

STEPS TO STARTING A BIBLE RELEASE TIME (BRT) PROGRAM

- Begin with prayer and form a prayer team to pray for the BRT program
- Educate yourself about the laws, guidelines and benefits of a BRT program
- Recruit a host church where gifted and willing individuals commit to running the BRT program
- Begin to speak to individual school board members about the program
- Recruit support among other pastors and Christians in the area – focus on a targeted school.
- Take your request to the full school board and seek approval for a pilot BRT program with an individual school to “test the waters.” Seek to start with a school that has a supportive Principal
- Complete your pilot and follow-up with the board seeking final approval to have the program long-term in your district.
- Train your workers in the host church, handout parental request forms, and begin the program
- Follow-up during the year with the principal, pastoral staff and key board members to keep everyone informed and to problem solve if there are any adjustments that need to be made along the way.

Grow your program to other schools in the district and increase the number of grades that receive BRT training each year

The Essentials

What Does it Mean to be an Elgin-Sponsored BRT Site?

To be an Elgin-sponsored Bible Release Time site, the partnering host church and/or parachurch ministry ***must*** be committed to running program that is legal, safe, kingdom-minded, and high quality.

LEGAL

- The host site team ***must*** adhere to the rules established by the Supreme Court and state law governing release time programming.

SAFE

- All volunteers ***must*** undergo background checks and attend training in running a BRT program with the best possible safety standards. The host site secretary will maintain a log of volunteers and verify these criteria are met.

KINGDOM-MINDED

- The site ***must*** use approved interdenominational curriculum and materials.
- Volunteers are to be mindful of children from other churches or children who might more naturally fit into another church for their ongoing discipleship.

High-Quality

- Leaders and volunteers ***must*** attend training in the protocols of the program and best practices in running a successful BRT program.
- The BRT team is committed to maintaining good records (parental request forms, volunteer rosters, student enrollment and attendance numbers, etc.).
- The BRT team is open to frequent reviews of the program and shares an ongoing desire to improve the BRT experience for participating students and volunteers.

Elgin Children's Foundation Monthly BRT Attendance Form

School Name: _____

District: _____

Host Church: _____

Volunteers Present (#): _____ BRT Class Date: _____

Submitted by: _____ Date Submitted: _____

TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION 	BRT ENROLLMENT	BRT CLASS ATTENDANCE
--	-------------------	-------------------------

2nd Grade _____

3rd Grade _____

4th Grade _____

5th Grade _____

6th Grade _____

 Note: Total Student Populaton only to be recorded on the first and last class of the year.

BIBLE RELEASE TIME

WHAT IS IT?

Bible Release Time ministry offers parents an opportunity for their children to receive biblical instruction during school hours. It is an excellent, government-approved tool to provide students with a foundational knowledge of the Bible. In 1952, a Supreme Court ruling (*Zorach v. Clauson*) permitted the release of students during the school day to receive religious instruction if the program follows three guidelines:

1

Students **MUST** provide written permission from their parent/guardian.

2

Religious instruction **MUST** be provided away from school property for no more than 1 hour.

3

Government funds cannot be used to support the program.



THE FACTS

- Bible Release Time programs have been in operation for over 100 years in America
- There are already several other school districts in your area that currently accommodate local Bible Release Time programs
- Independent research has documented that children participating in Released Time programs do better academically and have fewer behavioral problems

(Source: Monique W. Morris, Barr Krisberg, Sharan Dhanoa, 2003. Summary of Findings: Released Time Bible Education. Columbia, SC; Oakland, CA; SchoolMinistries; National Council on Crime and Delinquency.)

** Disclaimer: The School Board and School System do not sponsor or endorse this advertisement for solicitation.*

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Bible
Release
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LEADER'S GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION TO ELGIN

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ELGIN ENTITIES

Elgin Children's Foundation exists primarily because of the generosity of our founding philanthropist. Before he died, B.R. Thompson laid the framework for a private foundation to help children in communities where his family ran mining and business operations.

Originally, the foundation served ten counties in three states: Anderson, Blount, Knox, and Scott from East Tennessee; Buchanan and Tazewell from Southwest Virginia; and Bell, Clay, Laurel, and Leslie from Southeast Kentucky. In 2016, the Thompson family decided to expand Elgin's service area to include counties that are contiguous to the original ten.

In 2012, Elgin Children's Foundation (ECF) was created to carry out the primary operations of the Elgin Foundation. ECF is a public charity and is a Supporting Organization of the National Christian Foundation. Currently, ECF carries out the operations of Elgin programs.

