican University in Chicago, where he will major in graphic design.

KIRKWOOD Kirkwood High School

Khalea Edwards became a voice for issues surrounding social justice at Kirkwood High School. As a student, she led staff development on race and equity districtwide and, in 2017, received a Princeton Prize from Princeton University for her leadership in race relations. Khalea was accepted to the school newspaper staff with the idea of writing a column specifically on race. She organized a social justice club and lead weekly conversations with a diverse group of students. People opened up to Khalea because she asked good questions and truly listened to their answers. Khalea plans to attend either Harris-Stowe State University or St. Louis Community College–Meramec in the fall, studying education and law.

MEHLVILLE Mehlville High School

Kailey Thompson was a great representative of Mehlville High School and its values. A kind and compassionate student, she was always willing to help a friend or anyone at MHS, often serving as a motivator and tutor. Kailey served in the Mehlville Konnect Freshman Mentor program, which helps students make successful transitions into high school. An active member of the choir program, she competed at various levels, including Show Choir. She plans to attend the University of Missouri–Columbia to major in biology and minor in chemistry, with a goal of attending medical school to become an anesthesiologist.

MEHLVILLE Oakville High School

Shaun Lamar was a true leader and inspiration at Oakville High. Shaun was named as a National Merit Commended Scholar and a member of Missouri Scholars 100. He had great passion for debating, and his club activities included being president of the Speech and Debate Club, co-president of the HOSA future health professional club and president of the German Honor Society. The American Association of Teachers of German awarded Shaun with a month-long study trip to Nuremberg and Berlin. He earned a full scholarship to attend Yale University to major in molecular biophysics and biochemistry with the goal of becoming a neurosurgeon.

PARKWAY Parkway Central High School

Hungry is the most accurate description for Nathan Okpara. Those who meet him are immediately drawn to his insatiable appetite for knowledge. During his years at Central High, Nathan participated in DECA and was a member of National Honors Society and Leaders of Educational and Athletic Discipline. He also was an established athlete, running track for Parkway Central for four years on the varsity team. Nathan will begin his collegiate career in the fall at the University of Missouri with a major in business administration. He credits the VICC program in giving him the opportunity to learn in a competitive environment.

PARKWAY Parkway North High School

Andrew Jones knows all about preconceived notions. During his time at Parkway, he strove to break down barriers and stereotypes. Andrew credits the VICC program as one of the keys to his success. He plans to continue his post-secondary schooling at Southwest Baptist University, pursuing a degree in business administration with an accounting concentration. He is adamant that during his tenure at Parkway Schools he was exposed to diversity and social justice and had the opportunity to use state-of-the-art educational materials, giving him an academic advantage that he might not have enjoyed at his neighborhood school.

PARKWAY Parkway South High School

Java, C#, C++, HTML — most people would be stumped upon seeing this basic coding language. Leila Hodge would be excited. Leila has a winning smile and an insatiable appetite for technology. During her time at Parkway Schools, she was exposed to state-of-the-art curriculum, including web and computer programming. Because of South High's access to mentors and South County Tech, Leila has mapped her own post-graduation plans, which include participating in the A+ program at St. Louis Community College. After two years, Leila plans to transfer to University of Missouri–St. Louis to major in computer science, pursuing her ultimate goal of becoming an information technology manager.

PARKWAY Parkway West High School

When Rikita Saunders walked through the doors of Mason Ridge Elementary in August 2004, she was continuing a legacy. Her mother graduated from Parkway Schools under the old desegregation program, and Rikita was ready to make her mark. The most important thing Rikita has learned throughout her years and experience in the VICC program is perseverance. While at West High, Rikita pushed herself to take challenging AP classes while juggling athletics (volleyball, cross-country, track and field), and working closely with the deputy superintendent in the Project Parkway program. Rikita's grit, perseverance and a healthy dose of time management were essential to her achievements. This tenacity helped Rikita map out her goals, which include enrolling in Delta State University to major in sports management.

ROCKWOOD Eureka High School

Tia Wilson was an active Eureka student, participating in the student equity team, theater and track. She was a mentor for Eureka's eCrew freshmen mentoring program and co-founded Women Empowering Women, a group of upperclasswomen who mentor a group of freshman black girls through their first year of high school. Tia received the VICC Academic Achievement Award every year in elementary school. In her senior year, she was named a Questbridge Scholar, an honor that awarded her a competitive full four-year scholarship to the University of Notre Dame. Tia plans to major in finance at Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business while minoring in Africana. She also plans to study in Milan, Italy, with the Global Business Scholars program during the spring semester of her sophomore year and in Singapore the next year. Her career plans include becoming a financial analyst and eventually a CFO of a Fortune 500 company.

