

V-A-1 Annual School Budget

Subject to the rules and regulations of the State Board and with the advice of the Superintendent, the Board of Education shall prepare an annual budget setting forth the amount required to operate the schools and to make repairs and improvements to the school plant.

The budget shall be prepared to include the following current expense categories:

1. Administration
2. Mid-level Administration
3. Instructional Salaries
4. Textbooks and Classroom Instructional Supplies
5. Other Instructional Costs
6. Special Education
7. Student Personnel Services
8. Health Services
9. Student Transportation
10. Operation of Plant
11. Maintenance of Plant
12. Fixed Charges
13. Food Services
14. Capital Outlay

V-A-2 Preparation, Submission and Adoption of the Budget

The budget shall be prepared by the Superintendent with support from principals and system level administrators. Upon adoption by the Board of Education, the budget shall be submitted to the County Commissioners not less than 45 days before the date for levying local taxes or on an earlier date on or after March 1, as may be requested by the county fiscal authority. Copies of the proposed budget shall be made available to the public, on request, at the time it is submitted by the Board of Education. A copy of the budget as approved by the County Commissioners shall be sent to the State Superintendent within 30 days after approval.

V-A-3 Administration of the Budget

The annual budget is itemized in detail and, when adopted by the Board of Education, represents a plan of approved expenditures for the fiscal year. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the administration of the budget and shall be authorized to make expenditures within the limits of funds specified in the major categories of the budget. Appropriate allotments will be established and codes developed for data processing services and monthly audit control. A Treasury Report detailing total expenses shall be submitted to the Board at each monthly meeting for review and approval. In the case of all purchases of supplies, equipment, etc., where formal bids are required under the terms of the law, all contracts shall be awarded by the Board of Education.

The budget is only an estimate of the annual requirements, and it would be impossible to anticipate exactly what will be required for each item, as for example, fuel. In view of this, it is necessary from time to time to reallocate funds from the total budget allotment among the various items. Therefore, the Superintendent or designee shall prepare a monthly statement showing the relationship of expenditures to budget allocations. A transfer may be made within the major categories with Board approval and with notification to the County Commissioners. Transfers between major categories may be made only with approval of the County Commissioners.

V-A-4 Annual Audit

The Board of Education shall provide for an annual audit of its financial transactions and accounts. The audit shall be made by a certified public accountant and in accordance with the standards and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education. The results of the audit are a matter of public record and shall be reported within 3 months after the close of the fiscal year to the State Superintendent and the County Fiscal Authority.

V-A-5 Annual Report

The Board of Education shall prepare, publish and make available to interested parties an annual report on the condition, current accomplishments and needs for improvement of the schools as well as a statement of the business and financial transactions of the Board in accordance with state regulations.

V-A-6 Responsibility and Procedures for Internal School Accounts

Each school principal shall be responsible for maintaining and keeping an accurate account of all funds received or expended under the auspices of the school. The accounting system shall be uniform in all schools and shall be in accordance with the provisions of the School Accounting Manual adopted by the Board of Education.

All school accounts shall be audited annually by the firm which audits the central accounts of the Board of Education.

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V-B-1 Purchasing Procedures

A purchasing manual detailing the method of allocation of funds by program and cost center (school or office), and including the procedures for requisition, bidding and other related matters will be developed by the Superintendent or designee and adopted by the Board of Education. The provisions of the manual shall be adhered to by all Board employees.

V-B-2 Bids for Supplies and Equipment

The Board may name in the specifications and advertisements for bids the particular make, model or brand of article to be contracted for or purchased. The contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder who conforms to specifications. The Board may reject any and all bids and readvertise for other bids.

Contracts for the purchase of books and other materials of instruction and emergency repairs are excluded from these provisions.

V-B-3 Distribution of Supplies and Equipment

Supplies, materials, and equipment purchased by the Board of Education may be shipped directly to the schools or to the Board of Education warehouse. Timely deliveries to the schools from the warehouse shall be made under the direction of the supervisor responsible for purchasing. Each such delivery shall be carefully checked against the proper requisition and any omission or errors reported immediately.

For materials purchased by the county, but not furnished in total quantity at one delivery, requisitions shall be submitted to the Central Office on prescribed forms as such materials or supplies may be required.

The principal is responsible for all materials, supplies and equipment delivered to the school.

The principal or designee is responsible for verifying the quantity and quality of orders received by the school and the accurate recording and timely return of the acknowledgement copy of the purchase order to the Purchasing Department.

V-B-4 Inventories

An inventory indicating the quantity, and in some instances the age, of all equipment and books shall be accurately completed each year, with one copy of the prescribed forms to be filed in the school and one copy to be submitted to the Board of Education.

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V-B-5 Purchase Agreements Made by Principals

Principals may make no deferred payment or installment payment agreement for purchase of any equipment, merchandise, or service. Anything purchased during any school year must be paid for during that year, preferably within thirty days after the receipt of a proper bill or statement.