ELGIN MISSION

The Elgin Children's Foundation seeks to serve God by serving the youngest, poorest and most vulnerable children in designated counties in rural, southern Appalachia. Elgin has dedicated its resources to breaking the cycle of poverty that has oppressed these communities and seeks to begin a new generation of learners and doers.

HOW DO WE DEFINE THE "YOUNGEST, POOREST & MOST VULNERABLE?"

"YOUNGEST"

- 1st Priority: Birth - Preschool
- 2nd Priority: K - 3rd Grade
- 3rd Priority: 4th - 6th Grade

"POOREST"

- 1st Priority: Children living below 100% on the Federal Poverty Scale
- 2nd Priority: Children living between 100-185% on Federal Poverty Scale

"MOST VULNERABLE"

- 1st Priority: Children living in home environments that lack safety, security and compassion

- 2nd Priority: Children lacking primary care by either birth parent
- 3rd Priority: Children with single parent caregivers

Additionally, it is a priority of Elgin to serve children living in rurally isolated locations.

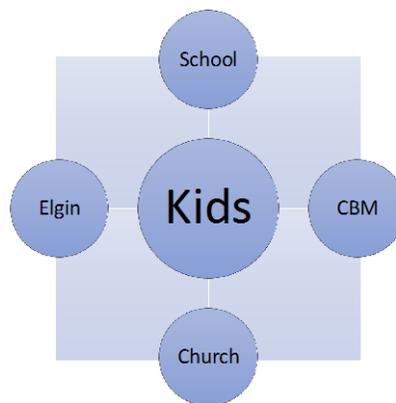
ELGIN SPONSORED PARTNERSHIPS

- There are many different areas of expertise (academic, social, religious) within a community and partnerships maximize the effectiveness of each of these. We can achieve more together than we can separately.
- Partnerships generate local ownership and maximize local resources and talents without creating dependency on outside sources. Communities that work together often gain hope, satisfaction, creativity, and health as by-products of these partnering relationships.

BRT Partnership Design

Values

- Kid-centered
- Equal Partners
- Open Communication
- Integrity
- Gift Oriented



Partnerships eliminate waste and duplication. There is no reason to have three organizations doing the same thing on a limited basis when a partnership can accomplish the same goals on a much larger scope.

WHAT DO WE HOPE FOR CHILDREN IN OUR COUNTIES?

These four statements serve as a good summary of our grand vision that we strive daily to help facilitate for children growing up in Elgin counties.

We hope that every child....

1. *Is introduced to the gospel message of Jesus Christ and disciplined in the basics of the Christian faith*
2. *Lives in a safe and secure home led by loving adults*
3. *Experiences a healthy start in life, free from avoidable and unnecessary pain*
4. *Develops a strong early academic foundation in the basic skills of reading and mathematics*

----- START OF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK CONTENT -----

WHAT IS BIBLE RELEASE TIME (BRT)?

Bible Release Time ministry offers parents an opportunity for their children to receive biblical instruction during school hours. A 1952 Supreme Court ruling (*Zorach vs. Clauson*) and subsequent state law(s) permits the release of students during the school day to receive religious instruction if the program follows four guidelines:

1. Students must provide written permission from their parent and/or guardian
2. Religious instruction must be provided away from school property
3. Government funds cannot be used to support the program
4. A maximum of one-hour of release-time instruction per week

BRT is an excellent government-approved tool to provide students important foundational Bible instruction.

BRT VOLUNTEER PURPOSE STATEMENT

We collaborate with the faith community and schools to develop and support Bible Release Time programs as part of our mission to spread the gospel message of Jesus Christ and develop a foundational understanding of the Bible for children in our service area. Program volunteers provide biblical instruction in a fun, caring, and safe environment to the vulnerable and needy among us – our children.

PROGRAM ESSENTIALS

A HEART FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

All volunteers engaged in the program must have a heart for children and understand that the children will come from a variety of home environments.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

All volunteers who are leading the program and responsible for the children who are released into their care must complete a background check prior to serving in the program. We primarily recommend that volunteers complete the same background check that the local school district requires for volunteers in their system.

TRAINING

Elgin-sponsored Children's Ministry Ambassadors (CMAs) are willing to lead a training with BRT volunteers to ensure that the program utilizes best practices and safety protocols in overseeing participating children.

