

SECTION IV: OPERATIONS

I. EXTRACURRICULAR FIELD/ACTIVITY TRIP

1. Guidelines

- a. All extra curricular field /activity trips (athletic trips, "field" trips, etc.) shall be well planned and coordinated by the school Principal (or designee).
- b. Teacher supervision of students while on an extracurricular trip is an absolute necessity. Teachers are responsible for handling all arrangements such as trip destination, departure and return time, student lunch, etc.
- c. The school Principal (or designee) shall be responsible for ensuring that all trips are adequately chaperoned and that seating space on buses is available for all chaperons and students.
- d. All charter buses contracted for extracurricular trips by public schools must meet federal, state, and local standards. Evidence of current liability insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$500,000 single limits (primary coverage) must be presented to the school Principal prior to the commencement of the trip.
- e. Each school Principal (or designee) is authorized to select drivers for their extracurricular field/activity trips.
- f. It is recommended but not required for Principals to make driver selection based on the following procedures:
 - 1) School Principal will compose a list by seniority of all drivers serving his/her school.
 - 2) Extracurricular Field/Activity Trips, as they become available, will be offered to the most senior driver first. The type, length, or destination of the trip will not be a factor in selecting a driver.
 - 3) If the most senior driver declines to accept the trip he/she is passed over and the Principal will offer the trip to the next most senior driver on the list.
 - 4) When another trip has been approved and the Principal is seeking to obtain a driver, he/she will refer to the list and offer the trip to the next most senior driver starting after the last driver assigned a trip.
 - 5) Principals will continue offering trips to drivers based on their seniority list until they reach the last driver (least senior driver) and then will start over at the top.
 - 6) If a driver either accepts or declines a trip, he/she will not be offered another trip until all other drivers have an opportunity to accept a trip.

- 7) The Principal or designee should provide detail information such as departure/return time, destination, nature of trip, etc. to each driver so they can make an informed decision.
- 8) If a driver accepts a trip but fails to fulfill his obligation, he/she will be removed from the seniority list for the remainder of the school year. Exceptions shall be made for drivers who provide verification of an emergency or mechanical breakdown. However, the driver is responsible for arranging for another driver/bus to fulfill their obligation or to notify the Principal in time to obtain another driver/bus.
- g. It is the school's responsibility to see that all trips are scheduled in a manner not to conflict with regular bus routes. Schools will not schedule extracurricular trips which conflict with regular route schedules without the approval of the Transportation Director. If it is impossible to conform to this time schedule, the Principal (or designee) should contact the Transportation Department for assistance in finding a qualified driver or make arrangements with an outside transportation service.
- h. Drivers may not use a school owned bus for an extracurricular trip without prior approval of the Transportation Director.
- i. Drivers may not use sick leave or personal days for the purpose of driving an extracurricular trip without prior approval of the Transportation Director.
- j. Statutory requirements, state and local policies, and administrative regulations pertaining to safety, bus loading and vehicle operation shall apply to all extracurricular field/activity trips.
- k. Once the students are presented to the driver for transportation, the driver will be ultimately responsible for the safe transportation of all students assigned to his/her bus.
- l. If an unusual circumstance occurs (i.e. bad weather, mechanical failure, sick student, etc.), the driver will consult with the lead teacher and determine the best course of action. If the driver and lead teacher can not come to a consensus, the driver will make the final decision.
- m. It will be the driver's responsibility to ensure that the bus is not loaded beyond its seating capacity.
- n. Drivers are not authorized to pick and drop off passengers on extracurricular trips at any location other than pre-arranged, approved stops without written authorization of the Principal (or designee).
- o. Approved fees for activity trips shall be published in the annual Salary Schedule prepared by the Payroll Department and approved by the TPSB. All trips should be documented by use of the Extracurricular Trip Reports (See Appendix) and submitted to the Transportation Department for payment processing.

