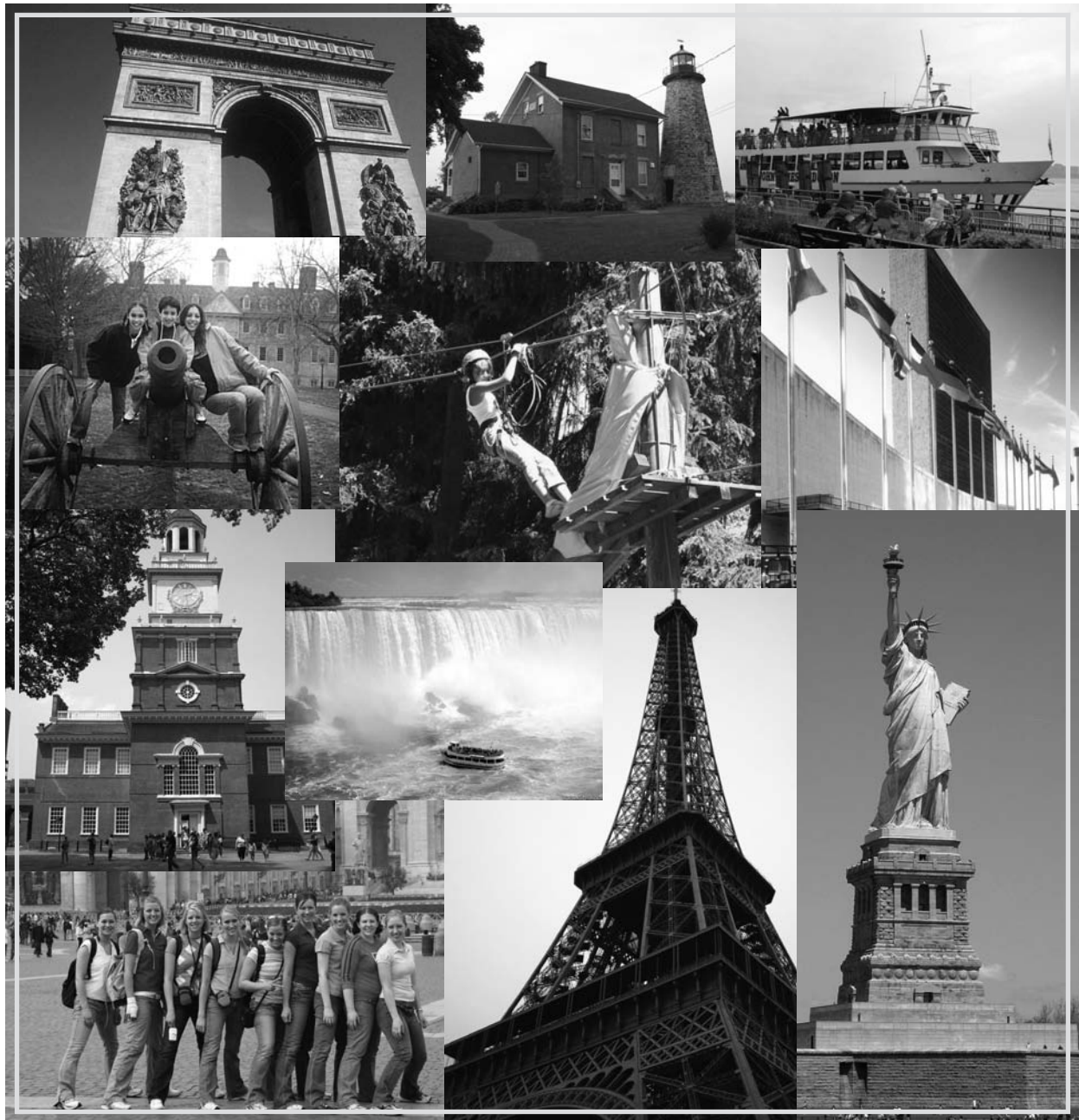




Safeguarding New York Schools

A Guide to Managing Student Travel

Reissued for 2011



A Guide to Managing Student Travel

A Publication of



www.nysir.org

This NYSIR resource -- *A Guide to Managing Student Travel* -- was compiled for research and discussion purposes only, and it does not address every situation, exposure, condition or hazard. Please contact the appropriate expert when making program or planning decisions. References to insurance coverage is for illustrative purposes; contact your insurance representative or NYSIR Underwriting at 1-800-476-9747 ext. 1461 for an explanation of how coverage applies.

