

Instruction

Field Trips

The Region 17 Board of Education recognized the value that field trips can play in enhancing educational opportunities for students. These out-of-school activities can often provide a vital interdisciplinary and real world connection for students. The coordination of these activities into the curriculum can create an incentive for new learning, an opportunity for authentic inquiry on the application/extension to new content and skills.

The Board will appropriate monies each year to provide field trip experiences. It is the responsibility of the building principal to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to gain like experiences related to curriculum at each grade/class level.

The Principal, the Director of Transportation and the Superintendent must approve all field trips no less than two (2) weeks prior to the event. Overnight activities must be approved by the Board of Education prior to fund raising and notification to students. Proposals needing Board of Education approval must be submitted in a timely fashion, giving adequate time for Board of Education consideration. Approval will be based on the availability of buses and drivers, the building budget for such activities, the congruence of the activity to district and state curriculum objectives, the safety of children, and adherence to the following Board of Education regulations.

1. Student fees and transportation costs, for field trips will be shared by the school and the family. Effective beginning the 2001-2002 school year, there will be three levels of field trips and funding as stated below. No child shall be excluded from any field trip because of an inability to pay.
 - **Core Curriculum:** These field trips that are an integral part of the curriculum for a grade level
And are provided for all students. These trips will be identified and submitted as budget considerations for both transportation and student fees.
 - **Supportive:** Field trips that provide educational experiences related to the curriculum will be supported in part by the district budget. The district will provide transportation and students will be requested to pay any student fee.
 - **Extra:** Fees and transportation costs for additional field trips and co-curricular activities will be paid by students.
2. Each student on a field trip shall have written parental or guardian permission.

3. Each parent shall have written information regarding the nature and details of the trip.
4. The activity and the grade level determine the amount of adult supervision. A ratio of 1:8 for grades K-3 and 1:10 for grades 4-12 is appropriate for whole group or guided activities. For activities that do not provide the structure of a guided event a ratio of 1:5 is necessary for all grade levels.
5. Chaperones must sign the district chaperone form and abide by the rules and regulations of the district.
6. Overnight trips require Board of Education approval and background checks for chaperones.
7. A school nurse shall accompany students whenever a student with known medical needs is attending. A school nurse will also be in attendance at any overnight trip in excess of fifty (50) students. The Superintendent may waive this requirement upon recommendation from the Director of Nursing that a plan to provide alternate medical supervision is available and appropriate.
8. Field trips for clubs and co-curricular activities and those not directly related to school or state objectives, should be scheduled during non-school hours whenever possible.
9. Region 17 buses may be used only for in-state field trips and for trips within 100 miles one-way. These trips may be scheduled so as to provide no conflict to the regular bus schedule. Other transportation shall be provided via insured buses or public carriers.
10. Where like opportunities exist for field trips, every effort should be made to remain within the state of Connecticut.

Policy

Adopted:

November 14, 2000

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17

Higganum, Connecticut

Regional School District No. 17

6000 Series

6153(a)

Instruction

Field Trips

General

Field trips are valuable educational activities which enhance classroom learning.

Approval

Field trips requiring approval by the Superintendent of Schools or designee and/or notification to the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education should be submitted for review as soon as plans have been made and no later than two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled trip.

Principals should keep current records of such requests, and if they don't receive approvals from the Superintendent of Schools one (1) week before the trip is scheduled they should call the Central Office.

In no situation should field trips take place unless the requisite approval has been obtained beforehand.

School Sponsored Trips

Principals should review staff members' field trip requests as they relate to Board policy and the current budget. Principals may consult with the Superintendent of Schools, or his designee, as necessary.

Copies of the field trip request forms are to be distributed as follows:

- I. the school office file;
- II. the Business Manager/Accounting Supervisor (or the Superintendent of Schools or designee for approval if the field trip is overnight or involves private vehicles).

Field Trip Procedures

I. Pre-Planning:

A. Notification:

1. The teacher-sponsor should check with the Principal before involving students and/or parents in planning.
2. Where student contributions are requested, the teacher-sponsor shall present a proposal indicating fund sources or fund-raising activities planned, to provide for students unable to meet costs.

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Field Trips (continued)

Procedures (continued)

B. Knowledge of Location to Be Visited:

1. The teacher-sponsor should visit (ideal) or be familiar with the site of the trip before the trip is taken.
2. If the teacher-sponsor is unable to comply with item #1, he/she should consult with other staff members who have visited the field trip location to obtain specific information about its educational value for students of the participating grade level.

C. Statement of Purpose:

1. Written trip objectives of the trip and its relationship to curriculum should be submitted to the Principal by the teacher-sponsor; if chiefly for enrichment, it should be presented as an enrichment activity;
2. The Principal will review the statement of purpose before recommending the trip to the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, for approval.