- p. The Principal (or designee) shall ensure that each bus driver is provided a passenger roster of assigned students including chaperons before each extracurricular trip. The school official responsible for organizing the trip is responsible for ensuring that the roster is converted to a seating chart before departing on the trip.
- q. When taking trips for events that require the bus to carry equipment, drivers are to ensure that equipment does not block any emergency exits, (doors, hatches, windows) and does not block the aisle or the entrance step well.
- r. Before leaving the school (or any other point of origin), the bus driver must review the basic rules of conduct and emergency procedures with all passengers by use of the Extracurricular Activity School Bus Safety Statement provided in the next section.
- s. Student misbehavior on any extracurricular trip will not be tolerated and shall be reported to the school administration using the regular reporting procedures (i.e. School Bus Behavior Report).
- t. Drivers must communicate with the lead teacher as to the exact departure time for the return trip home. The departure time should be set so as to allow enough time for the driver to return students to their school, refuel the bus if needed, perform a PM pre-trip inspection, and arrive at their first PM school prior to the ending bell.

2. Extracurricular Activity School Bus Safety Statement

The following Extracurricular Activity School Bus Safety Statement must be read by the bus driver to each bus load before the bus leaves the parking location. Drivers must assume that there are passengers aboard that are unfamiliar with school bus safety procedures. The following statement should be provided to the passengers before the beginning trip:

Attention Passengers:

In accordance with Tangipahoa Parish School System policy and in the interest of your safety and well being, I am presenting the following school bus safety information at the beginning of our trip.

I am (Name of Driver), your school bus driver for this particular trip.

In the event of an emergency, I may direct you to evacuate the school bus through the service door and/or the labeled emergency exits. Please note their locations as I point them out to you now.

I have designated (Designee's Name) to direct the possible evacuation in the event that I am unable to do so. You are not to leave the school bus unless you are so directed by

my appointed representative or me. If an evacuation does occur, either I or my appointed representative will:

- 1) Telephone 911 and provide our location and situation.*
- 2) Notify the School District Office.*
- 3) Move you to a safe location.*

Do you have any questions or concerns?

Thank you for your attention. Let's have a safe trip.

3. Chaperones

In general, chaperones shall ride in private vehicles to and from field trips or other events. Only chaperones authorized by the Principal may ride on the bus. Principals shall determine the appropriate number of chaperones by considering factors such as the age and maturity of the group being transported and potential hazards presented by the activities to be undertaken. The minimum number of chaperones needed to assist the driver and the teacher or school representative will be assigned to the bus and shall assist with maintaining order on the bus.

4. Convoys

- a. While it is desirable for vehicles to be able to assist one another on special trips, convoys (buses and other vehicles traveling in groups to special events) are strongly discouraged. Vehicles departing from the same location and at the same time shall travel individually, or at most, in pairs. Extreme caution is to be exercised to prevent tailgating. Consideration must be given to the possibility of a multi-vehicle crash resulting in mass student injuries. Drivers are to pay special attention to maintaining extra following distance that is appropriate for the road surface, weather conditions, and rate of speed.
- b. As an alternative to traveling in convoy style, a driver or chaperone may carry a two-way radio or cell phone in each vehicle in the event assistance is needed. Drivers shall designate a responsible individual to assist in communication between vehicles so that he/she can concentrate on driving. The driver may ask this same individual to assist him/her in obtaining cell phone numbers for the all other vehicles participating.

5. Third Party Bus Lease/Release of Contract

Drivers may provide transportation services for non-public school related activities such as parochial schools, churches, scouting groups, music groups, tours, etc. with the appropriate permissions. In order for a driver to obtain the required release from his/her bus lease, they must complete the Third Party Bus Lease/Release From Contract Form (*See Appendix*) and provide proof that auto liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$500,000 is in place covering this trip. Completed forms will be submitted to the Superintendent (or designee) for his approval.

ⁱ Revised Date July 1, 2008.