Questions concerning this publication should be directed to Robert Bambino, Director of Risk Management at 516-750-9403 or 1-800-476-9747, ext. 1403



December, 2010

Student travel provides wonderful opportunities to inspire learning and to provide unique experiences that go beyond the classroom setting. History comes to life when students visit famous sites that they have read about in their textbooks. A trip to the state or the nation's capital where students can observe how laws are made gives new depth to civic lessons. Overseas travel immerses students into foreign cultures, providing valuable understanding of the global community. Student, school-sponsored travel has been on the increase in recent years and NYSIR, in a proactive venture to reinforce risk management practices related to travel, has revised the 2009 guide to student travel to reflect additional means of implementing a successful excursion.

I am pleased to introduce this handbook for school administrators, teacher assistants, faculty, parent liaisons, and all of those involved not only in the decision-making process, but also the organization of field trips for our students. While the first steps are to determine the educational objectives the trip provides and to seek approval, there are many subsequent elements that ensure a safe and successful trip. This handbook includes a discussion of NYSIR's loss experience as related to field trips, and a thorough review of ways to manage risk to ensure the safety, security and welfare of student travelers and their chaperones. Also included are a number of forms and documents that are related to field trip organization and safety.

Thank you to Bob Bambino, NYSIR's Director of Risk Management, for his coordination of this carefully researched guide, and Joann Robertson, Coordinator of Risk Management, helped edit and review the material. We trust that this guide will become an essential part your field trip planning. In addition to this printed guide, which you may copy as required to other trip coordinators in your district, we have included a CD-Rom of the guide that you to download the forms you will need and fill them out directly from your computer.

Please share this document with your administrative team and be certain that all your schools are following the same procedures.

Sincerely,
Joe Goncalves
Executive Director
New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal

A Guide to Managing Student Travel

Table of Contents

The Perils of School Travel

- A Changing Landscape - 1
- NYSIR's Loss Experience - 1
- Reputation Risk - 2

Insurance Coverage

- Property - 2
- Commercial General Liability - 2
- Automobile - 3
- Workers' Compensation - 3
- Student Accident - 3
- Unapproved Travel - 3
- Activities Not Covered - 3

Evaluating Student Travel

- Educational Field Trips - 4
- High-Risk Activities - 4

Risk Control

- Emergency Management Planning - 4
- Transportation Issues - 5
- Pre-Trip - 7
- During Trip - 7
- Post-Trip - 8
- Chaperones - 9

Foreign Travel - 11

Managing the Terrorism Threat - 12

Sample Forms and Documents

- Request for Educational Field Trip - 14
- Parental/Guardian Permission Form - 15
- Parental/Guardian Permission Form – Foreign Travel - 16
- Transportation Permission Form - 17
- Student Assumption of Risk Form - 18
- Volunteer Application - 19
- Model Code of Conduct - 21
- Field Trip Attendance Guide and Sheet - 33
- Checklist for Charter Bus Trips - 36
- Charter Vehicle Inspection Checklist - 37
- Insurance Agreement - Transportation - 38

References - 39

The Perils of School Travel

Managing school-sponsored field trips has always been a challenge for school districts. Recent travel restrictions have increased the challenge, including those regarding liquid carry-ons. There is nothing more anxiety-producing than having students, chaperones and faculty traveling away from the safety of the school environment, whether they are going across the state or across the world. Although student travel has decreased somewhat over the past few years, many school groups are still venturing beyond the traditional one-day bus excursions to local historical or geographic attractions. Trips involving overnight stays, air travel, journeys going across the country or even overseas, are still common.

This handbook was written for our subscribers to help them with the challenging task of selecting, planning and managing student travel. It includes information about several aspects of student travel, such as:

- **Insurance coverage**
- **Risk control recommendations**
- **Emergency management planning**
- **The terrorism threat**
- **Foreign travel**
- **Chaperones**

Sample forms and documents are also provided. See pages 14 – 38.

A Changing Landscape

Not surprisingly, the exposures experienced by public schools are a reflection of what is occurring in our society. Whether on the national or state level, external exposures shape and ultimately affect the risk management programs implemented and managed by NYSIR subscribers. Exposures dramatically changed on September 11, 2001. There have

been increased security measures taken by federal, state and local officials; actions taken by the owners of popular tourist attractions and venues; and well publicized hazing and assault incidents. These factors have raised the need for well-planned and designed field trip organization and management. These events have increased the scrutiny of student travel by boards of education, administrators and parents, and have raised questions about the appropriateness of individual trips and the overall safety and security of students, staff and volunteers. Additionally, subscribers have raised many poignant questions about travel during elevated terrorist alerts, foreign and domestic airline travel, and whether or not sports camps are still appropriate.

NYSIR's Loss Experience

The many student travel claims that have been initiated against subscribers have been related to assaults, the majority of them student-on-student claims from students who were injured on school trips or at sports camps. Given the nature of the claims, this exposure is considered to be low-frequency, high-severity in nature. One claim against a subscriber involved an alleged sexual assault from a volunteer chaperone against a student.

