

## Commonly Asked Questions about the Use of School Buses on Field Trips

**How do I request buses for a field trip?** All requests are entered via Transfinder. This must be approved by a School Level II approver (principal or designee) prior to the Transportation Department scheduling a bus.

**When should I request a field trip?** As soon as you know of a field trip, please schedule it. You must request a trip no later than 48 hours prior to the trip departing – the Transfinder system has been programmed to lock out requests of less than 48 hours. We will still work with you, but you must call the Transportation Department directly to make the request.

**Can I request a specific driver or bus for my trip?** We use a rotational system to offer trips to our drivers that are interested in taking trips. However, we will do our best to accommodate your driver request. When you make a request for a bus, in the Comments Section please add the driver's name.

**How do I know if my trip has been scheduled?** Confirmations are sent to the sponsor of the trip when it has been scheduled.

### **What hours are buses available?**

- During school hours, buses are available from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. If you request a bus to arrive prior to 8:30 a.m., we will make every effort to have a bus there but we make no guarantees that you will be able to depart at 8:30 a.m. All buses must be back on the originating campus no later than 2:30 p.m. during school days. Anything later than 2:30 p.m. disrupts the afternoon run.
- After school hours, the earliest a bus is available is 4:30 p.m.
- On non-school days, buses are available at the requested time.

**My trip does not fit within the hours available, what should I do?** Contact the Director of Transportation and discuss. As Transportation staffing changes, we may (or may not) be able to accommodate a request outside the listed hours on a first-come, first-served basis. The more time you can give us, the better. Monday and Fridays are very difficult days to staff an extended trip.

**My team/group is involved in the playoffs and I cannot schedule 48 hours ahead of time.** We understand this and for teams/groups involved in tournaments we schedule the same driver for the entire tournament. Keep the driver informed of the schedule and the next time you need the bus. Also, notify the Director of Transportation to keep him informed.

**How many buses should I request?** For trips going outside of Laurel County – Middle school and High school – 54 people + 1 driver; Elementary schools – 78 people + 1 driver. For trips remaining within Laurel County – 78 people + 1 driver.

**Will the bus driver know how to get to the destination?** It depends on how the Trip Request is filled out. Too many times we receive a Trip Request that simply says "Richmond, KY" or "EKU." If you give us more information, such as "Galaxy Bowling Alley, Richmond, KY" or "Planetarium at EKU" the bus driver can properly prepare.

**Can we bring coolers and other equipment on the bus?** If necessary, request a cargo bus. You cannot block the aisle or any of the emergency exits. Please remember that the bus driver is not responsible for items left on the bus such as coolers, electronics and other equipment.

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**How can I estimate the anticipated trip cost?** We have placed a tool on our webpage for you that will give you an estimate. Please remember, this is an estimate, not a quote. We bill from the time your bus(es) leave your school building to return. Adding various stops along the way will extend the mileage. <http://www.laurel.kyschools.us/Content2/30>

### **What else should I know before requesting trip buses?**

- It is a state requirement that we have a manifest on each bus – before a trip bus leaves your school, we must have a passenger list of all students, sponsors and chaperones on the bus.
- Each bus rider must be made aware of the Bus Evacuation Procedures prior to the bus leaving.
- No food or drink may be consumed on the bus.
- Athletic cleats will not be worn on the bus.
- The sponsor is responsible for keeping the bus clean and assisting in removing the trash.
- An additional charge will be added for cleaning if necessary.

**It would be quicker to take a toll road, is this okay?** Yes, but understand that all toll and/or parking fees are the responsibility of the school. Bus drivers will not be responsible for these fees.

**Are there any black-out dates for trips?** The Superintendent makes the final decision on black-out dates and he will inform the principals/administrators. During the 2015-2016 school year, extended trips were not authorized for the last two weeks of the school year.

**We want to take a trip out-of-state, what should we do?** These requests require school board approval. Please plan ahead so the trip is approved prior to departure.

**We would like to use a private carrier/motor coach.** Once again, these requests require school board approval.

**What can we do to ensure accurate billing?** When the field trip is over, the bus driver will ask the sponsor to sign the Trip Ticket. There is a spot to verify mileage and time. A sponsor's signature confirms all information on the Trip Ticket. If you have a question about billing, please contact the Trip Coordinator or the Director of Transportation.

**I did everything correct, but my bus has not arrived as scheduled. What should I do?** If a bus is not there at the scheduled time, the sponsor should immediately contact Transportation. Please do not wait hoping the bus will show up – a phone call will allow us to rectify the situation or get you an answer. The confirmation email has everyone's phone numbers, but you can always call the Director of Transportation at (606) 312-2977.

**A note from Transportation.** We have a good inventory of buses, but we do not always have a full complement of bus drivers that can support trips outside of regular hours. If you have anyone (teacher, staff, coach, band director, ROTC personnel and/or parents) that would be interested in driving field trips for your school, we can train that person and provide you a bus. They would have to go through the same screening process as all other staff members in the Transportation Department (back ground check and drug screening) and the CDL certification process.