

TRANSPORTATION AND FIELD TRIPS

1. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO TRANSPORT STUDENTS TO MEETINGS?

When transporting students to county, district, state or national meetings an advisor is faced with a number of choices. Become familiar with your county policies regarding the transportation of students and do not violate them. Your principal probably has a copy of your county's policy book. Ask him/her to duplicate the section regarding field trips and the transportation of children for you.

With regard to the transportation of students in private vehicles. Florida statutes addresses this issue as follows:

FSS 1006.22: "When the transportation of students is necessary or practical in a motor vehicle owned or operated by a district school board other than a school bus, such transportation must be provided in designated seating positions in a passenger car not to exceed 8 students or in a multipurpose passenger vehicle designed to transport 10 or fewer persons which meets all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards. Multipurpose passenger vehicles classified as utility vehicles with a wheelbase of 110 inches or less which are required by federal motor vehicle standards to display a rollover warning label may not be used."

In addition, the Risk Management Department of the School Board of Broward County states:

1. All regular passenger cars are acceptable with the exception of PT Cruisers and convertibles
2. No motorcycles or pick-up trucks may be used to transport students. (If a vehicle is designated a truck by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration it cannot be used for the transportation of students.)
3. SUVs and Mini Vans are acceptable if they do not have a roll over warning label. (The roll over label is usually displayed on or between the sun visors)
4. Any vehicle designed to transport more than 10 persons (including the driver) cannot be used to transport students.
5. Students under 12 years of age should not be placed in the front seat of any vehicle, therefore, the front seat should not be counted when transporting students in this age range)
6. Regardless of seating capacity all passengers must have a seat belt. This does not negate number 4, if a vehicle (other than a school bus or regular bus) is designed to carry 11 or more people it cannot be used to transport students under any conditions.

Probably the best options for transporting students include:

1. Having the student's parents drive them individually to the meeting.
2. Using a school bus and driver.
3. Using a chartered bus or rental car.
4. Using commercial transportation.

2. WHAT IS A HOTEL/MOTEL REPORT FORM AND WHEN MUST I USE ONE?

A Hotel/Motel Report Form is used to report the condition of a hotel room after it has been used by students attending a meeting. An example to this 3-part form appears in this section.

Theoretically the form should be used every time you take students on a trip and they stay in a hotel or motel. The form certifies that the room was in good condition after your students check out. Make sure that a representative of the hotel signs the form, and you take one copy with you when you leave.

This form is for your protection and can usually be obtained from your school's athletic director.

3. WHAT FORMS DO I NEED TO FILL OUT FOR FIELD TRIPS?

One-day field trips within the tri-county area (Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach) need school approval only. Those outside of the tri-county area, overnight or directly involving water need to be approved by both the school and the Area Superintendent. The Area Authorization Form for a field trip is included in this section. Schools have their own Field Trip/Parent Permission Forms that participating students will have to have filled out and submitted to the school prior to the trip.

In general, a student's teachers do not have the right to deny a student permission to participate in a field trip once the trip has been administratively approved. The chaperones or sponsoring teachers may request that a student be denied the privilege of participating if the student has a record of misbehavior on a field trip.

4. HOW MANY CHAPERONES MUST ACCOMPANY A FIELD TRIP?

The number of chaperones as well as other rules governing field trips are included in Broward County School Policy 6303. A copy of this policy is in this section of the handbook.

5. MAY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DRIVE THEMSELVES AND OTHERS TO MEETINGS?

Yes, within the tri-county area. The student driving and his/her passengers, if any, must have a school Field Trip/Parent Permission Form, the Annual Field Trip Authorization Form, and the Request for Approval to Use Private Car for Transporting Students Form completed and turned in. Copies of the last two forms appear in this section.

6. HOW DO I CHARTER A BUS TO TRANSPORT STUDENTS?

First, contact either your bookkeeper or A.P. in charge of activities for the list of approved charter bus companies. Buses can only be chartered from companies on this list. Last year's list is included in this section to give you an idea of what to look for. After getting the list you should fax a quote form (sample provided) to the company of your choice.

7. WHAT ARE THE RULES REGULATING WHO MAY CHAPERONE STUDENTS?

The Jessica Lunsford Act requires that anyone who chaperones students under go a background search and fingerprinting.