Student travel often involves athletics, sports and recreational activities. Injuries resulting from these activities occur infrequently, and as a rule, do not rise to the level of claims or litigation. However, injuries and illegal or unacceptable behavior on trips can lead to another serious problem for school districts, resulting in the ramifications of a damaged reputation in the community. Typical allegations in lawsuits are failure to supervise, not enforcing rules of conduct, and not warning of hazards.

Reputation Risk

Reputation risk is the potential negative impact on a district's ability to meet its financial, educational and operating goals as a result of negative public opinion. When a district's reputation is negatively affected, budgets do not pass; capital projects are postponed; programs are canceled and relationships with staff, students and taxpayers are damaged.

There have been several well-publicized incidents covered by both local and national

media. These incidents concerned illegal or unacceptable behavior occurring during student travel, predominantly during overnight trips. In addition to causing financial loss resulting from claims and litigation, these incidents force administrators and board of education members to divert time to deal with the media, address public relations issues and answer questions from staff, parents, students and others, in effect allocating their valuable resources and time to manage unfavorable publicity.

Insurance Coverage

NYSIR has not decreased its coverage for student travel. A general overview of NYSIR coverage by policy follows. Subscribers should read the applicable policy, or contact their broker, insurance representative or the NYSIR underwriting staff directly for specific coverage questions or for detailed advice.

Property

The NYSIR property policy provides coverage for property damage to buildings and contents subject to the policy deductible. Except for property that is temporarily away from a covered location (and subject to a sub limit of \$100,000), coverage for contents (such as equipment, laptops, and musical instruments) only extends for 1,000 feet from a covered location. The best way to properly cover property that "travels" away from a school is with a floater (inland marine) policy that covers property off-premises. Floater policies provide coverage on a direct risk of loss basis, subject to a smaller deductible – often \$250 or \$500.

Personal Property Coverage: A standard Homeowner's Insurance Policy will cover loss to an insured's personal property while away from the premises, however, some insurers exclude coverage for off-premises theft. If this endorsement is on the policy, loss caused by theft is excluded, but the policy will respond to losses caused by other perils, such as fire and water damage.

Commercial General Liability (CGL)

The NYSIR CGL policy provides coverage on a worldwide basis and does not contain a specific exclusion for student travel. Employees and bona fide volunteers are considered insureds for covered accidents that arise as a result of their employment, service as a chaperone or volunteer activities. This includes coverage for claims alleging improper supervision of students. There is no insurance coverage for any person who is a named offender in sexual misconduct.

Automobile

The NYSIR Automobile Liability policy provides coverage for district-approved use of vehicles during field trips and other types of student travel in the following ways:

- **Primary insurance for the district and persons operating district-owned vehicles with permission.**
- **Excess insurance for employees and volunteers who operate their own vehicles may be provided by the NYSIR Automobile Policy when the use of non-district-owned vehicles is allowed.**
- **Excess insurance for rented vehicles.**

Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation coverage extends to employees for compensable accidents whether on or off-premises. NYSIR does not provide Workers' Compensation insurance for its members. Contact your Workers' Compensation insurer or third-party administrator for more detailed information.

Student Accident

Generally, Student Accident Insurance covers all school sponsored and supervised activities. However, plans offer options which enhance the coverage, including interscholastic athletics and summer school activities. Since NYSIR does not provide Student Accident Insurance, subscribers should contact their student accident insurer for information concerning this coverage.

Unapproved Travel

Usually, NYSIR's policies do not cover activities that are not part of a district's official

or approved activities, programs or operations. The policy does not afford coverage to a person (such as an employee) who is sued because of his or her involvement in an activity that is not part of the employee's duties or responsibilities for the district. Therefore, a teacher who arranges a field trip that is not approved by the district will not be entitled to coverage through the NYSIR program.

Unapproved travel for students, trips that have not been submitted to the board of education or administration for formal approval, but that the district is aware of and supports by allowing:

- **Meetings to be held on school property**
- **The use of office supplies**
- **The use of duplication services**

could possibly result in an uninsured situation for the teachers or staff involved. Additionally, there is a chance that indemnification under the New York State Education Law may not apply.

Accordingly, NYSIR recommends that all travel should be evaluated and reviewed, and the district's policies on student travel checked. In some cases, it is better for trips to be brought into the district as sponsored activities so that applicable policies and procedures can be addressed and followed. Do not implicate the school district by becoming even partially involved with a non-school-sponsored trip.

Activities Not Covered

The NYSIR Commercial General Liability (CGL) policy provides broad coverage for school districts. However, not every exposure is covered. Examples include: district owned aircraft and certain watercraft. Subscribers should consult their insurance representative or NYSIR Underwriting for coverage information or interpretations.