CURRICULUM

It is important that BRT instruction be provided with integrity and consistently across all service areas. To accomplish this, Elgin will provide your team with the standard BRT Curriculum that is being used successfully at all established sites. The curriculum is based on basic Christian principals with an interdenominational approach. Examples of program lessons are listed below:

- The Bible Is God's Word
- Creation and the Fall
- The Story of Noah
- The Call of Abraham
- The Story of Joseph
- The Story of Moses and the Exodus
- The Story of Jesus and the Resurrection

KEY ROLES

There are certain **Key Roles** that every team needs to cover. They can be filled by one person or by several depending on the number of volunteers. In some cases, small teams have individuals who fill more than one role. It is ideal, however, to have at least one person designated for each essential role.

SITE LEADER

This person takes on the primary responsibility for overseeing all parts of maintaining a safe and successful BRT.

VOLUNTEER TEAM LEADER

This person is responsible for recruiting volunteers, evaluating their gifts and abilities, assigning roles, and generally ensuring that key roles are filled. The Volunteer Team Leader will also make sure that all volunteers complete an approved background check and training in the running of the program.

TEACHER

This person should be gifted with children and able to communicate Biblical truth in an engaging and age-based manner.

TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR

This person is responsible for managing PowerPoint Lessons and games, videos, projectors, and all technology needed to offer quality class presentations for participating children.

GAME COORDINATOR

This person works with the teacher to identify and lead age-based, engaging games designed to complement the lesson. The games should be fun but should also be safe and non-destructive to church property. The best games reinforce the lesson that is being taught during the BRT hour.

WORSHIP LEADER

This person identifies and leads an engaging, age appropriate worship experience for the kids. While this typically consists of a couple of songs, worship can also be done using video and other creative tools to help kids give glory to God and to prepare their hearts for the lesson that day. The worship leader should have some skill with music, but he/she can also use children's worship music from the internet to carry the bulk of the melody and to engage the kids in worship.

SECRETARY

This person keeps all of the records needed for a high-quality BRT program. These records include completed parental request forms, completed volunteer trainings and background checks, and attendance.

Note: Programs who use verses and homework lessons often track these with a point system that the secretary needs to note each week. While this is more work, it increases Biblical knowledge and provides point systems for awards and for camp scholarships.

SECURITY

This person makes sure that all the doors are secured once the program begins. He/she also ensures that only approved BRT volunteers are permitted in the area during the lesson.

BUS RIDERS

These are essential when a district allows non-school personnel on the buses transporting children to the program. The Bus Rider counts the kids coming and going on the bus. He/she helps the bus driver to keep the kids safe while in transit. Often, the Bus Rider(s) can begin the program with engaging songs during the travel to the host church. Check with your district to find out what the rules are concerning bus travel.

Note: For schools that walk to the BRT site, these same principles apply.

COMMUNICATION LEAD

This person makes sure that information is communicated well with all of the partnering organizations. This person can also take pictures and publicize the program for each of the partnering organizations. (Be careful to avoid taking pictures of children whose parents have not given permission for pictures).

PRAYER TEAM LEADER

This person will be responsible for leading folks within the church to regularly pray for the BRT team, participating children, and the school personnel.

SUPPORT ROLES

There are also several **Support Roles** that might need to be filled as the program grows and develops.

LISTENERS

This person listens to the kids who have memorized Scripture verses when verse lists are handed out to further Biblical instruction.

GRADERS

This person grades completed homework (or Mail-in Bible Lessons) when utilized.

SUBSTITUTES

These people may not participate regularly at BRT classes, but they are prepared to fill in when needed.

DRIVERS

Most sites will pay for the services of experienced, professional drivers to provide transportation for the program. When this is not the case, the host church or ministry will need to provide drivers and means of transporting children between the school and host site.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

BEFORE THE PROGRAM LAUNCHES:

- Encourage concentrated prayer in your church for BRT. Pray for God to show your church new ways to disciple children beyond BRT.
- Develop a system for follow-up with BRT students and families that do not have a home church.
- Develop a plan for informing parents and the community about the program and for seeking parental request forms.
- Communicate with school personnel to clarify the BRT calendar.

