

Transportation of Students in Personal Vehicles

BACKGROUND

The Fusion Education Association (FEA) Board recognizes that off-site trips offer essential educational experiences in support of students' Collegiate programming. The Board is committed to ensuring that students are safe and that staff understand their responsibilities in transporting students. The use of a staff member's personal vehicle may, in some cases, be the most prudent way to transport small groups of students. Volunteers, parents, and contractors are not authorized under this policy. The Superintendent and Principal are jointly responsible for the administration of this administrative procedure.

PROCEDURES and REQUIREMENTS

The transportation of students in personal vehicles should occur only when alternate transportation (e.g., school bus, charter vehicle, rental van) is unavailable or impractical. When such transportation is necessary, the following standards and procedures apply to protect students, employees, and the Association.

Authorization

1. No employee or teacher shall transport students in a personal vehicle without prior written authorization from the Principal or Superintendent.
2. Authorization shall only be granted when the requirements have been met including the submission and verification of documents.

Driver Eligibility Requirements

1. The driver must be a current employee of Fusion Education Association.
2. The driver must hold a valid Alberta Class 5 driver's license (or equivalent).
3. The driver must have a satisfactory driving record, with no major convictions or suspensions in the preceding three years. The driver must notify FEA immediately of any change in license status including suspensions, prohibitions or serious traffic offences.
4. The driver must supply a current Driver's abstract issued within the previous twelve months.

Insurance Requirements

1. The driver must maintain a minimum of \$2 000 000 third-party liability insurance on the vehicle to be used.
2. Proof of valid insurance must be provided prior to authorization and upon each renewal.
3. The driver must notify their insurer that the vehicle will occasionally be used to transport students for school purposes.
4. The driver's personal automobile insurance is primary in the event of an incident or loss. FEA's insurance may respond only as excess coverage where applicable.

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Vehicle Requirements

1. The vehicle must be registered and insured in Alberta, roadworthy, regularly maintained and compliant with the Alberta Traffic Safety Act.
2. Functional seat belts must be available for each occupant and occupants must wear seat belts at all times.
3. No vehicle defects that affect safe operation are permitted.
4. Passenger capacity must not exceed the number of seat belts.
5. The use of 15-passenger vans or other high-capacity vehicles not designed for passenger safety is prohibited.

Parent/Guardian Consent

1. Parent/Guardian consent must be obtained for every student transported.
2. Consent forms must identify the driver, vehicle, destination, date and purpose of the trip as well as the acknowledgement of the use of a personal vehicle.
3. Consent forms shall be retained by the school office according to the record retention schedule.

Conduct and Supervision

1. More than two individuals must be in the vehicle.
2. The driver is responsible for ensuring the safety and appropriate conduct of students in the vehicle.
3. The FEA codes of conduct for students and staff must be maintained.
4. The driver shall not use a mobile device or engage in distractions while operating the vehicle.
5. Occupants must wear seat belts at all times.
6. When possible, a second adult should accompany the driver for supervision, especially for longer trips with multiple students.

Emergency Procedures

1. In case of a collision, injury or emergency – stop safely, ensure passenger safety and contact emergency services as required.
2. Notify the Principal and Superintendent as soon as possible.
3. Complete an Incident Report Form within 24 hours of the occurrence.
4. Drivers must carry a mobile phone or other communication means as well as student emergency contact information.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Alberta Traffic Safety Act

RELATED FEA POLICES AND PROCEDURES: Employee Code of Conduct #301, Student Code of Conduct #202, Records Retention and Disposition #104, Off-Site Activities and Field Trips #602