



# Columbus City Schools

**Getting kids to school on time necessary  
to achieve mission.**



## Organization

Columbus City Schools

## Industry

Schools transportation

## Location

Columbus, Ohio

## Operation

- 31,000 students
- 764 school buses
- 750 daily routes
- 18,000 daily stops

## Website

[www.ccssoh.us](http://www.ccssoh.us)

## Solutions

- Zonar Ground Traffic Control®
- Zonar V3™ TCU
- Zonar EVIR®

## Benefits

- Real-time customer service
- Increased driver accountability
- Pre- and post-trip inspection compliance
- Better planned vehicle maintenance

## Getting kids to school on time necessary to achieve mission

Columbus City Schools have a mission and pupil transportation understands it starts by kids getting to school safely and on time.

Mission: Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.

With the transportation department making 18,000 bus stops daily, the details really matter. First, they work to ensure the students are picked up then adjust in real time as needed to get them to school on time.

## Zonar enables call center and dispatcher real-time support

In the morning, the call center receives calls from parents asking, "Where is my bus?" In the afternoon, the calls from parents are about "where is my child?"

With Zonar, the whole customer service equation has changed. Now when parents call, the call center can in real-time locate the bus on its route, determine if and what time a stop was made and adjust pick-up when appropriate. The vast majority of the time, the Zonar gathered data provides the facts. Knowing that the route and time, in real-time, changes the dynamics of the call.

## More cost-effective options available

In the case when a stop was missed, the dispatcher can locate the bus and decide if a go-back is optimal, if another bus in the area can be directed to the pick-up or if the student can be directed to another pick-up stop. The data is shared in map form which really saves time for everyone involved including the call center, dispatcher, driver and principal.

Ensuring the child gets to school is the goal and with Zonar, the transportation department has more cost-effective options available to achieve its mission.

## Principals kept in the know

The school principals are the transportation department's "other" customer alongside parents. With Zonar, the principal has access to up-to-date information on bus arrivals.

Many of the Columbus City Schools principals have chosen to self-serve by accessing this information through Zonar because it is accurate and so easy to use. In the event of a delay, the call center is

able to alert the principal and ensure the children are not charged with a tardy.

## **The day starts about 5:30 a.m. And doesn't end until 10:00 p.m.**

Steve Simmons, Director of Transportation, says most people think the buses are used just for going between the home and school; however the buses often go until 10:00 P.M. to support academic programs. This includes field trips, which totaled 5,000 last year. "Zonar helps the transportation department to be efficient in accomplishing everything it needs to as well as maintain careful control of our expenses."

## **Pre- and post-trip inspection is what gets the bus rolling**

Looking back at the decision to purchase Zonar, Phil Downs, Fleet Supervisor, remembers, "There were a lot of GPS systems out there but only Zonar had HD-GPS and verified pre-and post-trip inspection for compliance." That's what gets the buses rolling at the start of the day and back at the end of the day.

Phil reports that in addition to having good inspections and the data needed to demonstrate compliance, they actually have improved maintenance practices now because good inspections means fewer breakdowns.

## **Zonar is woven into the fabric of day-to-day decision making**

Shortly after Zonar HD-GPS was implemented, the transportation department ran a Zonar produced speed report and found that many bus drivers had exceeded the 55 mile an hour speed limit at least once a day.

This data was posted anonymously and the next day there was a 50% reduction in buses exceeding the posted speed limit for buses. Columbus City Schools Transportation uses Zonar as part of their everyday work to help make decisions regarding their "Yellow Fleet" of buses as well as their "White Fleet" of cars and tractors.

## **Winning clean air award gets assist with Zonar "footprint data"**

The Transportation & Fleet Services Department at Columbus City Schools has become a real power user of

Zonar. So, when the Idle Emissions Module was Principals kept in the know advantage was taken of the data it presented. The footprint data really focused the attention on idle times and the impact it had on the environment and fuel cost. Phil Downs said, "This really contributed to the understanding that we needed to change behaviors which in turn contributed to our winning the Clean Air Award from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission this year."

## **Outcomes: improved accountability and customer service**

Steve Simmons said, "The most important benefits we have received from using the Zonar System are increased driver accountability and improved customer service. We know the students come first, but we are also driven by wise fiscal choices, and Zonar has helped us do both, better. I also want to point out that you don't need to be a large school district to realize all the same benefits."

*"I think asking the driver to simply shut the bus off is something that all of us can do to reduce emissions. Sure, you can add new technology to buses that will help reduce emissions, but shutting the bus off and reducing unnecessary idling is something we can all do immediately to reduce emissions and save fuel dollars at the same time. Zonar makes a real difference with its idle and emissions information."*

► Phil Downs, Fleet Supervisor

*"The most important benefits we have received from using the Zonar system are increase driver accountability and improved customer service. Now we can answer parents' questions precisely and in real-time. Where is my bus? Where is my child?"*

► Steve Simmons, Director of Transportation Services

## About Zonar

Zonar exists because you and your student riders deserve the best. We're the trusted leader who helps protect our nation's children every day. And we're the clear choice for small to mid-sized businesses, enterprise fleets, and public sector organizations across the Americas. To some, you're a sale to make. To us, you're a partner to stand by. Our proven fleet management solutions help you run better, safer and more efficiently. We help you save more of everything. We work late, push harder and deliver what's really needed, faster—for you.

Zonar has been here for you, for more than 20 years and counting. You call? We answer, 24/7. Because you have the most important responsibility a fleet can have: transporting schoolchildren safely. Whatever your fleet's size, rely on us to help solve real-world problems.

Zonar HQ: Seattle, WA. Other locations: Cincinnati, OH, West Chicago, IL & Lakeland, FL. Top priority: You.

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