AFTER THE PROGRAM LAUNCHES, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR:

- **Day of Expectations:**
 - Monitor the bus ride carefully and make it a positive experience for the children. The bus ride is part of the BRT experience.
 - Enthusiastically greet the children when they arrive. Let them know you are excited for them to be there.
 - Start the program immediately when all children are seated.
 - Have volunteers sit among the children and participate with the children in the class time. (Ex: singing, worship music motion,...)
 - Stand at the door while the children leave and let them know you are glad they attended.
 - Make sure children enter and leave the building in safe manner.
 - Have a plan in place for children who want to go to the bathroom. Best to have school staff to make sure they went before leaving for BRT. When one goes during the meeting, you open it up for all.
 - Post Class Wrap-Ups – Have review sessions with your team after each class. Sit down and have open and honest program evaluations. It is important to critique your teaching, singing, game time, etc. to continue to improve your program.
- **Other Expectations Throughout the Year:**
 - Communicate positive stories of what is happening during the program both to the church and to the school.

- Build and maintain a good relationship with school personnel (superintendent, Principal, school secretary, etc.) We need to convey our desire to be a school supporter, and it's a great opportunity to minister to school personnel.
- Be sensitive to the fact that some of the children attend other churches. Treat them as you would want your own children to be treated at a different church.
- Build a volunteer team so that, if one member cannot attend the meeting, there is a qualified substitute.
- Build unity among your BRT volunteers. Make sure everyone has a role and understands what his/her role is.
- Visit other churches' BRT meetings to learn new ideas.
- Hand out information to BRT students regarding upcoming children's events at your church (Ex: summertime events such as VBS).

AFTER THE LAST CLASS OF THE YEAR:

- At the end of the school year visit school personnel to thank them and ask for any improvements that can be made.
- Express appreciation to church volunteers.
- Celebrate the end of the year and make plans for the next year.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

CONFIDENTIALITY?

Confidentiality means protecting all personally identifiable data, information, and records collected, used, or kept by the school district pertaining to a student. Confidentiality requirements also apply to any event, conversation, or records you might see or overhear someone discussing.

What you *SEE* and/or *HEAR* in a school, classroom, hallway, bathroom, cafeteria, or at any site or activity the school participates in, should be considered confidential and only discussed or repeated to the principal of that school. Even if you know a parent of one of the students you interacted with, do not discuss those activities with that child's parent.

GOSSIPING IS NOT PERMITTED. WHEN IS TALKING NOT GOSSIPING?

- When you support and enhance educators as honest, expert and caring professionals
- When you help to promote parental and community involvement
- When you attend school committee meetings to give input into decision making
- When you suggest new activities and general enthusiasm for positive changes
- When you share your pride of the school's achievements

If you overhear a conversation between students, staff, or administrators **DO NOT** repeat them to others. There are times that conversations, not intended for anyone other than those involved in the conversation could be overheard. If you are concerned about what you have overheard, talk to the principal. If you ever find yourself in a situation of overhearing conversations that do not concern you, get up and walk away, or make your presence known. Do not put yourself or allow yourself to be put in controversial situations.

DISCIPLINE

Those who work with students will never hit, slap, spank, pinch, push, or in any way use physical contact as a means of discipline. At no time will a child be struck, roughly handled,

verbally abused, or demeaned as a disciplinary measure. Producing pain or embarrassment is not a legitimate means of controlling students' behavior or for getting their attention.

Kind firmness, "tough love," and suitable enforcement of rules for order are possible without the threat of physical punishment.

Clear rules, expectations and consistent messages about behavior are the key to effective discipline procedures. Occasionally students have trouble following the rules or display disruptive behavior. In these cases, the following steps should be taken in progressive order-only as necessary.

- Warning
- Move student to another seating location
- One-on-one talk between adult leader and student. This conversation should still take place in clear view of other adults.
- Temporary suspension from attending Bible Release Time (BRT) for one or more classes
- Expulsion from BRT for the remainder of the school year

THE TWO-ADULT RULE

The two-adult rule states that there must always be two *non-related* adults present when supervising one or more students. This rule is designed for the safety of adults as well as minors and is required across all ministry areas with few exceptions. Compliance to the two-adult rule includes the following:

- There must always be two adults present when supervising one or more students
- The adults must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered "related")
- The adults should be in sight of each other at all times.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE TWO-ADULT RULE

The purpose of the two-adult rule is to ensure the actions of any one leader are known to (and visible by) at least one other leader and to support leaders in ministry. Guidelines for exceptions to the two-adult rule follow this intent- that even when only one leader is present, the actions of that leader are known and visible to others. This is accomplished by the adult

choosing to be in visible and in public locations, and by communication with other ministry staff.

DIVIDED CLASS ACTIVITIES

Some activities may require a class to be divided into two or more smaller groups-sometimes led by a single BRT approved volunteer. When this occurs, the small group leader should place him/herself in plain view so that other adults may see them at all times.

ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING MEETINGS

One-on-one meetings between students and BRT volunteers are sometimes necessary during class. All such meetings must take place in a visible area in a public place. Adult leaders should never meet with a student in closed room or other isolated/non-public area.

TAKING CHILD TO BATHROOM

While every effort is made to ensure that students use the bathroom *before* BRT class, sometimes it becomes necessary to escort a student to use the bathroom during class. When this happens, the adult must always stay in public areas. He/she must not accompany student into the bathroom.

TOUCHING

Quite simply, no person in contact with students (including staff, volunteers, visitors, guests-anyone) will be allowed to touch students in areas roughly blocked out by the rectangle in the diagram shown below.

It is entirely possible to effectively show compassion and Christian caring through a pat on the arm, a hand on the upper shoulder, etc. Not permissible are tickling, massage, back rubs, rump slaps, or any other contact inside the blocked-out area on the diagram. Hugs must be brief, with arms placed only near upper shoulders.



----- END OF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK CONTENT -----

HOW ELGIN SUPPORTS BRT PROGRAMS

The needs of each local BRT program are different, and local BRT teams should inquire about possible support from Elgin. The biggest support Elgin can give is to offer your church a good framework with supporting resources to run the program. We recognize that needs vary from church to church and here are some other ways Elgin can contribute to partnering ministries to help support BRT programs.

- Paid expense of background checks for up to 5 volunteers per school/church
- Reimburse cost of transportation and curriculum expense
- Purchase t-shirts for volunteers
- Reimburse expenses for training events and end-of-year celebration events

ONLINE RESOURCES

Here are some helpful websites as you start your program:

RELEASETIME.ORG

This is one of the best resources to discover ideas and to find out what your state law is concerning BRT.

RTCE.ORG

Fellowship of Release Time Ministries is a good resource for networking and contains links for curriculum ideas as well as other resources.

SCHOOLMINISTRIES.ORG

This site provides many valuable resources which can be purchased as needed.

APPENDICES

SAMPLE PARENTAL REQUEST FORM

[INSERT CHURCH/MINISTRY LOGO HERE]

Please return to your child's school

Bible Release Time Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Bible Release Time is a program that gives public school children and their guardians the opportunity to include biblical instruction, along with good morals, in their education. Once a month, students may be permitted by their legal guardians to attend an off campus (a facility within 5 miles) Bible class full of fun, songs, and bible based moral education.

REQUEST FORM FOR BIBLE RELEASE-TIME CLASS

Dear Principal,

I hereby request that my child, _____, be released from school to attend Bible Release Time classes in facilities off the school grounds under the supervision of (ORGANIZATION NAME).

Child's Grade: _____ Child's Public School Teacher: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Work Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone #: _____