Evaluating Student Travel

Educational Field Trips

School districts have similar policies and procedures concerning field trips. All districts should require approval from a building principal, central office administrator and the board of education. While criteria for approval differs, typically requirements include:

- **Relationship to curriculum or grade level**
- **Relationship to a specific course**
- **Emanation from a school-sponsored club**

High-Risk Activities

Periodically, subscribers arrange trips that involve high-risk activities. Such activities as rafting, mountain hiking, rock climbing, cave exploration, and skiing involve unusual hazards that require special attention and planning:

- **All required or recommended license and certification requirements for guides, outfitters and instructors should be reviewed and verified before the trip.**
- **A detailed description of the activities must be in the parental/ guardian permission slip. This gives parents and guardians the opportunity to evaluate their child's skills, physical condition and interest beforehand and determine if the child should participate.**
- **All participants, chaperones and staff must wear personal protective equipment as recommended or required.**
- **The permission slip may have an "opt-out" provision for individual students in a specific activity, such as use of a rock-climbing wall at a recreation center.**

Risk Control

Subscribers can prevent accidents from occurring during student travel by implementing risk control measures before, during and after school trips.

Emergency Management Planning

Although it actually is a pre-trip risk control measure, we believe emergency management planning should be addressed separately. Under Project SAVE, NYSIR subscribers are required to establish and maintain an emergency management plan (EMP), crafted to respond to different emergencies and situations.

NYSIR recommends adopting the plan to address emergencies that can occur off campus and when students are traveling, which can be part of multi-hazard response planning. This can be accomplished by listing the types of trips taken in the past and those approved for the upcoming school year. Central office administrators should make certain that the trip leader, other district staff and volunteers on the trip are thoroughly familiar with, and carry a copy of, the EMP.

An EMP for student travel should address emergencies that arise from:

- **Student illnesses**
- **Student accidents**
- **Motor vehicle accidents or breakdowns**
- **Fires or other emergencies in hotels**
- **Civil unrest**
- **Weather emergencies (such as floods, hurricanes, or ice storms)**
- **Bomb threats**
- **Assaults**
- **Utility failures**

Hotel or sports camp management should have an EMP for their facilities. Trip leaders should check the evacuation plans when they arrive. Review the evacuation routes that are posted in hotel rooms with students, staff and volunteers, as well as the building's alarm system and procedures. Select a meeting spot away from the hotel. Carry a copy of the attendance list to ensure that all students, chaperones, volunteers and staff are accounted for. While most weather events arise after sufficient warning, hotel or camp management should be prepared to respond to hurricanes, severe weather or floods. Checking with the local weather service before leaving is prudent, especially if travel is during a severe weather season.

Ask coach bus contractors to explain or provide a copy of their emergency plans in case of an accident or mechanical breakdown.

If students are stranded, consider the following recommendations:

- **Contact local law enforcement for assistance.**
- **Contact district administration and parents/guardians.**
- **Ask law enforcement to direct the group to**

a suitable sheltering site.

- **Be prepared to assist students with medical conditions or special needs.**

Establishing a Communications Center:

In the event of an emergency during student travel, school administrators in the district should establish a communications center, preferably using the site designated in the district-wide EMP.

Parents and guardians can be directed to the site to obtain information and meet with school officials.

Transportation Issues

■ *Transportation by Parents, Guardians and Others*

In some instances, a district may find that for school-sponsored events, having parents or guardians transport students in private cars not owned by the district is warranted. In these instances, NYSIR does not provide primary automobile insurance coverage for non-district-owned vehicles. In New York State, liability insurance follows the vehicle. The drivers must carry adequate personal automobile insurance since they may be held personally liable for injuries to passengers and others that are a result of their negligence.

Before allowing the use of non-district-owned vehicles, administrators should determine whether there is a district policy that addresses this practice. In some districts, it is prohibited. If this type of student transportation is permitted, then the policy must be followed. The policy should also be reviewed with drivers in a pre-trip meeting. Check with the district's transportation supervisor or school attorney to see what is required in order to

allow parents or guardians to drive students in their vehicles.

