

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

CAMPUSES FIELD TRIP INFORMATION PACKET

**2018 – 2019
SCHOOL YEAR**

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The following is a summarization of important items and/or addition to the information and procedures contained in the *Plano ISD - Building Administrators Handbook, Section IV: Budget/Accounting*.

PROCEDURES & CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHEDULING FIELD TRIPS

- Please use the new Transportation Request Form for 2018 - 2019 setup and request field trips. It contains all the necessary information for Transportation Services to schedule and service the field trip. Teachers should use this form when documenting their field trip needs and submitting requests through their Office Manager. It becomes a valuable communications, tracking and control document for them, the Office Manager and the Field Trip Specialist.
- Plano ISD buses are available from 9:15am to 2:00pm and after 5:15pm on regular school days. They are available at any time on non-school days.
- The Depart Time is the time you would like to actually pull away from the curb at your departure location. The Return Time is the time you should be back from your destination to your departure location and the bus is unloaded and empty, thus making it available for its regular route assignments. Keep in mind the time necessary to load and unload students. Allow extra travel time should you expect to be traveling in heavy traffic areas. If a bus is late getting back from a field trip, it is usually not possible to re-capture lost time and the bus will be late for its assigned routes. This affects schools, parents and bus operations so careful planning of field trip departure time, onsite time and return time is necessary.
- Transportation Services has implemented new practices and focused attention for on-time arrival by field trip drivers that are proving successful. While always striving for improvement, we respectfully request your support in minimizing the “buffer time” from when you request the bus arrive versus when you actually need to leave. District labor costs are directly affected by the amount of buffer time specified on each field trip.
- Generally, Office Managers will enter field trip requests into InfoFinder LE. The Transportation Request Form is similar in layout to the data and flow of the entry screen. Office Managers should be contacted first when Sponsors have questions about their field trip, such as times, headcounts, request number, is it scheduled, etc.
- The same school going to the same destination on the same day with two different times should be entered as two separate trip requests into InfoFinder LE. An example would be trips to Heritage Farmstead.
- Transportation Services assigns drivers to field trips utilizing a bidding system once the field trip has been approved.
- Field Trips can be changed in InfoFinder LE as long as the status is “Request Submitted” or the departure date is **10 days** greater than the day when you are processing the change(s).
- Field trip requests less than **10 days** from the current date until the departure date are considered exceptions and are to be strongly discouraged. They are classified as “walk throughs”. District policy requires that these requests must be complete in their content and approved by the Principal; Fine Arts if for Band, Orchestra, Choir, Theatre or Speech group; Executive Director for Elementary or Secondary Education; Finance and then hand-delivered (**no faxing, scanning, or emailing**) to the Field Trip Specialist in Transportation for final review with the Sponsor and expediting.
- Because of their classification and compressed timeframe for planning and execution, Transportation Services makes no guarantee a “walk through” field trip can be serviced.

- Though extremely rare, field trips may be refused or canceled due to lack of available buses or drivers. In this particular situation, you will have the option of requesting a charter bus at 100% of your groups cost. See *Charter Bus Section in this Information Packet*.
- If multiple departure locations and/or destination locations will be part of the field trip, they should be entered into the Comments section on the Transportation Request Form and on the entry screen.
- On the day of the field trip, if the school thinks the buses are late or missing, Dispatch (469-752-0792) should be contacted first. Dispatch has radio contact with buses and can quickly determine the location and status of the assigned field trip buses.

BLACKOUT DATES

- Blackout Dates are days when availability of Plano ISD buses for field trips is unlikely. The causes could be large Fine Arts events, Early Closings, testing, etc. Additional requests for field trips on these dates should be made to the Field Trip Specialist and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Curriculum required field trips to the Outdoor Learning Center and Collin County Adventure Camp are exceptions to Blackout Dates.
- Please reference Blackout Dates on the field trips webpage for the most current information.

PLANO ISD BUSES

- **We recommend 50-55 students per passenger bus.** Transportation has primarily 77 passenger buses seating 2 students per seat. The students only have 12 inches each of seat space when seated so densely. Cost is \$4.75 per mile per regular passenger bus for the 2017-18 school year. Schools are charged by actual mileage (see Estimating Field Trip Costs).
- Transportation also has Special Needs buses with 2 tie downs for wheelchairs and also come equipped with seatbelts and/or shoulder harnesses (restraints). These buses come in 22 passenger or less sizes. We encourage other students to accompany special needs students on their buses for diversity and a sense of community. Cost is \$4.75 per mile per Special Needs Bus for the 2017-18 school year.