Sign Here

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print

Parent/Guardian Signature

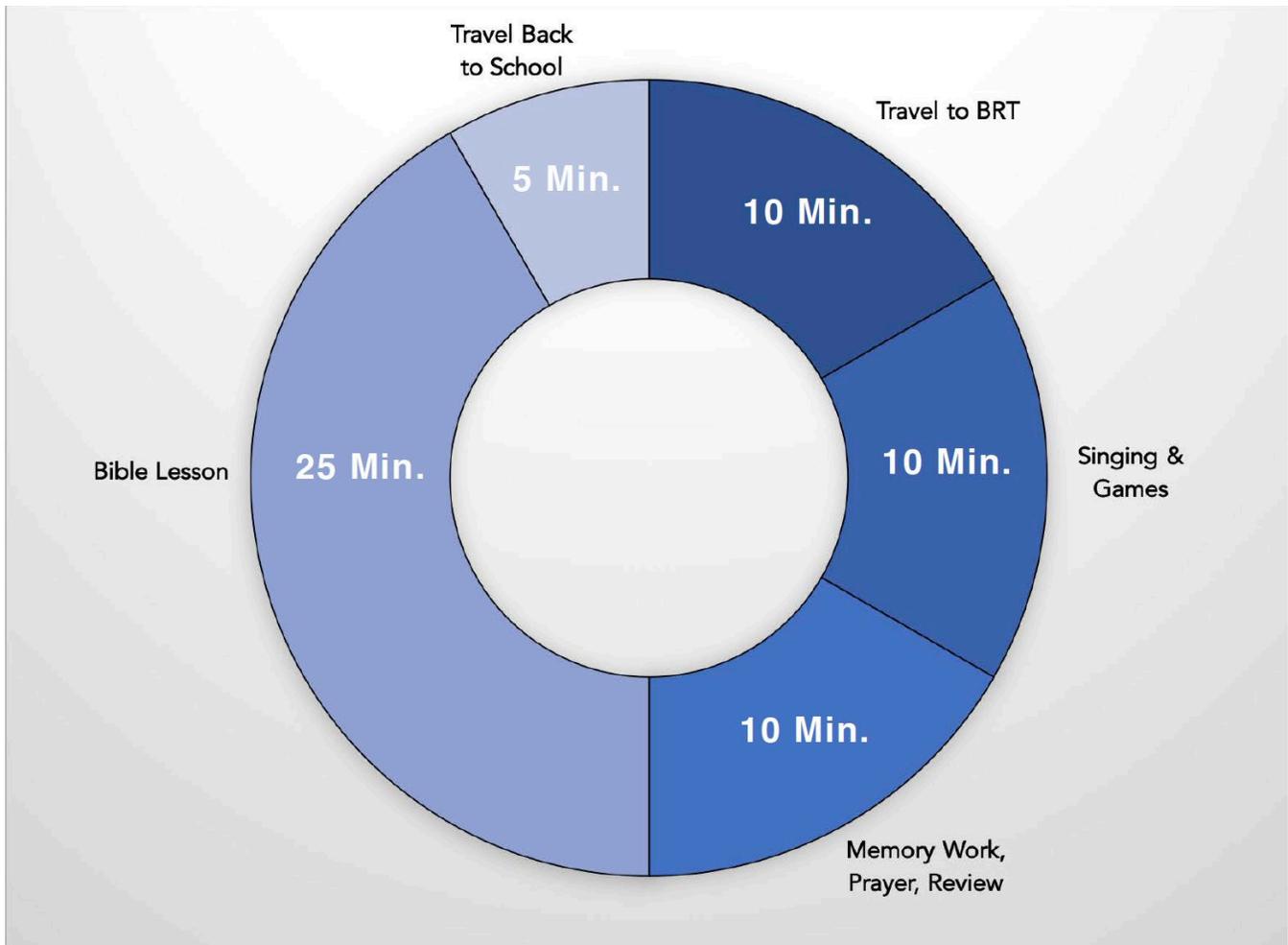
Date

I also give permission for my child's picture to be taken and used to publicize this program.

Signed: _____

SAMPLE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The BRT hour begins when the students leave the public school and ends when they return.



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School Name: _____

District: _____

Host Church: _____

Volunteers Present (#): _____ BRT Class Date: _____

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**TOTAL
STUDENT
POPULATION**

**BRT
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2nd Grade _____

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 *Note: Total Student Populaton only to be recorded on the first and last class of the year.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Positive **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP** is essential for a good BRT program. Here are some ideas for the participating school.

- Have BRT students in the hall when the bus arrives. The students are your responsibility until they are released to the BRT volunteer team.
- Give roll call list to BRT leader noting any reasons for a student's absence.
- Have a school leader ready to receive students when they return from BRT to ensure a safe and quiet re-entry into the school.
- Communicate concerns quickly to the BRT volunteer team and work with the team to ensure a high-quality program.
- Communicate any special needs that a participating student may have during the program. Does the student have any special health needs? (i.e. allergies, emotional needs, security needs...).
- Avoid planning any special events and outings during the BRT hour that might entice a child to skip the lesson.
- Communicate testing dates in advance to the volunteer team and work with the team to have a consistent time each month for the program.

Bible
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VOLUNTEER'S GUIDE

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This person makes sure that all the doors are secured once the program begins. He/she also ensures that only approved BRT volunteers are permitted in the area during the lesson.

BUS RIDERS

These are essential when a district allows non-school personnel on the buses transporting children to the program. The Bus Rider counts the kids coming and going on the bus. He/she helps the bus driver to keep the kids safe while in transit. Often, the Bus Rider(s) can begin the program with engaging songs during the travel to the host church. Check with your district to find out what the rules are concerning bus travel.

Note: For schools that walk to the BRT site, these same principles apply.

COMMUNICATION LEAD

This person makes sure that information is communicated well with all of the partnering organizations. This person can also take pictures and publicize the program for each of the partnering organizations. (Be careful to avoid taking pictures of children whose parents have not given permission for pictures).

PRAYER TEAM LEADER

This person will be responsible for leading folks within the church to regularly for the BRT team, participating children, and the school personnel.