The following recommendations will help reduce transportation-related accidents:

- **Obtain signed permission slips from the parents of all students stating that they understand and authorize their child to be transported by private vehicle.**
- **Consider obtaining a written memorandum of understanding of their responsibility and liability from the volunteer drivers or teachers, when applicable.**
- **Obtain a copy of the driver's license, DMV record and insurance ID card from all drivers.**
- **Those with poor driving records should not be authorized to transport students.**
- **In addition to the driver, we recommend having at least one other teacher or chaperone in each vehicle.**
- **Vehicles should have a basic safety inspection prior to the trip. Confirm that the registration and inspection certificate are up to date. The transportation supervisor may want to look over the vehicle for safety hazards before the trip.**
- **For long trips, time parameters should be established to ensure the driver remains alert.**
- **Any and all accidents must be reported to the district regardless of the severity.**
- **A minimum age should be established for volunteer drivers.**
- **The number of passengers in any vehicle cannot exceed the number of appropriate safety restraints, as established by the manufacturer of the vehicle.**

■ *Arranging Contractor-Provided Bus Transportation*

The use of other modes of transportation is a consideration when requests are made for travel over long distances, for trips that require more buses than a transportation department has available, or for trips on weekends.

There are pitfalls associated with alternative modes of transportation and a district can incur liability in the event of an accident.

Suggestions for improving this exposure include:

- **Make certain that charter buses are DOT inspected, driven by operators with Article 19-A certification.**
- **Obtain proof of certificates insurance and workers' compensation with additional insured status for the district. Submit these forms to NYSIR for review. (Examples of insurance requirements are in the Sample Forms and Documents section of this book).**
- **Verify the identity of the driver by asking to see a driver's license. This will ensure that only those drivers that you have already checked through the Bus Driver Certification Unit are the ones who show up to drive the trip.**
- **Carefully evaluate the condition of the vehicle (please see "Charter Vehicle Inspection Checklist" in Sample Forms and Documents). It is not uncommon for charter bus companies to overbook and subcontract out to another bus company whose vehicles, operational records, and drivers may not meet a district's requirements. You should consider prohibiting this in writing.**
- **Coordinate transportation arrangements in one centralized location (transportation**

office or central administration).
Principals and teachers usually are not familiar with transportation requirements and/or the district's policies.

Pre-Trip

Perhaps the most important step in the risk control process, pre-trip planning, should be done on a team basis. Depending on the scope of the trip, members might include the safety or risk manager, athletic director, a school nurse, the district's broker or insurance representative, the transportation supervisor, the principal, the school attorney, teachers and student club leaders.

Pre-trip risk control management includes:

- **Review the district's policies concerning student travel. Policies contain restrictions that need to be considered. For example, travel limitations based on location and distance, fees, minimum chaperone-to-student ratios, and transportation insurance requirements.**
- **Review and amend the approval process, if needed.**
- **Check the manner in which fees and other money are collected, recorded and safeguarded so that cash collected for student travel can't be stolen. The district should have procedures that address the way cash is handled by staff.**
- **Review parental/guardian permission forms. Sample forms are on pages 15 & 16.**
- **Conduct a mandatory pre-trip meeting for parents, guardians, chaperones and students when overnight travel is**

occurring. The rules and itineraries (containing a detailed summary of each day's activities as well as lodging arrangements) must be distributed, along with the ramifications for breaking the rules and the penalties for violations.

- **Require both the student and parent or guardian to sign an acknowledgement, indicating that they have read and understand the district's code of conduct. Where applicable, a separate athletic code of conduct should be developed. Parents and/or guardians should be advised that they will be promptly notified if a student is going to be sent home for a major infraction, and that they will bear the cost of additional travel expenses.**
- **Check overnight accommodations to make certain that they are suitable for students. There should be no access to mini-bars or telephones that allow outside calls that can be charged to the room. Discourage in-room movies and games.**

During Trip

Once the trip is underway, the most important task for staff and chaperones is supervision. The trip leader needs to supervise and manage the activities of both students and chaperones. Although properly trained with an understanding of what is expected, chaperones without adequate experience with students need to be organized and directed.

From the trip leader's perspective, each trip presents its own set of challenges and needs. Suggestions for overnight travel and sports camp include:

- **Limit the amount of free or down time. Schedule staff to supervise students during these times.**
- **Provide security during the night. Depending on logistics, chaperones should be on duty overnight with access into student sleeping quarters.**
- **Provide telephone access for coaches and staff. They should have access at all times to a building or central office administrator and be able to contact each other.**
- **Take ‘head counts’ at different times during the day to keep track of the students and their whereabouts.**
- **Maintain the planned chaperone/student ratio. As a general rule, a chaperone ratio of 1:10 (trained chaperones to students) is recommended. It may be lower, depending on the student population.**
- **Ensure that curfews are enforced with mandatory bed checks. Some districts have student sign-in procedures.**
- **Create and bring a phone chain (parent/guardian numbers). One subscriber requires a photo of each student with the student’s personal information on the back of the photo.**
- **Plan for disruptions in schedules. For example, if there is inclement weather and a rainout, be prepared to direct students to substitute activities.**

Sleeping arrangements on coed trips also present unique challenges. Adjoining rooms between males and females are discouraged. Coed room hopping should be prohibited and if violated, considered a major infraction.