Principals may enter into a contract with any purveyor of goods or services for only one school year. Such agreements should be consummated only after all interested purveyors have made their proposals and the principal has selected the most advantageous arrangement; judgment of the reliability, reputation, and service record of a purveyor should be a factor.

POL. V-B-6 Minority Business Enterprise Policy for State Funded Public School Construction Projects

The Board of Education school construction procurement procedures shall be consistent with Section 14-302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. School construction procurement procedures shall be implemented to try to assure that a minimum of 25% of the total dollar value of school construction contracts is made directly or indirectly with certified minority business enterprises when State Public School Construction Program funds are utilized, with a minimum of 7% from certified African American owned businesses, a minimum of 10% from certified women owned businesses and the balance from all certified minority business enterprises.

The Superintendent or designee shall confirm that school construction procurement procedures are in compliance with the State Finance and Procurement Article.

V-C-1 Student Transportation Operations

The Superintendent and designee shall be responsible to the Board of Education for the operation of a transportation system for public school students residing within the county according to specific procedures and guidelines of the State Department of Education pertaining to the following areas:

- A. State Funding
- B. Contracts
- C. Inspections
- D. Routing and Scheduling
- E. Loading Zones
- F. Accident Reporting
- G. Accounting and Reporting
- H. Railroad Grade Crossing and Bridge Evaluation
- I. School Vehicle Driver Instruction

V-C-2 Student Transportation Role

The system of student transportation shall be operative:

- A. To transport all eligible students in a safe and economical manner to and from school.
- B. To provide transportation of students from one school to another for instructional programs.
- C. To provide transportation for students to outdoor educational programs.

V-C-3 School Bus Contractors

- A. School buses shall be operated on a private contract basis. Buses shall be operated in accordance with the terms of the written contract, and equipment and drivers must comply with standards, requirements, and regulations established by the State Board of Education, the laws of Maryland, and the Board of Education. School buses that meet all standards may be operated for 12 years. With the approval of the Superintendent, a school bus, which meets the standards, requirements, and regulations prescribed by the Maryland State Department of Education for buses older than 12 years, may be operated to transport students for up to 15 years.
- B. The Board of Education shall award contracts upon recommendation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent or designee shall advertise for bus contractors, prepare application forms, receive and review applications and train applicants. Contracts shall be awarded on the basis of best qualifications as judged by the Board of Education and upon location of residence of the applicant in relation to the bus route. No contractor may have more than one (1) bus contract and one (1) spare bus. The spouse of a contractor who meets all requirements may also acquire a bus contract.

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- C. No contract between the Board of Education and bus contractor shall be valid unless properly executed on the form adopted and provided by the Board of Education. The contract is the continuing type; that is, it is automatically renewed year to year, subjected to termination by either party under terms set forth in the contract.
- D. Sale of equipment other than for replacement and by approval of the Board of Education shall result in termination of the contract. Contractors own their equipment but shall hold no transferable or negotiable rights or franchise for the bus route.
- E. Contractors desiring to terminate their contract and sell their equipment should advise the Board of Education of their intentions. New contractors approved by the Board will, upon the recommendation of the Supervisor of Transportation, may assume the ownership of the bus at the prorated cost of the vehicle for the remaining years left in the twelve-year life of the bus. Private sale of equipment shall in no way be binding upon the Board of Education with respect to the award of a contract.

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V-C-4            Qualifications of Drivers

All school bus drivers must meet the following requirements:

- A.     All licensing requirements of the Motor Vehicle Administration.
- B.     Minimum requirements of the physical examination.
- C.     Have not more than two current points on the driving record, and have a satisfactory past driving record.
- D.     Complete the State Department of Education prescribed preservice instruction.
- E.     Have no evidence of a criminal record which in the opinion of local authorities makes the individual unfit for employment.
- F.     Have 5 years driving experience during which time a valid driving license was held.
- G.     Meet the minimum requirements of the following tests:
  - 1.     Night Vision
  - 2.     Field of Vision
  - 3.     Depth Perception
  - 4.     Reaction Time
  - 5.     Steadiness

V-C-5            Contract Prices

Contract prices shall be determined by the Board of Education on the basis of type and cost of equipment provided, length of route, and condition of roads. Contract prices shall be adjusted whenever the bus route is extended or reduced, using the current table of rates in effect at the time of adjustment.

V-C-6            Termination of Contract

The contract between the bus contractor and the Board of Education may be terminated at any time by either party with thirty days notice and in accordance with the terms of the written contract.

V-C-7           Absence of Bus Contractors

Bus contractors may be absent from driving duty up to a maximum of ten days during any one school year, for personal or business reasons not related to personal illness or family emergencies, provided the bus is operated by a qualified driver approved by the Supervisor of Transportation and provided the Supervisor is notified prior to such absence. Absences from assigned routes for field trips approved by the Board of Education and for other reasons approved by the Supervisor of Transportation will not be counted as a part of the ten days permitted.