ROCKWOOD Lafayette High School

During Keilah Moore's time at Lafayette High School, she was involved in a variety of clubs and athletics. She participated in French Club, Book Club, Link Crew, NHS, cadet teaching and track. However, her greatest passion and success came from her involvement in ROTC and theater. Academically, Keilah excelled while maintaining a rigorous schedule, including AP and honors courses, and was recognized as a Bright Flight student for achieving higher than 30 on her ACT. Keilah was selected as the Student of the Month four times and was a Glory of Missouri Award recipient. Keilah plans to attend Mississippi State University, where she will major in anthropology with a minor in business.

ROCKWOOD Marquette High School

Kearstyn Richardson was a true leader at Marquette High School. She enjoyed both running and Step at Marquette. During her senior year, she helped guide the class of 2017 Powderpuff team to victory with her positive attitude. In addition, she enjoyed learning, trying new things, and just being a Mustang. Kearstyn would like to major in biology and work in the OB-GYN field, where ultimately she wants to open her own clinic for women who are unable to afford proper medical care.

ROCKWOOD Rockwood Summit High School

Marquis Powell has made an indelible mark on the Summit community with his outgoing, warm personality and his positive presence. He even made friends with students and staff from the other three high schools on a trip to France after junior year. He played football all four years at Summit, was part of the track team and served as president of DECA. Marquis was one of the founding members of Summit's step-team and also performs with the Gateway Center for Performing Arts. With an entrepreneurial spirit, Marquis was an integral part of a Junior Achievement sales project, was in the Cooperative Career Education program and worked a part-time job at Russell's Café while successfully maintaining a college prep course load. He hopes to pioneer new and innovative concepts in the hospitality industry and own his own company after completing his college education.

VALLEY PARK Valley Park High School

Kiara Vanessa Scott graduated third in her Valley Park senior class, and it's no wonder. She made the High Honor Roll list every year in high school, and she qualified for the A+ Program. She was a National Honor Society officer and a National Business Honor Society officer. She plans to study civil engineering at Missouri Science and Technology University beginning this fall.

WEBSTER GROVES Webster Groves High School

Tamir Caldwell has attended Webster Groves schools since kindergarten. At the High School, he received academic awards from the Renaissance Program as well as from the Webster Challenge. He also participated in the A+ Scholarship program. Tamir's extracurricular activities included four years on the varsity football and track teams. Hoping to become a surgeon, Tamir will major in biology at Coe College and will play football there. He describes his years in the Webster Groves School District as "an amazing experience" where he found "great friends and teachers."



Andrew Jones
Parkway North High School



Leila Hodge
Parkway South High School



Rikita Saunders
Parkway West High School



Tia Wilson
Eureka High School



Keilah Moore
Lafayette High School



Kearstyn Richardson
Marquette High School



Marquis Powell
Summit High School



Kiara Vanessa Scott
Valley Park High School



Tamir Caldwell
Webster Groves High School

Outstanding GRADUATES

2017



MESSAGE
from the CEO

In the current issue of the *Parent Link*, we have the opportunity to celebrate and recognize several of the outstanding graduates of the VICC program. These students are merely a representation of the many students who have recently graduated from the program.

In addition, no matter where your child is on his or her high school graduation journey, this is an event that all parents anticipate. We remember the first day our children begin school and work diligently with them throughout their school career to prepare them for this important event. We recognize that any dream worth achieving requires

effort, passion and hard work as well as the support and participation of family and friends in addition to talented teachers, support staff and school administrators.

Graduation is an exciting time. It marks both an ending and a new beginning. For the students recognized in this issue, all of their hard work has now paid off. We are proud of them and look forward to celebrating their ongoing achievements in life as well as celebrating the achievements of all of our students.

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.