The New York State Division of State Police has developed a field attendance system that includes an attendance sheet, nametags and

other information. A copy of the attendance sheet and description of the system begins on page 33.

Also included in trip control measures specifically for accidents and medical emergencies:

- **Preserve or photograph evidence such as defective athletic or recreational equipment.**
- **Be careful about giving statements concerning fault or responsibility to others.**
- **Check student permission forms for information on student medical conditions and insurance and share with medical professionals as allowed.**

How One District Solved the Curfew Dilemma. After learning that students were leaving the hotel after bed checks, one ingenious teacher placed tape across the doors after the rooms were checked. When he learned that the students carried their own rolls of the same tape he used, he began signing his name to the tape after he taped the room doors. That worked.

Post-Trip

Post-trip risk control efforts focus on the management of accidents or incidents on a field trip. Student incident reports should be completed either in the field or immediately upon returning to the district. It is a good idea to carry several student incident forms while traveling. Accidents should be reported to the district’s insurance representative or directly to the NYSIR Claims Department at 1-800-476-9747, ext. 1455, stating objective information concerning:

- **The nature of the accident**

- **Description of injuries**
- **Names and contact information for witnesses**
- **Supervisors present**
- **Other pertinent information.**

In the case of a serious accident after regular business hours, call the NYSIR Emergency Hotline at 1-800-894-9341.

Chaperones

Choosing the right chaperones is a key to having a successful class trip, whether to the circus or on a safe overseas voyage. Clearly, chaperones serve a vital role in supervision, and their roles can vary greatly depending on the length, distance and complexity of the trip.

Your chaperones can be staff, volunteers or a mix of both. Generally, staff members would be preferred since they are used to the role of supervisor and already have a grasp on the district's policies and procedures. If an emergency arises, students would be at ease with the more familiar staff members. Staff members should be instructed to help volunteers or they can be matched with a volunteer before the trip.

Before the trip begins, ensure that your chaperones have met the requirements of all school volunteers (see sample volunteer application on page 19). Make sure the district has cell telephone numbers and emergency contact numbers for all chaperones. References should be checked and generally fingerprinting and a criminal background check are required.

Formally approve chaperones. While the overwhelming majority of people who volunteer to assist with field trips are caring, giving people with good intentions, pedophiles and other criminals look for opportunities to be

in close contact with children and adolescents.

Train chaperones. Chaperones often do not have experience supervising groups of students, and they are generally not aware of the district's policies and procedures concerning travel nor is it certain that they have reviewed the district's Code of Conduct. Both male and female chaperones are recommended on trips with male and female students. This is essential even on local trips, in case some one needs to enter a bathroom or locker room in an emergency or to search for a student.

Before overnight trips occur, plan to have a mandatory pre-trip meeting with chaperones to discuss the district's rules and the travel itineraries that include a detailed summary for each day. Meetings and training sessions with approved chaperones should include information about:

- **Where they should be stationed or supervising during the trip.**
- **An explanation of the district's expectation of chaperone performance and behavior. Chaperones should be aware of how their performance affects the district's reputation.**
- **The district's Code of Conduct, policies on drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment and discrimination and other policies should be distributed and explained. Instruct chaperones that the school rules and Code of Conduct still apply on the trip. Prohibited behavior (and consequences) should be discussed. The emergency management plan needs to be distributed and explained, as well.**
- **The rules and protocol for the trip should also be distributed and explained including information on such matters as overnight procedures, sleeping arrangements and curfews.**

- **Review “What if” scenarios, such as: What if a student gets sick? What if a student cannot be accounted for? What if a student loses his or her passport? What if there is an emergency at the student’s home?**
- **Within legal limits, students with medical needs should be identified and arrangements made for administration of their medication.**

Chaperones should be informed that they cannot focus only on their own child or a select group of students. They are responsible for the entire group on the trip. Chaperones need to assist the trip leader and follow directions as needed. Chaperones should endeavor to learn all of the students’ names, and take attendance frequently to ensure that no one is left behind.

While on the trip, the chaperones should be aware that they are role models and should be following the rules that apply to students. They should be polite, wear their seatbelts, and model all the behaviors expected of students. If there are activities (bicycle riding, rafting, rock climbing, skiing, etc.) planned during the trip which require protective gear such as helmets, they should not only ensure that the students are wearing it, but they should wear it too.

Chaperones should be advised about the potential for problems during down or free time. When delays occur, waiting students might partake in pranks and horseplay or begin engaging in inappropriate activities. This time period is when the role of the chaperone is particularly crucial. Chaperones should be prepared to provide alternative activities and give direction to the students. Chaperones should also be instructed about the ramifications for students who break the rules.

When traveling, chaperones will have to communicate and make timely decisions. Unexpected issues can arise such as schedule

changes, weather problems, power failures or fire alarms.

