

Policy for: MULTI-FUNCTION SCHOOL ACTIVITY BUS USE	Revision 0
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PURPOSE

This policy defines the conditions of appropriate use of Multi-Function School Activity Buses (MFSABs) owned by the Needham Public Schools.

SCOPE

This policy governs the use of District-owned MFSABs and applies to all agents of the District who operate or use such vehicles.

APPLICABILITY

Multi-function school activity buses are vehicles of up to 15 passengers (including a driver) that are required to meet all federal motor vehicle safety standards applicable to school buses, except those requiring the installation of traffic control devices (flashing lights and stop arms.)

The purpose of these vehicles is student transportation other than 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 pupil’s school year.

A MFSAB will not be used to transport students who require child passenger restraints. These students are under eight (8) years of age and are 57 inches in height, or less.

AUTHORIZED USES

- MFSABs will be used only for extracurricular travel that occurs during, before or after the school day. Extracurricular travel includes, but is not limited to: field trips, sports trips, and travel between a before-school activity and school. Under no circumstances will MFSABs be used as school buses to transport students on fixed routes between home and school, or between school and school bus stops.
- MFSABs will be used exclusively for the conduct of official school business. The use of such vehicle for personal purposes, such as attending to personal affairs, social engagements, or commuting is prohibited. Misuse of an assigned MFSAB, or the

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appearance of misuse, will be considered a violation of the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest law (MGL Ch. 268A).

- MFSABs must be garaged on Town of Needham property while not in use, and may not be taken to a student or employee’s home.
- Only Needham Public School employees are permitted to operate a MFSAB. These employees will be subject to a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check at least every three years and a fingerprint background check upon hire.
- Passengers of a MFSAB will be limited to District employees, students at least eight years of age (or who do not require use of a child passenger restraint) and other authorized persons. Family members and unauthorized individuals, who are not directly connected to the Needham Public Schools, will not be transported.
- An employee’s use of a MFSAB will be strictly voluntary. Under no circumstance will an employee receive compensation to drive students in connection with use of a MFSAB.
- A passenger’s use of a MFSAB will be strictly voluntary. Parents/guardians who choose to allow their child to be transported in a District MFSAB must consent to such use. Parents/guardians may choose not to allow their child to ride in a District MFSAB.
- As a pre-condition of operating or being transported in a MFSAB, employees and parents/guardians will sign a liability release discharging the Town of Needham/ Needham Public Schools from any personal injury or property damage liability associated with the vehicle’s use.
- The District will not be liable for the loss or damage of any personal property transported in a MFSAB.

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- MFSABs will be registered and insured as a Town of Needham/ Needham Public Schools-owned vehicle.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OVERSIGHT

The Superintendent or designee(s) is/are responsible for developing procedures governing the use of MFSABs and for ensuring that such use conforms to applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and to this policy.

STUDENT AND ADULT PASSENGER DISCIPLINE

A District MFSAB is considered an extension of the classroom. Students riding in MFSABs are subject to the Code of Conduct which appears in student/parent handbooks for that student’s school. MFSAB operators are required to report misbehavior to a designated administrator, who will in turn, report to the Principal or designee. The Principal or their designee will take appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the handbook. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem on a District MFSAB may have their school vehicle riding privileges suspended by the Principal or their designee. In such cases, the parents/guardians of the children involved become responsible for transporting their children to and from an extra-curricular event.

If an adult passenger presents a behavior or disciplinary problem, the Operator will report the adult’s conduct to the Superintendent, or designee(s).

CITATIONS:

- Needham School Committee Policy JFCH/JFCI
- Needham School Committee Policy JG
- MGL Ch 90 s 7D
- MGL Ch 90, s 7AA
- MGL Ch 90 s 13A
- 540 CMR 7.00
- 49 CFR 571, 68 FR 44892