D. Safety Provisions:

1. Knowledge of Possible Hazards:

- a. The teacher-sponsor must be reasonably aware of possible hazards to the safety of trip participants and inform the Principal of such hazards.
- b. Undue hazards shall be pointed out to parents and to participants prior to the trip so reasonable precautions can be taken to avoid accidents and student injury.
- c. Potentially hazardous activities (including skiing, mountain climbing, scuba diving, etc.) may require special insurance arrangements. In case of doubt, the Principal should review planned activities with the Superintendent of Schools.

2. Knowledge of Students' Medical Problems:

- a. Teachers should be aware of special medical problems, allergies, handicaps, special prescriptions, etc. of student trip participants.
- b. Teachers should plan emergency measures to be taken if a medical emergency arises.

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Field Trips (continued)

Procedures (continued)

3. Transportation:

- a. Ordinarily, the Principal will make travel arrangements when the regular school bus carrier is involved.
- b. When reasonable, school buses, charter, or some other form of public carrier should be considered for transportation since vehicles of this type will have ample insurance coverage.
- c. With prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools, or his designee, staff members or volunteer parents may use their personal automobiles to provide transportation, however, staff members or volunteers must understand that Board insurance doesn't cover their vehicles. Board insurance assumes liability for damages beyond the limits of the policies carried by the owner of private vehicles. Before authorizing such transportation, assurance of adequate insurance coverage should be provided by the owners. While staff members and parents cannot be forced to be insured beyond legal limits, a minimum of \$100,000/\$300,000 is recommended when transporting students in privately owned vehicles.
- d. To ensure volunteer coverage under insurance, it is these volunteers should be classified as "VOLUNTEER WORKERS". The Principal shall maintain an official roster of designated volunteers. It is also important that this roster be used regularly for providing transportation services.
- e. If private automobiles, owned and operated by other than Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education employees, are used, the persons operating them shall be notified in writing of their personal responsibility. They shall also be notified of the recommended limits of liability insurance and shall be required to submit evidence thereof.

E. Parental Notifications:

1. Before the student is allowed to participate, permission slips shall be obtained from the parent or guardian of each student participant. Permission slips shall be taken on the trip by the teacher-chaperone, and retained for at least a six-month period after completion of the trip by the Principal. *(system-wide form)*

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Field Trips (continued)

Procedures (continued)

2. Information given by the teacher on the permission slip shall include: (a) the purpose of the trip, (b) the place to be visited, (c) the date and approximate times of departure from and arrival back to the school, (d) the type of transportation to be used, (e) the total costs, if any, (f) a release to seek emergency medical attention as needed, and (g) any required apparel or equipment needed.
 3. The permission slip should request information about any special medical problems, allergies, handicaps, special prescriptions, etc., of which a chaperone should need to be aware.
 4. Standard permission slip guides will be available at each school office. Modifications may be made to accommodate special circumstances.
 5. Parents/guardians do not waive legal rights for children by signing permission slips.
 6. Timely itineraries should be sent to parents for trips out of district/state.
- F. Notification to Cafeteria Personnel** - If a trip will cause students to miss lunch at school, teacher-sponsors shall notify cafeteria personnel, several days in advance.
- G. Preparation of Students:**
1. The teacher-sponsor shall acquaint the students with the purpose of the trip and point out what they are to look for;
 2. Where possible, the teacher-sponsor shall involve students in the actual planning of the trip;
 3. The teacher-sponsor shall inform the students as to what is expected of them in the way of behavior and dress and of what materials they may take with them.

II. Procedures on the Trip

A. Supervision:

1. Teachers, administrators, and other adults acting as chaperones are expected to exercise supervisory responsibilities;
2. Supervisory personnel must be continuously alert to reasonably anticipate possible hazards;
3. Visitor guides, if available and suitable, should be used;

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Field Trips (continued)

Procedures (continued)

4. Adult chaperones (e.g., other staff personnel, parents, etc.) may accompany the group and should be briefed by the teacher-sponsor as to purposes of the trip, possible hazards, procedures, supervisory responsibilities, etc., and should receive a copy of any written procedures;
5. Per Board policy, all "overnight" trips must be approved by the Superintendent of Schools prior to the trip. In those cases, the names and ages of all chaperones must accompany the request for approval submitted to the Superintendent of Schools;
6. The following ratios are suggested as to approximate proportion of adult chaperones (inclusive of the teacher-sponsor) to students in terms of grade level, and depending upon the activity and other circumstances, may be changed on the authority of the Superintendent of Schools:

Adults	Students
K-3	One : Five
4-6	One : Eight
7-8	One : Ten
9-12	One : Fifteen

Names of chaperones will be placed on record in the Principal's office prior to the trip.