No unused days may be carried forward to any succeeding year. Substitute drivers must meet all the qualifications of regular school bus drivers.

The intent of this policy is that the bus contractor or spouse will be the majority stockholder of the bus. In situations involving corporations the intent is that the primary driver shall be the owner or spouse of the majority stockholder of the corporation.

V-C-8           Eligibility of Students for Student Transportation

Any public school student who lives one mile from school shall be eligible for transportation. The Board may make exceptions to this policy to accommodate physically handicapped children or where in its judgment such an exception to the policy is required to eliminate a hazard to the safety of children.

V-C-9           Establishment of Routes, Route Extensions and Bus Stops

- A.    New bus routes shall be established by the Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, when required because of overloading of buses beyond rated capacity, when a sufficient number of students move into an area not previously provided with bus service, and when required by further consolidation of schools, or change in schools, or change in school attendance areas directed by the Board. This policy is subject to the conditions outlined in item V-C-8.
- B.    Distances in all disputed cases shall be measured from the student's home to the nearest driveway or walking entrance of the school by the most direct traveled route. This traveled route may be roads, walkways, or road shoulders.
- C.    Extensions of existing bus routes may be made by the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, for children living one mile from the existing bus route. The Board reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy where required to accommodate handicapped children or to eliminate hazardous conditions. Requests for extensions shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent.
- D.    Bus stops along the routes shall be established at points where vision is unobstructed and which are free of any hazard in the loading and discharging of passengers. Bus stops shall normally be established with a minimum distance of one-fourth mile between stops. Exceptions may be made in the cases of handicapped children or hazardous conditions. Requests for the establishment of new stops shall be made in writing to the Superintendent.
- E.    Under no condition may a bus driver or contractor make any changes in the established route without the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

V-C-10            Transportation Limitations for Disabled Students

Disabled students attending a State Department of Education approved school during the regular school year may be provided daily transportation if they live within a 50 mile distance of the assigned school. Disabled students living beyond the limit established shall be eligible for three round trips each school year.

V-C-11            Hazardous Walking Conditions

The Supervisor of Transportation shall review parent requests regarding hazardous walking conditions. Recommendations will be made to the Superintendent who will render a decision within 10 working days of the original request. The parent may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Education.

V-C-12            Maintenance, Care and Inspection of Equipment

All school buses shall be kept clean and in proper operating condition at all times. They shall be inspected at least three times annually in accordance with regulations established by the Motor Vehicle Administration. Inspection shall be made by competent persons designated by the Board of Education, and under the direction and supervision of the Supervisor of Transportation.

V-C-13 Insurance

The Board of Education shall provide liability, property damage and personal injury insurance on contractor-owned vehicles for approved travel through the Maryland Association of Boards of Education Group Insurance Pool.

V-C-14 School Vehicle Specifications

School vehicles used by the Board of Education to transport students shall meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration Specifications, Maryland State Board of Education's Standards, and Board of Education of Worcester County requirements and specifications.

V-C-15 Opening and Closing of Schools

- A. The schools of Worcester County shall be operated on a time schedule which will provide for the maximum use of school buses.
- B. When conditions exist that jeopardize the safety and general well-being of the students, the Superintendent shall close schools in accordance with existing policy and procedures.

- I. The Board of Education of Worcester County shall implement a drug testing program for school bus drivers in accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations (C.O.M.A.R.) and shall meet the substantive and procedural requirements of standards established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.
- II. The Board will participate in a clearinghouse sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education. Participation in the clearinghouse is authorized where the clearinghouse identifies individuals losing or failing to acquire school bus operator certification status because of sanctions imposed for actions related to this policy and where the clearinghouse compiles data from other Maryland public school systems which have adopted equivalent substance abuse policies, regulations and procedures.

V-D-1 Transportation Other Than by School Bus

In all cases where transportation of students is required and regular school buses cannot be used, such transportation should be provided on properly licensed public carriers. The use of private automobiles is prohibited. In the event of an emergency, students may be transported by the principal or designee with the prior consent of the parent or guardian.

V-D-2 Reimbursement for Field Trips and Athletic Team Transportation

Worcester County Public School bus contractors will be paid at the rate established by the Board of Education.

V-D-3 Staff Travel

For job-related and/or approved travel when a publicly-owned vehicle is not available, the Board of Education will reimburse such personnel at the rate per mile prescribed in the budget for the use of their own automobiles.