SUPPORT ROLES

There are also several **Support Roles** that might need to be filled as the program grows and develops.

LISTENERS

This person listens to the kids who have memorized Scripture verses when verse lists are handed out to further Biblical instruction.

GRADERS

This person grades completed homework (or Mail-in Bible Lessons) when utilized.

SUBSTITUTES

These people may not participate regularly at BRT classes, but they are prepared to fill in when needed.

DRIVERS

Most sites will pay for the services of experienced, professional drivers to provide transportation for the program. When this is not the case, the host church or ministry will need to provide drivers and means of transporting children between the school and host site.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

Here are some ideas for **Church Volunteers** to help run a high-quality BRT program.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM LAUNCHES:

- Encourage concentrated prayer in your church for BRT. Pray for God to show your church new ways to disciple children beyond BRT.
- Develop a system for follow-up with BRT students and families that do not have a home church.
- Develop a plan for informing parents and the community about the program and for seeking parental request forms.
- Communicate with school personnel to clarify the BRT calendar.

AFTER THE PROGRAM LAUNCHES, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR:

- **Day of Expectations:**
 - Monitor the bus ride carefully and make it a positive experience for the children. The bus ride is part of the BRT experience.
 - Enthusiastically greet the children when they arrive. Let them know you are excited for them to be there.
 - Start the program immediately when all children are seated.
 - Have volunteers sit among the children and participate with the children in the class time. (Ex: singing, worship music motion,...)

- Stand at the door while the children leave and let them know you are glad they attended.
- Make sure children enter and leave the building in safe manner.
- Have a plan in place for children who want to go to the bathroom. Best to have school staff to make sure they went before leaving for BRT. When one goes during the meeting, you open it up for all.
- Post Class Wrap-Ups – Have review sessions with your team after each class. Sit down and have open and honest program evaluations. It is important to critique your teaching, singing, game time, etc. to continue to improve your program.
- **Other Expectations Throughout the Year:**
 - Communicate positive stories of what is happening during the program both to the church and to the school.
 - Build and maintain a good relationship with school personnel (superintendent, Principal, school secretary, etc.) We need to convey our desire to be a school supporter, and it's a great opportunity to minister to school personnel.
 - Be sensitive to the fact that some of the children attend other churches. Treat them as you would want your own children to be treated at a different church.
 - Build a volunteer team so that, if one member cannot attend the meeting, there is a qualified substitute.
 - Build unity among your BRT volunteers. Make sure everyone has a role and understands what his/her role is.
 - Visit other churches' BRT meetings to learn new ideas.
 - Hand out information to BRT students regarding upcoming children's events at your church (Ex: summertime events such as VBS).

AFTER THE LAST CLASS OF THE YEAR:

- At the end of the school year visit school personnel to thank them and ask for any improvements that can be made.
- Express appreciation to church volunteers.
- Celebrate the end of the year and make plans for the next year.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality means protecting all personally identifiable data, information, and records collected, used, or kept by the school district pertaining to a student. Confidentiality requirements also apply to any event, conversation, or records you might see or overhear someone discussing.

What you *SEE* and/or *HEAR* in a school, classroom, hallway, bathroom, cafeteria, or at any site or activity the school participates in, should be considered confidential and only discussed or repeated to the principal of that school. Even if you know a parent of one of the students you interacted with, do not discuss those activities with that child's parent.

GOSSIPING IS NOT PERMITTED. WHEN IS TALKING NOT GOSSIPING?

- When you support and enhance educators as honest, expert and caring professionals
- When you help to promote parental and community involvement
- When you attend school committee meetings to give input into decision making
- When you suggest new activities and general enthusiasm for positive changes
- When you share your pride of the school's achievements

If you overhear a conversation between students, staff, or administrators DO NOT repeat them to others. There are times that conversations, not intended for anyone other than those involved in the conversation could be overheard. If you are concerned about what you have overheard, talk to the principal. If you ever find yourself in a situation of overhearing conversations that do not concern you, get up and walk away, or make your presence known. Do not put yourself or allow yourself to be put in controversial situations.

DISCIPLINE

Those who work with students will *never* hit, slap, spank, pinch, push, or *in any way use physical contact as a means of discipline*. At no time will a child be struck, roughly handled, verbally abused, or demeaned as a disciplinary measure. Producing pain or embarrassment is not a legitimate means of controlling student's behavior or for getting their attention.

Kind firmness, “tough love,” and suitable enforcement of rules for order are possible without the threat of physical punishment.