7. Chaperones will be apprised of their responsibilities by the teacher in charge.
8. Students will be informed of their obligation to adhere to the directions of the "teacher in charge" and chaperones.
9. Students will demonstrate equal respect for the teacher in charge and for adults serving as chaperones. Students not displaying such deportment will be reported to the Principal by the teacher in charge subsequent to return from the field trip. The Principal will take disciplinary measures as he/she deems appropriate.
10. The teacher-sponsor must notify the Principal if students are to be delayed or if the itinerary is substantially changed for extended trips.
11. Should accidents or medical emergencies occur, the teacher must immediately notify the Principal. Parents will be contacted if the situation warrants.

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Field Trips (continued)

Procedures (continued)

B. Group and Individual Activities on the Trip:

1. Adequate time should be allowed for lunch (or dinner) during the field trip.
2. Time should be allowed for toilet and washroom purposes.
3. Since the students are under the authority and responsibility of the school until they return to the school, each student shall ordinarily be expected to remain with the group until return to the school.

C. Educational Activities:

1. Every effort shall be made to ensure optimal learning by students on the trip.
2. If feasible, students shall be given the opportunity to collect other information not necessarily related to the stated purposes of the trip but educationally valuable.

D. Adult Behavior

1. Adults, teachers, and chaperones shall, at all times, conduct themselves in such a way as to demonstrate the best example to students.
2. Ordinarily, adults shall stay with the group at all times.
3. Smoking, use of alcoholic beverages, or any illicit substance is prohibited during the field trip. The prohibition extends to all students, teacher-sponsor, and chaperones.

E. Student Behavior—Regular school behavior policies are in effect.

III. Follow-up Activities:

A. Reports:

1. As soon as possible after the trip, the teacher-sponsor shall make a written report to the Principal.
2. If transportation or other details arranged by the Principal were unsatisfactory, the teacher-sponsor shall so report to the Principal for follow-up and correction for subsequent trips.

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Field Trips (continued)

Procedures (continued)

3. If an accident or medical emergency has occurred during the trip, the teacher-sponsor shall immediately furnish the Principal with complete written details as to apparent cause and effects and as to what actions were taken by teacher-sponsor.

B. Educational:

1. At the first opportunity, the teacher-sponsor shall review the stated purposes of the trip and observations made on the trip with the group. A brief written evaluation shall be submitted to the Principal.
2. If practicable, a written or audio-visual report should be prepared by students as a language arts class project. The teacher's assessment of the activity will accompany the report.
3. Appropriate expressions of appreciation to those who hosted the group during the field trip are encouraged.
4. The teacher-sponsor shall guide the group through a variety of suitable follow-up activities leading to additional learning as an outcome of the trip or as an introduction to other learning.

IV. Non-School Sponsored Trips:

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education will not accept responsibility for trips not covered by Board policy. Non-school sponsored trips planned for profit by staff members may not occur on school time and, therefore, are not to be planned on school time. ("Profit" is defined as monetary gain in excess of expenses.) The facilities of the schools may not be used in planning such trips. Letters to parents, directions, or other communications may not be duplicated on school equipment or distributed at schools. Teachers planning such trips should look to community agencies or organizations outside the schools. (In some communities, the YMCA, churches, recreation departments, etc., are used when organization sponsorship is needed.)

Summary Statement. Each Principal may, and is encouraged to, apply his/her judgment in modifying or adding to these regulations to suit the needs of specific field trips. The Superintendent shall be informed of such modification(s). At the close of each school year, the administration will compile a list of field trips by grade and school.

Regulation approved:
1/00

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Form 1

FIELD TRIP REQUEST

School: _____ Date: _____

Requested by: _____

Department: _____

Destination: _____

Date of trip: _____

Departure time: _____

Approximate time of return: _____

Number of students involved: _____

Number of chaperones: _____

Type of transportation: _____

Expense to students: _____

Expense to school system: _____

Relationship to curriculum:

Comments:

TRIP LOG

Approved by: _____
(Signature of Principal)

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Form 2

(To be completed and verified by trip chaperone and returned to Accounting Supervisor, Central Office)

Actual departure time: _____

Actual time of return: _____

Total time of trip: _____
(Hours/Minutes)

Bus number (s): _____

Driver name (s): _____

Verified by: _____

(Signature of Chaperone)

CENTRAL OFFICE USE ONLY

(For overnight and private vehicle requests only)

Approved _____ Disapproved _____

Superintendent or Designee's Signature Date

- Copy: Accounting Supervisor (Superintendent -- if overnight/private vehicle request) after Principal's approval.
Copy: Accounting Supervisor (after completion of trip log)
Copy: Principal's Copy