

Hello Bus Families,

**The MTN Dispatch Office phone number is 763-571-1541.**

Please call this number from now on when you are trying to determine the location of your bus, or if your child did not get off the bus at your stop. Please do not call the school unless it is an emergency, or if you can't reach dispatch after several attempts. We understand this is a change in policy from past years, but MTN welcomes this arrangement to help take the pressure off of our YA phones during dismissal.

Some of you have expressed frustration at not receiving updates fast enough or not being able to get through to someone. Please understand that we only have one phone line at the school and there is only one receptionist. Even with 2 extra people helping operate the phones on these first days, it has been very challenging to manage all of the busing phone calls coming in at the same time. And, this is only for buses. We are also coordinating the dismissal of 300+ other students to car pick-up, walk-up pick-up, aftercare, soccer, etc. We are doing the best we can and we thank you for your patience as things settle.

In addition, please wait until at least 15 minutes after your scheduled bus time before calling. Buses always run late the first few days. Moving forward, we will continue to send out an alert if a bus leaves the school late. MTN will also continue to call us to give us updates as soon as they are able. We will then send out those email updates as soon as we can. Sometimes these emails are delayed because the people who would send the email are tied up on the phone answering your phone calls, or we are addressing immediate concerns involved with the dismissal process.

We are working hard to adjust things with busing and things have been improving little by little every day. Now that kindergarteners have a day under their belt, we should be able to get the buses sent on their way relatively on time today.

Thank you, in advance, for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

Hello Yinghua Parents!

Welcome to Yinghua Academy's Busing Service!

You are receiving this email because you successfully registered your child(ren) for busing for the 2015-2016 school year. Below are a few quick announcements and reminders before the first day of school.

- **Confirmation Postcards** – MTN has given us post cards to hand out to families at *Meet Your Teacher Night* that will confirm your bus stop location and time. Please pick them up from your child's homeroom teachers when you are here. If you notice that the time of your stop has changed slightly, do not be alarmed. This was due to the minor adjustments required after registration was processed (30 students take longer to load at a stop than 2!). More importantly, make sure the stop listed on your card is correct. If there is a mistake with your stop, please let me know immediately so I can alert MTN.
- **Busing Communication** – We have a new school management software this year which has a new communication tool called Messenger. Messenger will allow us to communicate important automated phone calls, texts, and emails to parents en mass. However, this tool will not be available for a while. In the meantime, we will only be able to use emails to communicate important busing announcements (i.e. – your bus is running late). Please pay attention to your emails if you have concerns about the timing of a bus. Once Messenger is up and running, we will go back to using texts as well.
  - **Email Addresses** – The bus emails have only been set up with the one email address you provided during registration. If you would like additional email addresses included in these mailings, please respond to this email with your bus number and the email address(es) you wish added.
- **Publicizing Rosters** – A few of you have asked if we would be publicizing the bus rosters for all busing families to see who else is

riding. Unfortunately, this is a privacy and security issue, so we will not be able to make rosters public.

- **GPS Tracking** – Most of our MTN buses were purchased within the last school year, so they are very nice and very new and they all have internal video cameras and GPS tracking. Some parents have asked if we will be providing the tracking information to families so they can see where their bus is at all times. We did have a very good discussion with MTN about this. Our mutual decision was to not provide this information to families. There are many reasons behind this decision that I won't be able to go into here. However, MTN welcomes parents to contact their dispatch office directly to inquire about bus locations. Their number is 763-571-1541.
- **Snacks** – As a reminder, food is no longer allowed on any of our buses. Bus riders wishing to eat a snack will be allowed to do so with their classmates during PM Homeroom before getting on the bus to go home. Please remind your children of this new policy.
- **Bus Prefects** – We do plan on having Bus Prefects again this year. However, we won't have them selected by the first day of school. We do hope to talk to the candidates throughout the first week and get them set up as soon as possible. In the meantime, please encourage your older children to help look out for younger children, especially the new kindergarteners. The first few days can be overwhelming for the little ones and they may need help "learning the ropes". Let's show the new KG parents how amazing your children are! After all, helping others and being a close community is one of the many things that makes Yinghua an amazing place to be!
- **First Week Adjustments** – As a last reminder, the first few days of busing can see late buses. This is normal. Please be patient as MTN gets used to our routes. We have 360 riders this year and it will take a few days for the drivers, teachers, and students to get into their routines. Hopefully, it will only take a few days for things to settle. So far, MTN has been very impressive so we are hugely optimistic that this will be the best busing year YA has ever seen!

I think that's it! I look forward to seeing you all at Meet Your Teacher Monday evening. In the meantime, please enjoy your last days of summer!

Sincerely,

Hello Busing Families,

Just a few quick policy clarifications to answer some of the questions that have come in over the last week or so.

**Buses Arriving Early to a Stop** - If a bus arrives early to a stop, the drivers have been instructed to wait until the official stop time. Buses will only leave a stop early if all students have been accounted for (i.e. - everyone is on board, all parents have arrived, etc.).

**Parents/Students Late to a Stop** - If families are late to their stop, the drivers have been instructed to wait no more than 2-3 minutes before moving on to their next stop. However, parents still need to target their arrival for 5-10 minutes before the bus is officially scheduled to arrive.

In the afternoon, students whose parents miss the bus and do not have permission to walk home alone will be kept on the bus until:

A) Their parent is able to connect with the bus company and/or rendezvous with the bus at a later stop along the route.

OR

B) The bus reaches the end of the route and the student is brought back to the school to await parent pick-up.

These policies are designed to keep children safe and keep the bus on schedule for the rest of the families along the route.

**Busing Student Dismissal Time** - Busing has greatly improved since September 28th. Now that things have settled and students are now familiar with their new drivers and new buses, we are able to move the dismissal time back to the end of PM homeroom. This change is in effect as of Monday, October 28th.