

GSCS - Transportation Department
Trip Planning Manual
2017-2018



Transportation Form – T022

INTRODUCTION

The GSCS Transportation Department is prepared to provide safe, dependable and efficient transportation services for most extracurricular activities. We currently average between 1200 and 1500 trips per school year. This document will provide you and your staff with needed information for planning and requesting bus service for all types of extracurricular activities.

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1. Labor Rates and Time Calculations

- **System Drivers** - \$12.00 per hour
- **Bus Monitors** - \$10.00 per hour
- **Coaches/School Based Drivers** – No Charge
- **Utility Drivers** - \$12.00 per hour
- **Minimum Rate** - All compensated drivers and monitors will receive a 3 hour minimum for all trips.
- **Start and Finish Times** – All compensated time will be collected from the driver's actual time sheet. This may differ from the original estimate.
- **Accrued Hours** - Labor charges will begin accruing when the trip actually begins and ends, on normal operational days. Labor charges for trips scheduled on non-operational days will begin accruing at the garage location and will include all required pre-trip and post-trip procedures.
- **Overnight Billing Rates** – Trips that require a system driver to stay overnight will be billed a 12 hour minimum for each full day that the driver is away from home plus a \$45.00 overnight fee for each night's stay. Schools and programs will be billed actual hours worked for travel days to and from the overnight destination (3 hour minimum applies).
- **Note:** System driver rates will be waived for cheerleader and band buses when performing at scheduled athletic competitions.

2. Vehicle Charges

- **Mileage Rate** - \$2.00 per mile
- Accrued mileage will begin and end at the trip's designated point of origin on operational days. Mileage to and from the garage location will be included on trips scheduled on non-operational days.
- All vehicle charges will be waived for the following trip types:
 - a) Sanctioned GHSA competitions (scheduled games only)
 - b) Middle School Athletic Competitions (scheduled games only)
 - c) Cheerleading and Band trips performing at athletic competitions (scheduled games only)
 - d) Approved Academic Competitions
 - e) Required Curriculum Based Trips (CTAE)

3. Additional Fees

- **Cleaning Fee** – Any buses returned by school based drivers that require additional cleaning due to neglect or excessive trash, debris or mud will be assessed a \$45.00 charge. (Pictures will be provided to all applicable school administrators.)
- **Parking Fee** – All parking related charges are the responsibility of the attending staff members and trip planners. Bus drivers will not pay related parking fees.
- **Toll Fee** – All toll related costs are the responsibility of the attending staff members and trip planners. Bus drivers will not pay related toll cost.
- **Late Cancellation fee** – If a planner is required to cancel a trip, the trip should be canceled in the trip planning software no less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled departure time. Trips canceled with less than 48 hours notice, will be invoiced for 3 hours labor. *Late cancellation fees will not apply to trips cancelled due to weather, emergency conditions or other circumstances beyond the requestor's control.*
- **Late Departure Fee** – A \$50.00 late departure fee will be assessed to any trip that fails to depart its final destination as scheduled. A 15 minute grace period will be allowed. This process only applies to trips scheduled on operational days that utilize that utilize a system driver.

4. Billing Procedures

- All trip invoices will be forwarded to schools and departments no later than the 2nd Wednesday of each month for charges accumulated during the previous month.
- Late payment notices will be forwarded to all applicable principals and the GSCS Finance Dept. for payments not remitted within 30 days.
- All checks should be made payable to: **GSCS Transportation Dept.**
- All payments should be sent to:
GSCS Transportation Department
1551 Flynt St
Griffin, GA 30224

5. Departure and Arrival Times

- Trips scheduled on operational days that utilize a system driver cannot depart the point of origin prior to 8:45 AM.
- Trips scheduled on operational days that utilize a system driver must return back to their point of origin no later than 2:15 PM.
- Trips scheduled on operational days that utilize a school based or utility driver can leave as early as desired and arrive back to the point of origin as late as desired. However, if a trip bus arrives back to its point of origin after normal dismissal time, the attending students will have to arrange their own transportation back home. Normal route buses will not be held and normal PM routes will not be altered to serve students arriving back to their school after normal dismissal.

