

November 2009

Dear Parents,

It has come to our attention that our arrangements related to flight travel may not be entirely clear as they pertain to the cost for unaccompanied minors. Children who are underage, according to the airlines' rules, must be escorted to the ticket counter and through security by an adult whose name has been provided to the airline by the parent. Per FAA regulation, that designated adult is required to remain at the terminal until the child boards the plane and until the plane actually takes off from the runway. Because of this regulation, cadets who require "unescorted minor" services must be transported to the airport by the escort, using Academy transportation. This individualized service, involving finding an escort/driver, providing transportation to (or from) the airport, and remaining with the cadet until he boards and until the plane leaves the runway, does result in a significant cost to the parent and varies depending on which airport is utilized. In addition, the airline typically charges its own "unaccompanied minor" fee. As of September, **United Airlines, Air Tran, Continental,** and **Southwest** require boys be at least 12 to fly unescorted. **Jet Blue** requires that they be 14 or older. **American Airlines, Northwest, Delta** and **US Air** require a child be at least 15 to fly without an escort. Please keep these age requirements in mind as you make plans for future flights for your son.

The parent of the child requiring "unaccompanied minor" services must provide the airline **advanced notice** of the name of the person escorting the minor through the airport and to his flight. The parent must also provide the airline the name and address of the individual who will be meeting the child at the final destination. This information is typically provided when the parent contracts the airline for the "unaccompanied minor" service.

Bus lines may have similar requirements. It would be a good idea to check with your preferred bus line to determine if this is the case should you decide on bus travel for your son's mode of transportation. (This does not pertain to the bus companies utilized by the Academy to transport cadets directly from FUMA to a transportation hub.)

The buses which leave Fork Union for all leaves are chartered from **James River Bus Lines** (and occasionally from **Quick's Bus Company** and **Winn Transportation**). The Academy does not routinely supply transportation to bus stations, airports, and other leave destinations in Academy vehicles. Please note that the drivers of these chartered buses cannot leave their coaches to assist cadets in any way once the cadet departs the bus. For times when scheduled transportation does not suit or individual transportation is desired, the Academy will endeavor to hire a driver to make the trip. That cost will be charged to the cadet's tuition account.

Thank you for your attention to the information provided. Please contact the following individuals with any questions related to transportation:

**Upper School** - MAJ Al Williamson: (434) 842-4239; [williama@fuma.org](mailto:williama@fuma.org)

**Middle School** - LTC Richard Washington: (434) 842-4490; [washington@fuma.org](mailto:washington@fuma.org)