Naturally, chaperones should not be seen smoking or drinking, and should set a good example for the students.

Chaperones should be provided with a list of emergency numbers and a first aid kit.

Here are some other issues that can be discussed:

- **Communication - Instruct chaperones to pre-program emergency numbers into their phones before the trip. If the trip is to be overseas, consider obtaining international cell phones or temporarily upgrading cell service.**
 - **Hotel - Information on safe evacuations and a copy of the floor plan should be available. Upon arrival, select a meeting point for assembly in case an evacuation is needed.**
 - **Overseas Trips - Consider providing a foreign dictionary with emergency phrases to the chaperones before the trip. Ideally, select chaperones who are proficient in the language spoken at the destination.**
 - **Charter Buses – Inform chaperones that charter buses should be evacuated from the back to the front, since the chance of fire is more apt to occur in the rear of the bus, unlike in a typical yellow school bus where the risk of fire is greater in the front. Overheated brakes, leaks, and smoking in the lavatory are some of the reasons fires can occur on coach buses. Position chaperones, coaches or teachers throughout the bus during the trip, rather than seating them all toward the front. Supervisors positioned in the back should be reminded to open and check the restrooms if there is an emergency**
- Understanding how to conduct swift and**

thorough evacuations on charter bus trips is an important part of field trip safety and should be explained to your chaperones.

Chaperones have accepted a serious responsibility and should be commended for their efforts upon the conclusion of the trip.

Foreign Travel

Before planning foreign travel, trip planners should determine if foreign travel is permitted. Most school district administrators and boards of education have changed their policies concerning travel outside of the U.S. Some districts prohibit foreign travel, others allow it, but on a limited basis. If it is allowed, the criteria for approval may be more restricted than in the past.

If foreign travel is anticipated, administrators should contact the U.S. Department of State. The U.S. Department of State web site has warnings about traveling in foreign countries. This web site can be accessed at <http://www.travel.state.gov/>

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) web site has health warnings for U.S. travelers. This web site can be accessed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/>

Conducting a threat assessment of the destination is a prudent idea. Countries and destinations that were popular tourist sites in the past may no longer be suitable for school-sponsored travel. Neighborhoods may have changed or increased security may limit access that was previously open.

Further Advice From the U.S. Department of State includes:

- **A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and leave most foreign countries. All persons traveling by air from Canada,**

Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda, must have a passport to enter the United States. This is true even if the foreign country visited does not require a passport for entry. Since it can take several weeks to obtain a passport, students are urged to apply several months in advance of the trip. Information about how to obtain a U.S. passport, and about traveling abroad, is available on the Department of State's website at <http://www.travel.state.gov/>.

- **Register so that the State Department can better assist you in an emergency: Register travel plans with the State Department through a free online service at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. This will help the State Department contact travelers if there is a family emergency in the U.S., or if there is a crisis where the trip is taking place. In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on travelers' welfare and whereabouts will not be released to others without express authorization.**
- **Check overseas medical insurance coverage: Have students and chaperones ask their medical insurance companies if their policies apply overseas, and if they cover emergency expenses such as medical evacuation. If they do not, you might consider recommending supplemental insurance.**

Managing The Terrorism Threat

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and other international events, there have been changes in planning and coordinating school field trips.

The following suggestions, developed with the assistance of subscribers while analyzing this issue, are warranted and may be helpful in deciding whether a field trip should take place:

- **Gauge the willingness of parents and guardians to allow their children to travel beyond the local geographic area.**
- **Evaluate the effectiveness of the district's emergency management plan for incidents that could occur while students are traveling.**
- **Be alert for changes in the national threat assessment level, and for advice and guidelines from the State Education Department or other authorities.**
- **Call ahead when planning travel to a specific venue to determine if there are closings, restrictions, or security procedures in place that make the trip impractical. Representatives from visitor bureaus, entertainment and sports arenas, and hotel and mall security officers can provide information about their current security status and procedures. Travel agents may be able to help as well.**
- **Choose sites carefully. Even if a trip is planned to a Tier One city, it may not present a threat. For example, a trip to the Bronx Zoo is arguably less of a threat than a tour of the New York Stock Exchange.**
- **Permit students to "opt-out" of certain field trips.**
- **Consider bringing representatives of the organization onto school property for demonstrations or in-house programs when trips are canceled.**
- **Carefully evaluate domestic travel, particularly to major U.S. cities, such as New York, Washington D.C. or Boston. Check with your travel agent or tour company, and the convention or travel bureaus in the cities your students are planning to visit. With heightened security and periodic closings of tourist attractions, historical sites and roadways, security delays and tour restrictions, travel may no longer be advised or as simple.**

Sample Forms and Documents



This section contains sample forms and documents that should be reviewed and changed as needed to address local conditions, policies and requirements. For ease of use they may be downloaded from the CD-Rom that is provided with this manual or accessed from the NYSIR web site, www.nysir.org.