CHARTER BUSES

- Charter buses requested using the Transportation Request Form be handled by the Field Trip Specialist as regular field trips excepting the times may be outside our normal support hours and charter buses will be provided.
- **Campuses that are already aware that regular yellow school buses cannot be reserved on the requested date (see blackout dates list) will need to contact ARTA (Steve Wood, 972-422-4000) to reserve charter buses.**
- If inside the local metroplex, costs for charter buses are \$590.00 per 5 hour minimum plus \$100 per hour for each hour after the minimum. Charter buses come in 46 and 56 passenger capacities with storage space underneath.

Kettle drums and risers will not fit in the underneath storage area. The storage entry door is 32 ½" by 54" with 33" by 58" inside storage dimensions.

- If outside the local metroplex, the charges may be time or mileage based. Please contact ARTA (Steve Wood, 972-422-4000) to determine how your trip will be costed, setup your trip and receive a cost quotation/estimate.
- Two weeks **minimum** notice should be utilized for reserving charter buses. There is more coordination and paperwork involved plus our travel company needs to acquire buses in advance. **During high usage times such as UIL competitions, graduations, local golf tournaments, etc., we have buses reserved.** On the two week threshold, we must commit to the actual number of charter buses we will be using and no guarantees for additional buses will be made by our travel company. Also, reduction in buscounts may not reduce charges after the threshold has passed.

TRUCK RENTALS

- Truck rentals can be ordered on the Transportation Request Form in the comments area.
- The boxtrucks come in small (16') and large (24' - 91 ½" wide x 21' 6" long x 93 ¾" high) sizes. Only large boxtrucks will have tailgate lifts.
- Costs for boxtruck rentals are currently \$95.00 per 24 hour period plus fuel plus \$0.75 per mile.
- Costs for PISD boxtrucks are \$4.75 per mile. We have 3 PISD boxtrucks assigned to Field Trips and are in high demand.

ESTIMATING FIELD TRIP COSTS

Schools are charged on an actual per mile basis for field trips from the Campus, to the Destination, and return back to the campus. This is considered a round trip.

Example: Renner Middle School to Sandy Lake Park – Carrollton, TX

Departing Mileage: Renner MS → Sandy Lake Park – Carrollton, TX (Est. Miles: 11.4)

Returning Mileage: Sandy Lake Park → Renner MS (Est. Miles: 11.4)

Total Mileage: 23 (rounded up to the nearest whole mile)

Est. Cost: \$109.25 per bus

To estimate the cost of using a PISD bus for a field trip, following these steps:

- 1) Using Google Maps, determine the distance from the departure school to the destination location.
- 2) Add these two mileages together and multiply by 2 for a round trip. Round up to the nearest whole mile.
- 3) Multiply the above result by \$4.75 to find the estimated field trip cost per bus. If using more than 1 bus, multiply the estimated per bus cost by the number of planned buses for a total estimated field trip cost.
- 4) The total estimated field trip cost may be more or less than the final cost because actual mileage from the buses involved is used. **The difference may reflect different buscounts, routes, detours, extra stops, etc., from the original estimate.**

SPONSOR TRIP SHEET AREA INSTRUCTIONS

Trip Sheets are the documents that the Driver uses to conduct the field trip. It utilizes the information provided when the trip sheet is entered into InfoFinder LE.

Trip Sheets have a several areas, including a Sponsor completed area which will be discussed in detail.

Sponsors should not leave the bus at the conclusion of the field trip without completing their area.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Group Depart Time: | Time the buses departed from the Depart From location. |
| Sponsor Signature: | The Sponsor should sign or initial this line to indicate they provided the information. |
| Return Drop Time: | Time the bus was back at the school, empty and available for other activities or return to the Transportation Depot. This is the "empty time". |
| Sponsor Signature: | The Sponsor should sign or initial this line to indicate they provided the information. |
| Sponsor Comments: | Any notes or information the Sponsor wants to record pertaining to the field trip. <u>This area is optional.</u> It is at the Sponsor's discretion to provide information. It might contain comments about Driver conduct, appreciations, communications, field trip problems, etc. |

SPONSORS & AUTHORIZED CHAPERONES

Sponsors are PISD Employees that request the field trip, prepare the group for the field trip, provide funding for the field trip and are the primary contact for the group during the field trip.

Chaperones are adult individuals selected and prepared by the Sponsor for the field trip. It is the Sponsor's responsibility to have the proper paperwork for each chaperone submitted, processed and approved by appropriate PISD personnel according to established PISD policies before the field trip begins. Chaperones answer to the Sponsor and ultimately are their responsibility.

Sponsors and authorized chaperones are expected to perform their responsibilities to ensure the safety and well-being of the sponsored group during the transporting of the sponsored group to the destination location, while at the destination location and during the transporting of the sponsored group back to the departure location.

Chaperones may or may not be PISD Employees.