6. Trip Requests

- All trip requests should be submitted using Tyler Versa Trans' "Trip Tracker". This is a web based application facilitated by the GSCS Transportation Department. Individual access and user rights are determined by each principal and department head.
- All requests for single day trips must be submitted and approved at least 4 weeks prior to the planned departure date. Exceptions to this requirement will only be made for "win to play" athletic scenarios and State Play-Off games and matches. * Note: In win to play scenarios, planners are encouraged to schedule bus service based on the assumption that a team will play through the entire event. Late cancellation fees will not apply if a team is eliminated early.
- All Out of State and Overnight trips must be submitted and approved no less than 3 months prior to the planned departure date.
- All Out of Country trips must be submitted and approved no less than 6 months prior to the planned departure date.
- All planned trips must be entered into the planning software (Trip Tracker) and go through all required approval processes.

7. Bus Capacity

- The recommended capacity for General Ed Buses is as Follows:
 - a) Elementary (Local Trips) – 72 students
 - b) Elementary (Out of Town) – 60 students
 - c) Middle (All Trips) – 48 students
 - d) High (All Trips) – 48 students
- For each adult rider on an ES trip: Subtract two students.
- For each adult rider on a MS trip: Subtract one student
- For each adult rider on a HS trip: Subtract one student
- Capacities do not allow room for supplies or equipment

8. Supplies and Equipment

- Needed supplies and equipment can be transported during field trips with certain minor restrictions.
- All supplies and equipment must be secured in or under a bus seat in a manner that will prevent them from becoming airborne in the event of an accident. This will reduce the seating capacity of the bus. For planning purposes, subtract 3 elementary students and 2 middle or high students for each seat occupied with supplies.
- No supplies or equipment can be placed in seats adjacent to emergency escape windows or in front of the rear emergency exit.
- No supplies can be stored in the driver compartment or in the stairwell area.
- No supplies can be stored in the aisle of the bus while in travel. If a single object cannot be secured properly in or under a bus seat, it cannot be transported on the bus.

9. Sack Lunches

- Requesting sack lunches from the Nutrition Department is the responsibility of the Trip Requestor. Trip Requestors are responsible for notifying their individual nutrition staff, when planning a trip.
- If sack lunches are required, the number of requested sack lunches must be defined in the remarks section of the Trip Request Form.

10. Communications

- At least one faculty member or chaperone must provide a cell phone number that will allow the driver to communicate with the group during their trip. Any unplanned circumstances, itinerary changes or emergencies should be communicated to the driver as soon as possible. All drivers will carry a cell phone and will provide their number as well.

11. Recovery Site

- Prior to a group separating from their driver(s), a return time and a recovery location should be established

12. Driver Activity

- It is the general expectation of the GSCS Transportation Department that all system drivers remain with the student group or at the determined recovery site, during field trips. Exceptions are made for longer full day and weekend trips. If the student group will be occupied for an extended period of time (more than 4 hours), the driver(s) may choose to go and eat lunch individually or as a group (only one vehicle should be utilized for this purpose). Drivers should never be more than 15 minutes away from the designated recovery sight.

13. Driver Access

- Many venues provide bus drivers with free access to events and facilities. Some may not. The provision of venue tickets and passes for your bus driver(s) is not required, but it is greatly appreciated. When planning a trip, if the driver(s) will not be granted or provided access to a given venue or event, please ensure that they have access to a climate controlled area and a restroom, when planning your trip.

14. Driver Meals

- The cost of all driver meals is the individual responsibility of the assigned driver. However, inclusion in pre-planned group meals is greatly appreciated.

15. Black-Out Dates

16. Special Education

- No trips will be scheduled during the last 10 operational days of the school year. Once the GSCS Transportation Department reaches its maximum amount of available trips on a single operational day, that day will be blocked for any future request.
- SE students whose IEP includes transportation as a required or recommended service should be provided the same level of service while on field trips. This includes but is not limited to: safety harnesses, star seats, wheel chairs, and the need for a bus monitor.
- When requesting trips, please define how many students utilize wheel chairs or other equipment as this will determine both the number and type of buses assigned to the trip.
- All trips that are designated for SE students only, must employ a minimum of one monitor per bus. The school or department may utilize their own para-pro to reduce costs. If non-ambulatory student(s) are attending the trip, a system monitor must be utilized.
- Students who utilize wheel chairs must be loaded and transported in their chair. They cannot be removed from the wheel chair and secured in a regular bus seat. They must be transported in a bus that is equipped with a chair lift and the proper securing equipment. If you have any questions concerning a particular student and their required transportation needs, please contact the Transportation Department.
- A good rule to communicate to all trip requestors in your facility is: *“Any service required for a student during normal bus service is required for all bus service.” Trip requesters should never compromise a student’s safety in order to eliminate the need for additional buses, equipment or personnel.*
- Note: General education trips that included students utilizing wheel chairs will not be invoiced for the additional cost of a lift bus, SE driver or monitor. Trips scheduled specifically for special needs students will be invoiced for all related cost as described in sections 1 through 4.

