

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

A “field trip” is an educational experience which occurs off school grounds. For the purpose of clarification, this policy will address various types of field trips: day experiences involving transportation, as well as day experiences within walking distance of the school; and extended experiences involving overnight lodging.

I. DAY EXPERIENCES

- A. Day experiences are viewed primarily as part of the school curriculum but there may be occasions where field trips are appropriate for enrichment experiences.
- B. Field trips shall be nondiscriminatory, providing equal educational opportunities to all students; however, extenuating circumstances may occur when a student’s behavior may cause concern for safety to him/her or others. In such circumstances, the teacher and principal will design an alternative educational experience. Students may be excluded from field trips for behavior or safety concerns. The principal’s decision on these matters shall be final. Parents will be notified in advance.
- C. Field trips will be planned by all affected staff members and school principal(s).
- D. Parents will be notified of the upcoming field trips. Notification will include locations of trips, educational objectives to be met, specifics of itineraries, adult/student ratios and funding requirements.
- E. School buses will be the preferred mode of transportation. If private vehicles are used, drivers may be required to show proof of liability and collision insurance. The Business Manager will have the authority to determine the adequacy of insurance.
- F. Student/adult ratio on field trips shall be sufficient for student supervision and safety. A ratio of 10 students or fewer per chaperone is suggested with consideration given to the age of students and the type of field trip experience. School personnel planning field trips shall be responsible for screening and selection of chaperones. The principal will have final authority for selection of individuals to accompany the group.

- G. The school system will make every effort to provide funding for planned field trips, within budgetary limitations. This does not eliminate the possibility of seeking funding from other sources. Funding from other sources may be required as necessary.
- H. At least one field trip experience per year should be offered to children at each grade level. It is the intent of the Board that such experiences be supportive of the grade level curriculum and that purely social activities be restricted in number and serve as a celebration or reward for the students.
- I. Field trips should be planned so as to avoid duplication of trips during the school year and between grade levels.
- J. In planning field trips, consideration shall be given to the ratio of travel time to the actual time at the site and/or engagement in the activity.
- K. Individual teachers or groups of teachers may design special walking field trips to complement specific objectives of the curriculum. These shall be arranged between the teacher and school principal.
- L. Within one week following the day trip, an evaluation will be conducted to assess whether basic objectives have been met. The classroom teacher is responsible for the evaluation.

II. **OVERNIGHT TRIPS (limited to 8th grade students)**

The primary goal of overnight trips for students is to provide an enriching experience while complementing the school curriculum. All overnight trips must be approved in advance by the School Board.

Policy

- A. In the event that more than one overnight trip is available, all 8th grade students will be offered a “guided choice” of different field trip options contained in a coordinated “trip package.”
- B. Students may participate in only one overnight trip.
- C. The overnight trip package must have the capacity to accommodate all potential 8th grade students who want to participate. If a trip within the

package has more applicants than it can accommodate, voluntary transfers to another trip will be requested. Further changes will be determined through use of a lottery system.

- D. Eligibility for participation in overnight trips is nondiscriminatory, however, extenuating circumstances may occur when a student's behavior may cause concern for safety to him/her or to others. In such cases, students may be excluded from the trip. The principal's decision on these matters shall be final. Parents will be notified in advance.
- E. Primary responsibility for funding of overnight trips lies with parents and/or students, but no students will be excluded for financial reasons.
- F. Arrangements for supervising and safeguarding students shall be clearly stated in each trip proposal.
- G. School buses or commercial carriers/buses are the preferred mode of transportation. If private vehicles are used, trip coordinators must work with the Business Manager to ensure that appropriate liability and collision insurance is in effect and that drivers are properly licensed. Prior to completion of out-of-state trips, the trip coordinators will determine through the business manager that appropriate liability and auto collision insurance coverage is in effect for all parties involved.
- H. The 8th grade teachers shall design and implement an educationally sound program for 8th grade students not participating in an overnight trip.

Procedure

- A. Trip coordinators will be responsible for giving advance notice to the School Committee of the proposed field trip package. The proposal will be submitted no later than November 1 of the 7th grade school year.
- B. The School Committee will review the trip package against the above policy criteria.
- C. A trip package detailing all pertinent information which has been approved by the School Committee will be mailed to parents by January 1.

- D. Parents/students must make a trip selection by February 15. Exceptions will be made for transfer students or retained students, if money cannot be refunded.
- E. Trip coordinators will be responsible for initiating and monitoring the fundraising process. Fundraising progress will be measured at two-month intervals. All students are encouraged to participate in the fundraising process.
- F. Approved trips which do not meet these policy criteria are subject to cancellation.
- G. Within two weeks following the overnight trip, an evaluation will be made to critique the trip. Affected teachers, students and parents will be asked to assess whether basic objectives have been met. This will also help in planning future trips. The trip coordinator will be responsible for the evaluation component.

III. EXCEPTIONS

- A. Exceptions to this policy requested by staff and approved by the principal and/or director of special education may be made to accommodate special education programming.
- B. Exceptions to this policy as requested by staff may be made by the principal and/or Superintendent to accommodate special circumstances.

Adopted: April 22, 1991

Revised: January 12, 1999; _____