

## **Springfield School Committee's Policy Regarding Van Use for Transportation of Springfield Public School Students**

### **I. Purpose**

Allowing Springfield Public Schools ("SPS") high school students and certain middle school students to be transported by passenger vans owned by SPS for limited purposes and under specific conditions will provide SPS students with valuable educational and athletic opportunities. The proper use of SPS vans is required to ensure the safety of SPS students, staff and resources. This policy outlines the use of vans owned by SPS to transport SPS students.

### **II. Scope**

This policy applies to all SPS vans used to transport high school students and certain middle school students. This policy sets forth the requirements for when SPS vans can be used to transport students, who is authorized to drive an SPS van when students are being transported, and how SPS vans should be operated when students are passengers.

### **III. Use of SPS Vans to Transport Students**

In most situations school buses should be used to transport SPS students participating in school co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when the number of SPS students to be transported is fifteen (15) or less, SPS vans can be used to transport high school students at Springfield Central High School, High School of Commerce, Roger L. Putnam Vocational-Technical Academy, Springfield High School of Science & Technology and students at Springfield Conservatory of Arts, Renaissance School, and Duggan Academy for the following Approved Activities:

#### **Approved Activities**

- Visit college campuses
- Attend SPS approved extended learning opportunities after school (e.g. MCAS tutoring) within the City of Springfield
- Attend SPS approved school clubs events within thirty (30) miles
- Attend SPS approved sports events organized by MIAA within thirty (30) miles
- Attend SPS approved art experiences (e.g. performances, theater lessons, museums) within thirty (30) miles
- Transport SPS student athletes to SPS athletic events or practice when the SPS team has no more than fifteen (15) SPS student athletes
- Transport Putnam students to their vocational programs

- Transport homeless students and emancipated students to PACE or support services within the City of Springfield.

The principal or his or her designee must approve use of SPS van for transporting SPS students for a particular Approved Activity.

#### **Prohibited Use of SPS Vans for Student Transportation**

The following reasons for transporting students in SPS vans is prohibited:

- Overnight student travel
- Transportation of more than fifteen (15) students
- Travel more than thirty (30) miles
- Any reason not mentioned under the Approved Activities, without the Superintendent's approval

#### **IV. Insurance Coverage**

In order to be used for an Approved Activity, the SPS van must be insured by an approved insurance carrier with personal liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$1,500,000.

#### **V. Prerequisites for Drivers of SPS Vans Transporting Students**

Drivers of the SPS vans must adhere to the following:

- The number of passengers to be transported in a SPS passenger van must not exceed the passenger capacity of the van.
- Only authorized SPS employees may drive a SPS van transporting SPS students.
- Drivers must have and maintain a valid US issued driver's license.
- Drivers must consent to having their driving records checked with motor vehicle registry records. Safety and Security shall review the driving records of the SPS employees seeking to be eligible to drive a SPS van transporting SPS students. SPS reserves the right to refuse driving privileges based on driver history.
- To be eligible to drive a SPS van transporting SPS students, an SPS employee must be approved by SPS and sign the Driver's Agreement.
- SPS vans are to be used only for SPS school activities.
- Drivers must notify the Principal and Safety and Security of any change in his/her license status, including but not limited to, license suspension or revocation.
- Drivers must have a valid license for the vehicle class.
- Drivers must adhere to all Massachusetts, Federal and local laws and SPS rules retaining to the safe operation of the van. If the SPS van is operated outside of Massachusetts the driver must adhere to the applicable other state's laws.
- Vehicles must be inspected annually at a state license inspection facility.

- Drivers shall not operate a SPS van that has not passed inspection or has an expired inspection sticker.
- Only SPS students and authorized SPS employees can be transported in the SPS van.

#### **VI. Parental/Guardian Approval**

The parents/guardians of SPS students to be transported in SPS vans must be informed of this means of transportation and must sign an authorization form.

Approved by the Springfield School Committee on November 30, 2017.