

**MAINE SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
(MSSM)**

MSSM INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PROTOCOL

In a 21st century world, an increasing part of student education occurs away from campus, including extended overseas travel. Providing these enhancing international experiences, however, often exposes schools to some liability. It is therefore both legally necessary and pragmatically expedient to articulate clear MSSM guidelines for such activities in order to minimize risk to students and chaperones through detailed planning and approval of such activities.

All international trips associated with MSSM must be presented to the Administrative Advisory Team twelve months in advance of the planned date of departure for approval to proceed. The written proposal should include the following:

Purpose:

MSSM international travel should have a distinct curriculum related educational purpose rather than be a 'holiday.'

Participation:

International trips are a privilege, not a right, and MSSM reserves the ability to deny a student the right to participate based upon historical behavior patterns that would lead to the conclusion that they might cause a problem while traveling overseas.

Research:

Those faculty and staff planning such trips should thoroughly research intended destinations with a specific focus on safety considerations. This should include a check with the U.S. State Department to determine whether there has been a travel advisory posted for the intended destination(s). This is particularly important when contemplating travel to less developed areas with weak tort law, chaotic traffic, and poor highway systems. The U.S. State Department reports that a third of the total risk to students happens during highway travel, and another 10 percent happens on boats, planes, and trains. More than a quarter of the total risk to students is drowning during swimming activities, and the remaining 30 percent of risk is a mixture of fires, falls, sickness, and pedestrian travel. All of these factors should be weighed closely as part of a risk analysis during trip research and planning.

Discipline:

During all intentional travel, the expectations and rules contained within the MSSM Community Handbook remain in force for all participants, in all places, and at all times.

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All international trips require a minimum of two qualified school adult chaperones with a ratio of one adult to six students. Both adults are required to be first aid trained including, dispensing medication, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and use of automated external defibrillators.

Parent Release:

The organizer is required to obtain a signed release from liability from parents of students participating in the trip. The release from liability form should include the following information sufficient that parents knowingly understand the full scope of what their child will be undertaking:

- Name of parents and student
- Trip Details:
 - Educational objective of trip: why is this trip being taken?
 - Itinerary: what are the exact details?
 - Student activities: what will the students be doing, particularly if they will be required to participate in physically demanding or somewhat dangerous events, e.g. Whitewater rafting.
 - Equipment and supplies: anything the students should bring with them.
 - Transportation plan: all of the details. When, where, and how.
 - Costs and expenses anticipated: mandatory costs and a notation of any discretionary money that may be needed by the student. (e.g.: if time will be provided for students to shop at a gift store, etc.)
 - Medical authorization: this information should include a physician's name and number, as well as an emergency number for either or both parents, and a release for the overseeing adult on the trip to make at least initial medical decisions on behalf of the parents until the parents or other emergency contact can be reached.
 - Agreement by both the parent and the child that the school policies and any additional rules will be followed.
 - Insurance coverage: Comprehensive travel insurance must be in place that includes all medical contingencies including treatment, hospitalization, and repatriation.
 - Hold harmless clause:

[parent's name] agrees to release and hold harmless [school name, administrators, and chaperones] from any and all liability, loss, damages, claims, or actions for bodily injury and / or property damage arising out of participation in this trip, in accordance with current state and federal law.

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Emergency Preparedness:

In light of the 9/11 tragedies and recent natural disasters, trip organizers must have contingency plans in place in the event that an emergency arises. These must include:

- Chaperones must have enough credit or access to funds to afford the group another several nights in a hotel in case the borders of either the country being visited or the United States close.
- Each student should have extra money or a credit card for emergency use.
- At least one school adult on the trip should have a cell phone with adequate service coverage, including international coverage.
- Every person on the trip should have the cell phone number and an emergency call-in number so that everyone can be accounted for, even if the group gets separated.
- Chaperones will contact an MSSM administrator designated by the Executive Director every third day of the trip to confirm that all is well.

Implemented: October 10, 2018

First Reading: December 1, 2018

Second Reading: March 2, 2019