

# West Valley Christian Academy

## Driver and Chaperone Instruction

Our school greatly depends on the involvement of our school parents for transportation and chaperoning of field trips and other off-site events. We appreciate you taking the time to support your child's school and its activities. The following are guidelines that we ask our drivers and chaperones to follow:

### General Instructions

- If you own or have access to a cellular telephone, please bring it with you on the trip for safety reasons. In case of illness or an emergency, please notify the school immediately. Call: (209) 832-4072.
- Chaperones are asked to refrain from drinking, smoking and talking or texting on their cell phone on all field trips.
- It is important for volunteers to realize that they are acting as Christian role models for our students. Please be an example by demonstrating maturity in actions, attitudes, and dress. A classroom teacher will be in charge of each field trip and will direct the volunteers as to what is expected of them.
- Only those parents who have signed up in advance as drivers or chaperones may attend (no last minute sign-ups.)
- Only children enrolled in the class or activity may go. Under no circumstances may guests or siblings attend a field trip unless the trip is announced as a special family event and other siblings are specifically invited. Many of our field trip destination institutions, especially commercial businesses, will not allow smaller children to accompany the field trip. Please do not make arrangements for someone else to meet you at the field trip or event site with siblings. We believe that it is nearly impossible for a mother of a small child to give that child the proper attention and also be able to give the necessary vigilance to supervising a group of field trip students. The first responsibility of each volunteer is to the students being supervised. Thank you for understanding our priorities.
- Chaperones are responsible for the behavior of those students assigned to them. In private vehicles, the driver is responsible for children's behavior. In school-owned or rented vehicles, the teacher is responsible, with help from the volunteers. If you are experiencing difficulties, please report the problem immediately to the teacher or other supervising adult. Do not allow rowdiness, disrespect, inappropriate voices, etc. Do not allow dangerous or potentially dangerous behavior on the trip.
- Chaperones should make it a special point to remain with the students for whom they are responsible. They should keep the students who rode with them close to them. They should vigorously resist the temptation to group with other adults while allowing the students to "do their own thing."
- Chaperones, enjoy the students! However, if you have a problem with any student, take him/her to the teacher or supervising adult.
- Know exactly how many students are in your small group and count, count, count, all day! Keep a roll if necessary. Be sure that all are present before moving from one place to another (especially when heading home).
- Students are to return with the same person and vehicle that transported them for this event. Exceptions to this can be made only by an administrator or the sponsoring teacher. Usually, exceptions are reserved for emergency situations only.
- Drivers and chaperones should refrain from purchasing special treats for the children they are supervising unless all the children in the class benefit equally.
- If you have questions about any aspect of the field trip, expectations of drivers/chaperones, or expectations for student behavior, please ask for assistance from the teacher or other person in charge.

## **Additional Instructions for Driver Chaperones**

- Please allow the teacher to make vehicle assignments for students. If you have a suggestion or preference, please let the teacher know a day ahead of time so this can be taken into consideration. Teachers sometimes have special reasons that they may not be free to explain for assigning specific seating arrangements. You will be provided with a list of the names of the children being transported in your vehicle.
- Please arrive at school at least ten to fifteen minutes before departure time. Schedules are sometimes tight.
- Copies of the Emergency Medical Release forms for all students will be with the teacher if the trip destination is more than ten miles from the school.
- Seat belts must be worn at all times. It is for this reason that children may be transported only in the cabs of pickups or other types of trucks. Note that only one child is permitted per working seat belt.
- Please be sure that you understand the route to be taken. A map and/or directions will be provided by the teacher. Please stick to the assigned route to and from the field trip. **Do not take a “better” way or stop for snacks unless this is part of the teacher’s plan.**
- It is expected that you will obey all traffic laws including maintaining acceptable speed limits.
- When traveling, cars will “caravan” together. At no time should cars pass the “lead car” or take “side trips” away from the caravan. Nor should you take “chances” to keep up with the caravan, such as entering an intersection when the light is already yellow.
- If there are more than three vehicles in the caravan, a “buddy system” will be used whereby two or three vehicles will caravan together, thus eliminating a long line of vehicles, which can become a safety problem.
- Please call the school right away if you experience car trouble or become lost. If someone has been hurt or is ill, and the teacher is not readily available for consultation, please call the school for instructions.
- Children must enter and leave the vehicle from the curbside unless the vehicle is in a protected parking area or driveway.
- Children must not be left unattended in a vehicle.
- Students should not eat or drink in your car without your permission. They have been instructed to use quiet voices when talking and to keep their hands/feet to themselves. If any student does not cooperate, please inform the teacher.

**Thanks for being a chaperone or driver for this event. We truly appreciate your help!**