



**RIGHTSPOT**

IN COLLABORATION WITH  
BELOVED COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL, NJ

# LESSONS FROM THE ROAD

Enabling School Transportation in the times of  
Coronavirus

Prepared by  
**RightSpot**

# INTRODUCTION

One of the schools that made a comeback to an in-person mode of education earlier in the year is Beloved Community Charter School (BCCS) in New Jersey. BCCS worked in collaboration with RightSpot to ensure safe transportation for their students to and from school. With adaptability and flexibility at the core of this collaboration, BCCS and RightSpot tackled a variety of new issues that originated through the pandemic.

Effective management of the school transportation system has always included its fair share of chaos, stress, and miscommunication on a normal day. The variations that the school transportation had to accommodate through the pandemic were at an unprecedented scale. As we move into a new normal, we strive to create a safer environment moving forward by taking the lessons that the pandemic has pushed to learn. Here's a deeper look into the variations handled through the pandemic to enable the school transportation system and our lessons from the road.

## About RightSpot

RightSpot was created by parents and teachers to build a safe transportation environment for children through efficient management of the pick-up/ dismissal processes. By bringing accountability to the forefront of the process, clear communication is established between the school administrators, the transportation staff, and the parents.

RightSpot has been working with schools for the past 5 years to actively minimize the miscommunication through the dismissal process by effectively managing all the variations that a regular school day observes. With an easy-to-use dashboard that can be managed by anyone from transportation staff to the principals, RightSpot has thoroughly reduced liabilities, complaints, stress, and confusion for the schools and enhanced the parents' trust of the school administrators.

# Arrival & Dismissal Issues

Close to 26 million children use approximately 480,000 school buses to travel to and from their schools in the United States ([National School Transportation Association, 2013](#)). The complications of the school transportation system take many shapes on a normal day. Lack of communication at the time of transportation causes a lot of stress. Even minor miscommunication from the school's end can lead to serious consequences.

RightSpot has worked with schools to design a system that manages information on multiple levels and clearly communicates the student's location to everyone concerned. This ensures the student's safety and the student always reaches the 'RightSpot'. BCCS implemented RightSpot to effectively handle the following everyday issues:

## Accurate real-time information:

The exact bus location can be tracked via GPS to provide parents and school administrators an accurate location when the student is traveling to and from school.

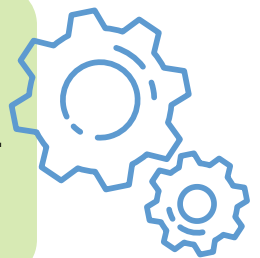


## Keeping Everyone in the Know:

3 layers of information distribution is enabled through the school dashboard, driver app, and parent portal to ensure that everyone involved in the pick-up/d dismissal process has the precise information they need. Notifications on any delays are informed immediately through these channels.

## RightSpot extends our SIS System functionality to handle additional variations:

Common variations such as students being absent are dynamically updated. Additional variations such as after-school programs, sudden pick-ups, etc. and other exceptions can be added through an easy-to-use platform.



## Parent App for clear communication:

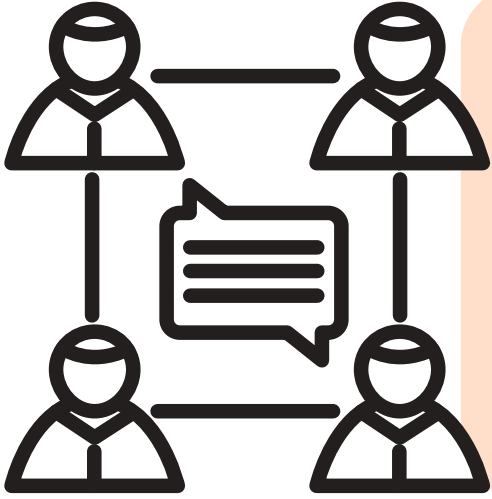
The parent application allows parents to track their child's location while on board. Information about delays and emergency cancellations is at the parent's fingertips through RightSpot. This greatly reduces the call volume needing to be handled by the school.

## Minimizing Liabilities:

By accommodating all the variations dynamically throughout the day, RightSpot provides accurate information on student rosters and routes eliminating the possibility of miscommunication.



# New Problems that COVID Introduced



## Contact Tracing Requirement

Students and staff testing positive for COVID is a reality. At such times, the schools need to have accurate information about the people who were on the bus with the affected individual to limit the viral transmission immediately. Having accurate transport logs allowed BCCS to know exactly who was on a bus and improved their ability to notify the right parents about quarantine policies.

## Cohort Management:

The reconfiguration of bus routes and handling staggered schedules with different cohorts of students could be a logistical nightmare if not organized and managed properly. With RightSpot, accurate rosters and bus routes helped the bus drivers to implement the changed routes and schedules without ambiguity. Any changes were updated thoroughly and reflected in the rosters ensuring the student's safety at all times.

