

**June 3, 2022**  
**Memorandum**

**To: Principals & Directors**  
**From: Anne Gulati, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations**  
**RE: Student Transportation in Private Vehicles & Updated Permission Form for School-Sponsored Trips and Events**

Effective September, 2022, the District will require use of an **updated permission slip form for all school events, field trips and student travel**. This permission form is attached. Please replace the permission slip form you are currently using with the attached and share with appropriate staff members.

In addition, at its May 17, 2022 meeting, the School Committee approved an updated policy governing student transportation in private vehicles. The purpose of the policy is to:

- Provide a consistent framework for all schools, K-12.
- Establish minimum safety standards for transporting pupils in private vehicles, which are comparable to standards used in school buses and 7D pupil vans.

Highlights of the new policy include the following:

- The parent/guardian of each student who is being transported signs a consent and release form (the attached permission slip form), which identifies the event and the driver's name;
- The driver is appropriately licensed and insured;
- The driver requires seat belts to be used by all passengers, including the use of child passenger restraints by children under the age of 8 who measure less than 57" in height;
- The driver engages in safe driving practices;
- The vehicle does not exceed fourteen passengers, plus a driver; and
- Travel is extracurricular only: privately-owned vehicles are not to be used to transport students between home and school, or for any form of 'fixed route transportation.'

ALG/alg  
Attachment(s)

**NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**PERMISSION FORM FOR SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS AND EVENTS**

**Please complete and return this form to your child's teacher**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to participate in  
the following school sponsored trip/event/athletic season: \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_\*. I understand that the mode of transportation to and from this trip/event will be:

School Bus  Private Vehicle  Other \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand this trip/event/athletic season is voluntary and attendance by my child is not required.
- I understand that Needham Public Schools will take reasonable precautions for the safety and welfare of all students involved.
- I understand that the Superintendent may cancel any trip/event/athletic practice or contest up until the time of departure for any reason. The Needham Public Schools will not be responsible for making refunds for goods or services not received due to such cancellation, however reasonable efforts to obtain such refunds will be made.
- I have instructed my child to behave in a proper manner at all times so as to reflect credit on his/her parents and school and to act in accordance with directions given by those in charge.
- I agree that my child may be transported by [ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

*(insert all possible drivers)* to and/or from the trip/event/athletic practices and contests. I expressly release the Town of Needham, Needham Public Schools, the School Committee and all their employees, agents, volunteers, and any and all individuals assisting in the foregoing activity (the "Releasees") from any and all claims, rights of action and causes of action that may have arisen in the past, or may arise in the future, directly or indirectly, from personal injuries or property damage resulting from my child being transported by the above-named individual(s).

- In consideration for my child's participation in the above-described trip/event/athletic season and except in the case of reckless or willful misconduct, I expressly agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless from and waive against the Town of Needham, the Needham Public Schools and their employees, agents and assigns, any and all claims for medical expenses, loss of services, injury to person or property, death, loss of consortium or other claims that may occur at, or traveling to or from, or from participation in, the trip/event/athletic practices and/or contests.
- I further consent to emergency treatment by a physician in the event of injury to or illness of my child during his/her participation in the above-described trip/event. I accept full responsibility for all costs for any such emergency treatment.

- If applicable: I give permission for my child to be given the following medication (name and dose):

\_\_\_\_\_ by the person delegated by the School Nurse.

- Check here  if you give permission for your child to drive him/herself.
- Check here  if you, or your properly licensed child, will transport students using your private vehicle. If checked, please respond to the following questions:
  - I possess a valid operator’s license and agree to transport students to the aforementioned trip/event using my private vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/ No/ Not Applicable)
  - I give permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name), who has been properly licensed for at least six months, to transport other students using my private vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/ No/ Not Applicable)
  - My vehicle is properly registered, annually inspected and insured to the following minimum limits: \$100,000 per person/ \$300,000 per accident bodily injury coverage; and \$100,000 property damage coverage: \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/ No)
  - My vehicle’s capacity does not exceed fourteen passengers, plus a driver: \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/ No)
  - I will operate my vehicle safely and will require the use of seat belts by all passengers, including the use of child passenger restraints by children under the age of 8 who measure less than 57 inches in height: \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/ No)

I/We have read and understand this Form and sign it voluntarily with full knowledge of its significance.

Parent/Guardian (only one signature required)	Parent/Guardian
Date: _____	Date: _____

- \* Note that if a fee is required to attend this field trip/event/athletic season:
- Check here  if you are interested in obtaining a scholarship to cover your child’s participation in this event. I understand that this information is confidential.
  - My fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (enter amount) is enclosed. Please make your check payable to Needham Public Schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Updated May 23, 2022

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY  
NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FILE

EEAG

Policy for: <b>STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES</b>	Revision 2
Date Approved by School Committee:  May 17, 2022	Signature of Chair:  Matthew Spengler

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School buses will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. However, when buses are not available, private vehicles may be used to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day, provided that all of the following conditions are met:

1. The activity has the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools or School Principal;
2. The parents/guardians of each student who is being transported signs a consent and release form, which identifies the event and the driver's name;
3. The driver certifies in writing that:
  - a. The driver will operate the vehicle in fact, and will not permit another person to drive the vehicle;
  - b. The driver has a valid driver's license in good standing, which is appropriate to the vehicle being driven. Drivers whose license is lapsed, suspended or revoked are not permitted to drive students. If the driver is a student, the student must have been properly licensed for at least six months;
  - c. The vehicle is properly registered, annually inspected and insured to the following limits:
    - i. \$100,000 per person/ \$300,000 per accident bodily injury coverage; and
    - ii. \$100,000 property damage coverage;
  - d. The driver will require the use of seat belts by all vehicle occupants, and the use of child passenger restraints by children under the age of 8 who measure less than 57 inches in height;
  - e. The transportation of students shall not be diverted to include other non-school purposes;
  - f. The vehicle's capacity does not exceed fourteen passengers, plus a driver; and
  - g. The driver will not engage in any activity that may interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle, including: smoking; consuming alcoholic beverages or controlled substances; refueling while passengers are in the vehicle; or using a cellphone or other non-voice activated electronic device while driving.

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This policy applies equally to pupil transportation in privately-owned vehicles that is provided by school personnel, parents/guardians, volunteers and properly licensed students. Such transportation will be considered by the School Committee to be part of a school employee's duties, when authorized by the Superintendent or School Principal.

Under no circumstances shall privately-owned vehicles be used to transport students between home and school, or for any form of 'fixed route transportation.' Fixed route transportation is defined as the transportation of pupils on a predetermined daily basis to and from a set location for the length of the pupils' school year.

The use of Needham Public Schools-owned multi-function school activity buses is governed by School Committee Policy #EEAFB.

LEGAL REFERENCE

- M.G.L. Ch. 90 s. 7D
- M.G.L. Ch. 90 s. 13A
- M.G.L. Ch. 90 s. 7AA