17. Student Information

- Student information is an extremely important element when planning trips. A single student roster should be maintained by the trip planner.
- For transportation purposes, you must be able to identify not only who was on the trip, but which students are on a particular bus. This can be facilitated prior to the trip, by pre-assigning students to a particular bus, or a staff member / chaperone can establish their roster by documenting each student once the bus(s) are loaded. This process needs to be completed before the buses depart from the initial point of origin.
- All rosters should include a minimum of: each student's name, address, and a home phone number.
- **Note:** If the trip planner chooses to create individual bus rosters during the loading process, the following procedure is recommended:
 1. Provide a full student roster with all required information to an attending staff member on each bus.
 2. Once loaded, the staff member can call roll and simply check or highlight each student that is on their bus.
 3. Once this process is complete, the staff member can use this list to ensure that all students are accounted for each time the students load and unload during the trip.
 4. Once each student roster is documented, students should remain on that bus for the duration of the trip.
- In the event of an accident, this roster(s) must be made available to the responding law enforcement agency.

18. Bus Accident Protocol

- In the event of a bus accident, the drivers are trained to follow certain required procedures. All staff members and students should follow the driver's instructions. The driver will need your help with the following processes: assessing the students for injuries, ensuring that students remain in the seat that they were in when the accident occurred, ensuring that each student stays on the bus, unless an evacuation is required (see below). Once the students have been assessed, use the student roster for that bus and document the seating location of each rider on the bus. Continue to follow the driver's instructions until an emergency responder arrives. In the event that the driver is injured or incapacitated, immediately assess the students, then call 911 and follow their instructions. Once a responder is on the way, follow all procedures as described above. If an evacuation is required, follow the instructions provided by the driver at the beginning of the trip (see below).

19. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

- Prior to the initial departure of a field trip or athletic trip, the driver should provide all riders with a quick verbal description of how to evacuate the bus in case of emergency (This is a DOE regulation for all extracurricular trips). Faculty and students alike should pay close attention. In the unfortunate event of an accident or emergency, these procedures must be followed. Emergency scenarios include but are not limited to accidents, mechanical problems, fire or severe weather. A copy of the bus emergency evacuation procedures is available on the GSCS transportation website. Please ensure that all trip requesters in your building are familiar with this document, prior to planning a trip.

20. Student Behavior

- All bus behavior rules and consequences apply to extra-curricular trips just as they would during normal bus service.

21. Charter Buses

While the GSCS Transportation Department strives to provide our schools with buses and drivers for all trips, there may be times when this is not possible and your school looks to use a charter bus company. An October 2009 accident involving a charter bus carrying college students just south of Atlanta reminded us that it is essential that school systems know that the company they are contracting with for services is properly licensed, has proper insurance, is reputable and meets all requirements when it comes to the safe transportation of students.

All schools or departments who contract charter bus services are required to comply with all state regulations, laws and liability limits.

- To assist schools and departments in this process, the GSCS Transportation Department will make available a pre-approved list of charter companies for GSCS trip planners to utilize.
- If a school or department is considering using a company that is not on the pre-approved list, the name of the company and their USDOT number should be submitted to the GSCS Transportation Department for verification and approval.
- You should always obtain a certificate of liability when contracting a trip with a charter bus company. The GSCS Transportation will strive to maintain a certificate of liability for carriers on the pre-approved list
- In any Charter agreement, the trip planner should include language that prevents the chosen vendor from using a 3rd party carrier to provide the requested services, unless that carrier meets the same safety and liability standards as the contracting carrier..

22. Personal Vehicles and Vans

- GSCS employee's personal vehicles are not to be used to transport students for extracurricular activities.
- Trip planners should not facilitate, plan or organize trips based on the use of anyone's personal vehicle (IE: parents).
- 14+1 Passenger vans cannot be used to transport students to and from extracurricular activities.