## Managing Safety Violations:

Children, in general, are averse to face masks and tend to take them off outside of the classroom or in other unsupervised environments. In cases where students remove their masks, fail their health screenings, or violate any other safety protocols, Incident reports can be filled by bus monitors. These reports help administrators take the appropriate course of action immediately.



## Seating Capacity & Arrangement:

The CDC recommendation to maintain the 6-foot distance reduced the bus capacity. With RightSpot, BCCS was always aware of bus capacities. Alerts were raised to the administrators by RightSpot if any bus rosters exceeded the capacity.



# Precautions, Guidelines, and Protocols

The following are the overarching guidelines that affected how BCCS modified its transportation policies.

## Bus Capacity

When the face-covering requirements are thoroughly followed, seating one student per seat in a staggered manner allows the buses to accommodate 26 students with sufficient protection.

## Contact Tracing Requirement

Being within 6-feet of a person with COVID-19 for a cumulative period of 15-minutes over 24 hours is considered to be close contact by the CDC and needs contact tracing immediately. All the staff, caregivers, students, and their families that have come in contact with the affected person would have to be informed immediately.

## Face Mask Requirement & Proper Usage

The proper fit of the mask is an important factor in determining the filtration efficiency of the mask. Having a poorly-fitted mask, however, provides more protection than when no mask is used. ([Sunjaya and Jenkins, 2020](#), [Konda et al., 2020](#)). Double-layered cloth masks prepared at home to perfectly fit the child's face have been observed to significantly decrease the distance traveled by the airborne droplets released by coughing ([Verma, Dhanak, & Frankenfield, 2020](#)).

## Loading/ Unloading Strategies & Ventilation

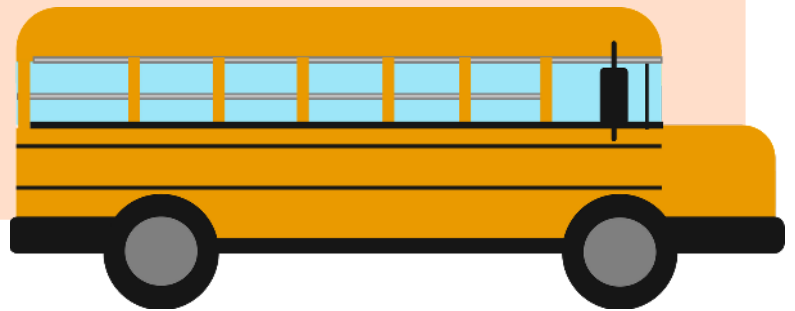
In the case of small children, the elevation of the breathing zone of a small child standing is at the same elevation of a child sitting on the school bus seat. Reducing the intersection of breathing zones by carefully planning the seating arrangement based on the bus routes can minimize the risk of viral transmission. Increasing air circulation by opening windows in the bus whenever possible can be a helpful measure (ASHRAE, 2020).

# The Future of School Transportation

As we move forward from our time in the pandemic, we need to take forth the agility that it pushed us to develop. New changes are inevitable to create a better normal. As we prepare to take on any changes, making school transportation safe for students continues to be a priority.

Taking a look at the measures in place before and through COVID, here are some efforts to be carried forward that have thoroughly helped us manage variations effectively:

- Real-time location communication
- Accurate Cohort Management
- Roster Updates to actively reflect Variations for bus monitors
- Bus Emergency/ Variation Communication to parents
- Accommodating Staggered schedules at any scale
- Seating Capacity Indication
- Safety Violation Management
- Integration with School's SIS Systems
- Easy-to-use Interface



## Results

Through RightSpot's Implementation, BCCS could:

- **Implement Contact Tracing** & inform the precise group of people who came in contact with the affected person about quarantine regulations
- **Manage Cohorts effectively** eliminating ambiguity in information on routes & schedules for drivers
- **Create safe transportation for students** to and from school through the pandemic
- **Consistently inform parents of their child's location** & any delays in pick-up/drop-off



**RightSpot has allowed us to dramatically simplify the management of our after-school and transportation programs**

**-Duanne Moeller**

Director of Operations, Beloved CCS

# Lessons Ahead...

The new systems that the Educational sector has adapted to through the pandemic - the hybrid classes, cohort-based education, and other planned variations - are here to find their footing. Our systems need to be prepared for these variations along with other unplanned, unfortunate ones like the pandemic to ensure a future where our students don't suffer.

Through our time transitioning onto the road, the focus was to always be prepared for the variations that may arise. RightSpot's versatility in accommodating changes and resilience in handling variations allowed BCCS to smoothly manage many problems that came their way on short notice.

The biggest lesson the Educational system strives to teach its students is to fare well in the face of uncertainty. As we move forward into the new normal with the inevitability of variations that can test our strength and rigor, the best way to step forth is with the support of adaptable and reliable systems that strive to always promise and create a safe space for our children.

**To know more about how you can safeguard your school with RightSpot,**

**Reach out to:**

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**For more information, you can also visit [www.rightspotsol.com](http://www.rightspotsol.com)**