PISD Transportation Services Employees are not eligible to act as or be qualified as chaperones excepting the following condition. PISD Transportation Services Employees having children, grandchildren, nieces and/or nephews as members of the sponsored group may act as and be qualified as chaperones by being qualified before the trip begins as a chaperone by the sponsoring group following established PISD policies.

PISD Transportation Services Employees acting as qualified chaperones receive no compensation for acting in that capacity.

ELIGIBLE FIELD TRIP RIDERS

In his directive memo of July 10, 2003 concerning Liability for Chaperones and Non-employees, Deputy Superintendent Danny Modisette is quoted, "PISD insurance only provides coverage to authorized chaperones and PISD staff members as passengers in district owned or leased vehicles. Our insurance does not provide protection for children or relatives of chaperones or PISD staff members" and they are "therefore prohibited from riding district owned or leased vehicles, unless they are authorized adult chaperones". This memo is a matter of PISD record and a copy is on file with the Field Trip Specialist for examination.

On field trips using PISD buses or chartered buses, eligible riders are limited to the driver, sponsor(s), authorized adult chaperone(s) and student members of the sponsored group.

This policy does not imply that un-authorized person(s) should be stranded. In that case, Dispatch, the Transportation Director or Field Trip Specialist should be contacted for instructions. If unable to reach any of the above parties for instructions, the following guidelines apply:

- The Sponsor provides formal permission to do so on their section of the Trip Sheet.
- The transport of the un-authorized person(s) can be accomplished in a safe manner.
- The Trip Sheet should be notated in the Driver Comments section as to what is transpiring.
- The Field Trip Specialist should be made aware of the situation on the next available workday.

PRE-REQUESTED DRIVER

The requesting of specific drivers to service field trips by sponsors is not supported out of a concern for equity of hours and opportunity for field trip drivers.

This policy can be waived should a sponsor demonstrate in writing why that specific driver was requested and how he can contribute to a more fulfilling field trip experience for the sponsored group.

Each instance will be discouraged and evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Field Trip Specialist and/or Transportation Director.

NO SHOW FIELD TRIPS

When drivers arrive on or before the Departure Time at the correct Departure Location and no group has arrived to utilize the bus for a field trip, the driver will wait 15 minutes past the indicated Departure Time before taking any action.

If Dispatch is open:

- The driver will go into the departure location, usually a school, and attempt to locate the sponsor and/or group. If unable to locate the sponsor and/or group, the driver will go to the Front Office and inquire about the status of the group taking the field trip.
- If conditions still indicate no field trip is going to occur, the driver will contact Dispatch to inform them of the situation and receive instruction from Dispatch.
- If Dispatch declares the trip a “No Show”, the driver will mark “SHOWTIME” on the trip sheet and review the field trip with the Field Trip Specialist before turning their trip sheet in for processing.

If Dispatch is not open:

- The driver will go around and about the departure location, usually a school, and attempt to locate the sponsor and/or group.
- If the driver is unable to find the sponsor or group, the driver should contact the Transportation Director or Field Trip Specialist for further instructions. Their numbers are contained on the Emergency Card in the Emergency Packet at the front of all buses.
- If the driver cannot contact the Transportation Director or Field Trip Specialist for directions and the driver has taken the above steps to locate the group, the driver will wait a minimum of 30 minutes past the indicated departure time, return to the Transportation Depot, mark the trip sheet “SHOWTIME” and discuss it with the Field Trip Specialist on the next workday before turning it in for processing.

BUS STANDING DURING A FIELD TRIP

Buses are to remain at the destination location until the sponsored group is ready to return to their departure location. Exceptions would be Drop & Return Field Trips or upon specific instructions from the Field Trip Specialist and/or Dispatch.

Buses are to be idled according to Plano ISD policies in compliance with the "Clean Fleet Ordinance" guidelines and directives established by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG).

On trips with 3 or more buses (convoy or caravan), the drivers may leave the destination location for meals only under the following guidelines:

- Safety and service are the two paramount factors for all actions in this subject area.
- The sponsor must directly express permission to the designated Lead Driver for drivers to leave the departure location in this subject area. Without that permission, drivers are not permitted to leave the departure location.
- The Lead Driver shall be responsible for all drivers and his decisions in this subject area are final.
- All buses, excepting one, shall remain in place and accessible for the sponsored group.
- The Lead Driver shall contact the Sponsor and provide him with a cellphone number where the Lead Driver can be immediately reached should the Sponsor need the drivers to return.
- The drivers desiring to leave the premises may do so to eat a quick meal or purchase food to be consumed back at the destination location.
- The drivers leaving the premises may do so by consolidating themselves into one bus. One bus only may leave the destination location.
- The bus and drivers leaving the destination location should not be greater than approximately 5 minutes driving time from the destination location.
- A driver desiring to leave the destination area may do so only after providing the Lead Driver with a contact cellphone number and the above constraints of distance and availability are met.