V-D-4 Board of Education Vehicle Use Policy

- A. These rules shall apply to all vehicles owned and operated by the Board of Education.
- B. A Board of Education vehicle may only be operated by authorized personnel. All operators must have a valid driver's license for the class of vehicle being operated.
- C. Drivers will comply with all vehicle operating and parking laws. Posted speed limits will not be exceeded nor is a vehicle to be operated above safe driving speeds for road conditions. Any fines or fees for violations will be the responsibility of the driver.
- D. Due to the fact that job sites change daily and are located throughout the county (local schools as well as Central Office) and the extensive number of evening and weekend assignments, (meetings, conferences and other school related events) in which Central Office administrators and supervisors must be engaged, those who are assigned automobiles may use them to commute to and from the work site and will store them at their place of residence. All other Board of Education owned vehicles will not be used for commuting and will be stored at the Worcester Educational Center site. I.R.S. Regulations pertinent to employer use of county-owned vehicles will be complied with.
- E. Board vehicles may not be used for personal business. If an emergency requires the use of a vehicle for personal reasons, the Superintendent must be notified.
- F. Only passengers relating to official business may ride in a Board of Education vehicle.
- G. Board vehicles may be used for meal trips while on a job assignment including evenings and weekends.

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- H. All vehicles shall be marked with a Board of Education seal and "For Official Use Only" designation.
- I. Vehicle use shall be planned to take maximum advantage of consolidation of official business and ride-sharing with other vehicle operators for similar destinations.
- J. Board vehicles will be used for out-of-county travel when available. Personnel who are not assigned a vehicle must request the use of a vehicle for out-of-county travel. If a Board vehicle is not available, personal vehicles may be used.
- K. The Career and Technology Center Auto Technology Department will be utilized for routine maintenance, minor repairs, and service when available. Gasoline shall be acquired at the Board of Education pumps except in an emergency or when the vehicle is out of the county. The employee to whom the vehicle is assigned will be responsible for its upkeep including routine service and cleaning.
- L. A monthly report shall be kept for each vehicle showing mileage and gas consumed. A copy of all maintenance invoices will be maintained on each vehicle by the Finance Office.
- M. There shall be no exception to these rules unless in a bona fide emergency or as authorized by the Superintendent. If the Superintendent, upon investigation, is satisfied that an employee has violated the Vehicle Use Policy, the Superintendent may invoke one or more of the following:
  - 1. Loss of the use of the vehicle on a temporary basis.
  - 2. Loss of the use of the vehicle on a permanent basis.
  - 3. Assessment of charges for use deemed inappropriate.
  - 4. Recommend additional disciplinary actions.

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V-D-5 Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Board Member Expenses for Attendance at Conventions and Conferences

A. Purpose

Board of Education Members', Superintendent's, and Assistant Superintendents' attendance at state and national conventions and conferences is encouraged and in some cases, required.

B. Regulations

1. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents and Board members may attend a maximum of one out-of-state conference or convention at Board expense per year.
2. If the spouse of a Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents or Board member attends, all expenses of the spouse must be borne by the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent or Board member.
3. The following expenses will be covered for conventions and conferences:
  - a. registration fees
  - b. convention materials
  - c. transportation to and from the convention site
  - d. business related travel during the convention if necessary to attend meetings and related events
  - e. accommodations
  - f. meals
4. Expenses for business meetings attended by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendents shall include:
  - a. tolls, parking fees and gasoline for the county vehicle if required
  - b. meals and accommodations if the meeting requires overnight absence from the county
  - c. other bona fide meeting expenses

## A. Purpose

Administrative staff members and teachers shall be permitted to attend state and national conferences and conventions related to management, instruction, curriculum and staff development with full or partial financial support by the Board of Education. This type of activity strengthens the staff members' understanding of the role of teachers and school administrators and exposes them to new developments and innovative ideas. In addition, staff members acquire the background and perspective needed to ensure that local educational programs are effective, decisions are sound and that the entire organization is productive. Teachers and administrative and supervisory staff members are also encouraged to present at state and national conferences and conventions thus adding to the prestige of the school system and their personal professional development.

B. Principals and supervisors are eligible to attend one conference or convention every three years, budget permitting.

C. Supervisors shall be responsible for selecting and inviting teachers to attend national, regional, and state conferences. Selection shall be based upon the needs of the instructional program and/or the developmental needs of teachers, quality of service, contributions to the students and instructional program of the Worcester County Schools and other reasons deemed appropriate. When selecting a group of teachers, supervisors will make every effort to insure balance in respect to matters of (1) schools and grade level, (2) race, and (3) sex.

D. An annual per person allocation for expenses will be determined based on funds budgeted and available. The allocation may be used for:

1. Registration fees
2. Convention materials
3. Transportation to and from the convention site
4. Business related travel during the convention when necessary to attend meetings and related events.
5. Accommodations
6. Meals

E. All requests for staff attendance at conferences and conventions will be made using an approved form. Administrative and supervisory personnel will submit requests to the Superintendent or designee at least 30 days in advance of the scheduled event.