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

Affton
Dr. Travis Bracht 314.633.5916
Bayless
Ron Tucker 314.256.8601
Brentwood
Alex Tripamer 314.962.4507
Clayton
Kashina Bell 314.854.6013
Hancock Place
Dr. Timothy M. McInnis 314.657.9199
Kirkwood
Dr. Shonda Ambers-Phillips 314.213.6105

Mehlville
Jeff Bresler 314.467.5007
Parkway
Rakiyah "Rocky" Talavedra 314.415.7060
Dr. Charlotte Ijei 314.415.5061
Rockwood
Brittany Hogan 636.733.2177
Valley Park
Tad Savage 636.923.3614
Webster Groves
John M. Thomas 314.918.4378
Special School District St. Louis County
Emily Boeckmann 314.989.8125

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 uses a telephone broadcast system, similar to ones used in many participating school districts.

This system, provided by School Messenger, 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 or drop-off time. 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 cell phone or alternate 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 also will continue to separately announce school closings due to inclement weather, via the media or their own phone system. However, in the event that 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 cell or alternate/emergency phone numbers. Your school then updates VICC's parent contact records so a separate notification to VICC is not necessary.

VICC STAFF

Ready to Assist Transferring Families

Recruitment Staff

The Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) staff is available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., to assist families with the magnet school application process and to answer general questions about the St. Louis Magnet Schools. Additionally, the recruitment staff can submit parents' requests for magnet school transportation arrangements. The recruitment staff often can provide answers to specific questions parents may have or help put parents in touch with the individuals who can best answer their questions.

Counseling Staff

The Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) staff includes five 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 also can 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.

Vickie Williams, Counselor, Part-Time

314.721.8422, ext. 3011

vwilliams@choicecorp.org

Serving Students A – C

Laverne Mitchom, Counselor, Part-Time

314.721.8422, ext. 3020

lmitchom@choicecorp.org

Serving Students D – H

Jennifer Christy, Counselor

314.721.8422, ext. 3021

jchristy@choicecorp.org

Serving Students I – N

Mildred Scott, Counselor, Part-Time

314.721.8422, ext. 3027

mescott@choicecorp.org

Serving Students O – R

Mary Schafer Meehan, Counselor, Part-Time

314.721.8422, ext. 3016

mmeehan@choicecorp.org

Serving Students S – Z

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 the VICC student handbook, which can be requested by calling 314.721.8422, ext. 3012.

The handbook also is available on the VICC website at 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 *ParentLink*.

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, times and transporter. 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:

- Looking for lost items left on the bus/cab
- Checking on activity bus location
- Questions or cancellations when VICC Transportation office is closed.

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
- Concerns with driver or contractor
- Requesting cab 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 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time, and remain at least 15 minutes after the pickup time, before calling the transportation staff at 314.721.8657 for advice on alternative transportation. If your child is not at the bus/taxi stop a full 5 minutes before the scheduled arrival time and does not wait the full 15 minutes after the scheduled time and misses the bus or taxi, it will be your responsibility to get him or her to school. The transportation staff does not send alternative transportation in such instances. All students must be visible at their assigned bus or taxi stop. Also, all students must get off at their assigned stop on their ride home unless an exception was granted by VICC prior to the p.m. bell.

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 (including activities) 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 the 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 he or she 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 with the VICC transportation office.

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 cell or alternate/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

- Obey the driver promptly.
- Smoking, eating or drinking are not permitted.
- Remain seated until the bus arrives at your stop.
- Refrain from using loud or obscene language.
- Do not damage the bus/cab in any way.
- Do not throw objects on the bus/cab or out of the windows.
- Do not extend head, arms, legs or hands out of the windows.
- Do not tamper with the emergency door except in the case of a real emergency and only under the instruction of the driver.
- Fighting, scuffling or creating loud disturbances are not permitted.
- Avoid the Danger Zones next to the bus where the driver can't see you. This distance is approximately 10 feet around all sides.
- If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal to you and then cross in front of the bus.

- Don't try to pick up something dropped near the bus because the driver might not see you.
- Remember that other motorists don't always stop for a stopped school bus. Use extreme caution when getting on and off the bus.
- Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

Student Safety

Help us protect your child as he or she travels 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 child's clothing. Also talk with your child about the behavior and safety rules.

Trespass Policy

To bolster the safety of students riding buses 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 8-17) 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.

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 16
Bayless August 16
Brentwood August 15
Clayton August 15
Hancock Place August 17
Kirkwood August 16
Mehlville August 16
Parkway August 16
Rockwood August 16
Special/Tech August 14
Valley Park August 16
Webster Groves August 15