Clear rules, expectations and consistent messages about behavior are the key to effective discipline procedures. Occasionally students have trouble following the rules or display disruptive behavior. In these cases, the following steps should be taken in progressive order-only as necessary.

- Warning
- Move student to another seating location
- One-on-one talk between adult leader and student. This conversation should still take place in clear view of other adults.
- Temporary suspension from attending Bible Release Time (BRT) for one or more classes
- Expulsion from BRT for the remainder of the school year

THE TWO-ADULT RULE

The two-adult rule states that there must always be two *non-related* adults present when supervising one or more students. This rule is designed for the safety of adults as well as minors and is required across all ministry areas with few exceptions. Compliance to the two-adult rule includes the following:

- There must always be two adults present when supervising one or more students
- The adults must not be related family members (a married couple would be considered “related”)
- The adults should be in sight of each other at all times.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE TWO-ADULT RULE

The purpose of the two-adult rule is to ensure the actions of any one leader are known to (and visible by) at least one other leader and to support leaders in ministry. Guidelines for exceptions to the two-adult rule follow this intent- that even when only one leader is present, the actions of that leader are known and visible to others. This is accomplished by the adult choosing to be in visible and in public locations, and by communication with other ministry staff.

DIVIDED CLASS ACTIVITIES

Some activities may require a class to be divided into two or more smaller groups-sometimes led by a single BRT approved volunteer. When this occurs, the small group leader should place him/herself in plain view so that other adults may see them at all times.

ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING MEETINGS

One-on-one meetings between students and BRT volunteers are sometimes necessary during class. All such meetings must take place in a visible area in a public place. Adult leaders should never meet with a student in closed room or other isolated/non-public area.

TAKING CHILD TO BATHROOM

While every effort is made to ensure that students use the bathroom *before* BRT class, sometimes it becomes necessary to escort a student to use the bathroom during class. When this happens, the adult must always stay in public areas. He/she must not accompany student into the bathroom.

TOUCHING

Quite simply, no person in contact with students (including staff, volunteers, visitors, guests-anyone) will be allowed to touch students in areas roughly blocked out by the rectangle in the diagram shown below.

It is entirely possible to effectively show compassion and Christian caring through a pat on the arm, a hand on the upper shoulder, etc. Not permissible are tickling, massage, back rubs, rump slaps, or any other contact inside the blocked-out area on the diagram. Hugs must be brief, with arms placed only near upper shoulders.



(CHURCH LOGO)

PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

Bible Release Time Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Bible Release Time is a program that gives public school children and their guardians the opportunity to include biblical instruction, along with good morals, in their education. Once a month for second grade through fifth grade, students may be permitted by their legal guardians to attend an off campus (a facility within 5 miles) Bible class full of fun, songs, and bible-based moral education.

REQUEST FORM FOR BIBLE RELEASE-TIME CLASS

Dear Principal,

I hereby request that my child, _____, be released from school once per month to attend Bible Release-time classes in facilities off the school grounds under the supervision of **(Name of Church)**. I understand that I am waiving any right or privilege I may have to hold the school **(School Name)**, **(School District)**, the **(School Board)**, any and all employees of the school and **(School District)** and **(School Board)**, and/or the State of **STATE** liable for my child participating in the released time course.

Child's Grade: _____ Child's Public School Teacher: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Work Phone #: _____

Cell Phone #/: _____ Carrier: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone #: _____

Sign Here

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Print

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

I also give permission for my child's picture to be taken and used to publicize this program.

Signed: _____

*Disclaimer: The **(SCHOOL BAORD)** and **(SCHOOL DISTRICT)** do not sponsor or endorse this advertisement for solicitation.*



All children deserve great childhoods.

Who Must Report?



Every person who has reason to believe that a child under 18 has been abused or neglected or is in danger of being abused or neglected is **required by law** to make a report.

How to Report?



To report suspected child abuse contact CPS at 1-877-597-2331 or visit prdweb.chfs.ky.gov/reportabuse

90%

90% of perpetrators are individuals the child knows.

9 Years Old

The median age for reported abuse is nine years old.



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Who Must Report?



Every person who has reason to believe that a child under 18 has been abused or neglected or is in danger of being abused or neglected is **required by law** to make a report.

How to Report?



To report suspected child abuse contact DCS at 1-877-237-0004 or visit <https://reportabuse.state.tn.us>

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The median age for reported abuse is nine years old.



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How to Report?



To report suspected child abuse contact CPS
at 1-800-552-7096

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