

## BUSINESS AND NONINSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS

### SCHOOL-RELATED TRIPS

BP 3541.1(a)

#### **Trips by School Vehicles**

Note: Federal safety regulations enacted in 2000 govern the number of students that may be transported in vans. These regulations are applicable to the purchase or lease of new vans by Alaska school districts. After 1 September 2000, new vehicles designed by the manufacturer to carry 11 or more persons (rated capacity if equipped with full seating) that are used for transporting students to or from school or school-related activities are required to meet all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards for school buses. As a result, passenger vans are limited to transporting a total of ten passengers, including the driver, unless the passenger van or suburban meets the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards applicable to school buses. The large majority of passenger vans do not meet and comply with Federal school bus safety standards. Although used vans are not covered under the federal regulations, for risk management purposes, districts may want to require the new van standards for the purchase of used vans.

Besides taking students to and from school, the Board may approve transportation for field trips and school-sponsored activities. The Superintendent or designee shall regulate the use of the district transportation, including vans, for approved school-related activities. Student councils, parent-teacher associations, and any other organizations requesting transportation shall be fully responsible for the costs of the trip. To the extent that funding has been approved by the Board, such costs may be charged to the district.

#### **Transportation by Private Automobile**

Note: In spite of any waiver of liability, in certain cases a court may find schools liable for injuries to students occurring in private vehicles during school-sponsored activities. Therefore, AASB recommends that districts consult their attorneys before deciding whether or not to allow the use of private automobiles for school-related trips.

Note: The following option and exhibit are provided for districts that allow transportation by private vehicles.

The Superintendent or designee may authorize the transportation of students by private automobile for approved field trips and activities when the vehicle is driven by an adult registered with the district for such purposes. Drivers shall be issued safety instructions and emergency information. All student passengers shall provide permission slips signed by their parents/guardians.

Drivers shall be required to possess a valid driver's license and liability insurance of at least \$100,000 per occurrence.

Note: AASB strongly recommends that districts require at least \$100,000 minimum liability. If desired, however, the district may change the above specification to read "liability insurance in amounts required by law."

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BP 3541.1(b)

Owners, drivers and passengers shall be informed that the registered owner and his/her insurance company are responsible for any accidents which may occur. District personnel who frequently transport students in their private vehicles are urged to carry liability insurance of \$1,000,000 or more per occurrence.

A seat belt must be provided for each passenger. Trucks and pickups may not transport more persons than can safely sit in the passenger compartment.

Owners furnishing private vehicles shall not accept reimbursement from passengers in excess of the cost of operating the vehicle. Reimbursement for the use of private transportation may be made from district funds.

#### **Transportation by other private means (boat, ATV, off-road vehicles, snow machines)**

Note: The following optional language addresses remote districts and schools where there may be a need to transport students via alternate means such as boats, ATV's or snow machines.

The Superintendent or designee may authorize the transportation of students by other private means for approved field trips and activities when an adult registered with the district for such purposes operates the vehicle. Operators shall be issued safety instructions and emergency information. Operators must abide by the specific vehicle safety ratings such as passenger capacity, maximum speed and required safety equipment (helmets, life jackets, etc.)

All student passengers shall provide permission slips signed by their parents/guardians. Operators shall be required to possess a valid driver's license and liability insurance of at least \$100,000 per occurrence.

*(cf. 6153 - School-sponsored Trips)*

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