23. External Services

- The Griffin-Spalding School District may provide transportation services for external agencies and individuals that provide support services for our students, community members and stakeholders.
- The Griffin-Spalding School District reserves the right to partner only with agencies and individuals that support the goals and mission of the school board.
- Buses purchased with state bond allocations will not be used in any "for profit" activities.
- All related costs to the district will be recovered from any individual or agency that utilizes the district's school buses and drivers for non-school related activities. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Superintendent.
- All individuals or agencies that enter into an agreement to use the district's transportation services and resources must follow all rules, processes and procedures as defined by the GSCS Transportation Department.

24. Procedures for School Based Drivers

Numerous schools utilize coaches and school based drivers to perform both field trips and athletic trips. Under DOE regulations these drivers are responsible for performing the same duties as a system driver when performing an extracurricular trip. Please see below for required processes and documentation:

- Before performing a trip, all drivers must obtain their trip packets prior to departure. Drivers performing weekend trips should make arrangements to pick up their trip packets on Friday.
- Drivers should always use the assigned bus on their trip detail. They should never take an alternate vehicle without prior approval from the Transportation Department.
- Prior to departure, all drivers should perform a complete pre-trip inspection of the vehicle. This inspection should be documented as the inspection is being performed. Pre-trip forms will be provided in the trip packet.
- All buses will be fueled prior to being assigned to a trip. This prevents the school based driver from having to fuel the bus. It does not absolve the driver from ensuring that the bus has fuel. Always check prior to departure.
- Prior to departure, all drivers should inspect and sign the DVIR book (previous driver's entry).
- Prior to departure, all drivers should note their starting mileage on the trip form.
- Once students are loaded, the driver should give all riders a brief verbal description of how to evacuate the bus in the event of an emergency. The required narrative will be included in the trip packet. This narrative should be given on every trip.
- Drivers should note that there are speed restrictions that apply specifically to school buses in the state of Georgia. When performing extracurricular trips, school buses can run the posted speed limit up to 55 mph. Buses should not operate over 55. It is understood that due to higher speed limits on Interstate Highways buses may break this barrier when utilizing on-ramps and exit ramps. However, once in a lane of travel, all buses should maintain a speed of 55 mph. All GSCS buses utilize GPS tracking systems and the speed of the bus is monitored any time the bus is in operation.
- Once a trip is completed, the bus should be returned to the garage location. The bus should be placed in an open parking space in the "Spare bus" area.
- Once at the garage location, the driver should record their ending mileage on the trip form.
- Once the bus has been returned, the driver should perform a complete post trip inspection of the vehicle. If there are any needed repairs, they should be documented on the DVIR book for that bus. The yellow carbon copy should be turned in with all other trip documents.
 - All required trip documents should be turned in after the vehicle is returned and inspected. All completed documents should be placed in the black collection box located near the entrance door at the bus shop.
 - All keys should be placed in the box along with the trip documents.

25. Activity Buses

Activity buses are placed at selected GSCS High Schools and Middle schools, if requested by the Athletic Director. These vehicles are designated for specific athletic purposes only. They can be used to transport athletes between practices fields and between middle and high school campuses. They may also be used for local ROTC purposes (example: color guard presentations). A formal trip request is not required for these activities (ROTC instructors should contact the Transportation Department before taking the buses off campus). See below for restrictions and operational requirements:

- Activity buses should only be utilized for their described purpose. They should not be utilized for other services without submitting a trip request and gaining the required approvals.
- When domiciled on campus, all activity buses should be parked in a secure location. The parking brakes should be set and wheel chocks should be placed appropriately. Never leave the bus parked on an incline or in an area that hinders normal traffic flow.
- Student athletes should not gain access to an activity bus without the presence of a coach or an administrator.
- The fueling of activity buses is the sole responsibility of the applicable athletic department.
- The Transportation Department may retrieve an activity bus at any time for the purpose of preventive maintenance.
- Only certified CDL drivers as designated by the Transportation Department should operate an activity bus.
- All coach drivers needing to utilize an activity bus should notify their athletic director prior to operating the bus.
- The storage and issuance of keys for all activity buses is the responsibility of the applicable athletic director.