Request for Educational Field Trip

School: _____ Date: _____ Teacher: _____

Trip Information:

Grade: _____ Subject: _____ Activity or Competition: _____

Destination/Location: _____ Date of Trip: _____

Explain how this trip will enrich and extend student learning:

Time leaving school: _____ Time returning to school: _____

Cost per student: \$ _____ Other costs to student: \$ _____

Number of students: _____ Number of teachers: _____

Number of chaperones: _____
(Attach a list of students, teachers and chaperones)

Transportation via:

School bus(es). If so, how many? _____

Contracted carrier – specify company and number of buses: _____

Private transportation Public transportation

Other _____

(If a contracted carrier is involved, the transportation supervisor must be consulted before making any arrangements.)

Approval:

Principal: _____ Date: _____

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction: _____ Date: _____

Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

Please attach permission slips, insurance certificates and other required documentation.

Parental/Guardian Permission Form

I _____ give permission for _____
(Name of Parent/Legal Guardian) (Name of Student)

to attend the following trip: _____
(Identify Field/Education Trip)

Here list the trip itinerary or refer to an attached document, along with a description of hazards, skills or conditioning that may be required of participants.¹ Also include a list of required equipment and supplies.² (To be completed by the trip leader or District/Boces administrator.)

Transportation is provided by ³ _____
(To be completed by the trip leader or District/Boces administrator.)

Trip Itinerary and Requirements

I understand that the leaders will make every effort to reach me, but in the event emergency treatment is necessary, I give the trip leaders the right to transport and authorize medical treatment on behalf of my child.

My child's physician is: _____
(Name, Address and Telephone Number of Child's Physician)

Two emergency contacts are: _____

(Names, Address & Telephone Numbers of the Emergency Contacts)

My child has the following medical conditions that would interfere with his/her participation on this trip: _____

My child takes the following medication: _____
and I will make arrangements for him/her to receive his/her medication, as required.

My child and I have read and understand the school's Code of Conduct. We agree to abide by these rules.

I _____ (Parent/Legal Guardian) hereby covenant and agree to release and hold harmless the _____ (Name of District) from and against any and all liability, loss, damages, claims, or actions (including costs and attorney fees) for bodily injury and/or property damage, to the extent permissible by law, arising out of participation in the _____ (Name of Trip).

Parent or Legal Guardian Date

¹ For example, for a rafting trip a district may indicate that participants must know how to swim since rapids and fast water will be crossed.
² Such as special clothing, insect repellent, backpacks, etc.
³ If transportation is not provided, state so. For example, "The (Name of District) will not be providing transportation. Students and their parents/guardians must make their own arrangements."

Parental/Guardian Permission Form – Foreign Travel

I _____ give permission for _____ to attend the following foreign
(Name of Parent/Legal Guardian) (Name of Student)
trip: _____.
(Identity of Field/Education Trip)

Here List the Trip Itinerary or refer to an Attached Document, along with a Description of Hazards, Skills or Conditioning that may be required of Participants. Also Include a List of Required Equipment and Supplies.¹ (To be completed by the trip leader or District/Boces administrator.)

Transportation is provided by² _____
(To be completed by the trip leader or District/Boces administrator.)

I understand that the leaders will make every effort to reach me, but in the event emergency treatment is necessary, I give the trip leaders the right to transport and authorize medical treatment on behalf of my child.

My child's physician is: _____ . Two emergency contacts
(Name, Address and Telephone Number of Child's Physician)
are: _____ . My child has the following
(List the Names, Address and Telephone Numbers of the Emergency Contacts)
medical conditions that would interfere with his/her Participation on this trip: _____

_____. My child takes the following medication: _____
_____ and I have made arrangements for him/her to
receive their medication as required.

My child and I have read and understand the school's code of contact for foreign trips. We agree to abide by these rules. Passport, immunization and other travel requirements have been explained by the district, and I agree to comply with these recommendations.

The district's code of conduct regarding, among other things, smoking, drug and alcohol use apply on this trip as well.

Parent or Legal Guardian does hereby covenant and agree to release and hold harmless the District from and against any and all liability, loss, damages, claims, or actions (including costs and attorneys fees) for bodily injury and/or property damage, to the extent permissible by law, arising out participation in the Name of Trip.

Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

¹ Such as special clothing, insect repellent, backpacks, etc.

² If transportation is not provided, state so. For example, "The (Name of District) will not be providing transportation. Students and their parents/guardians must make their own arrangements." List transportation to and from airport or train station, if applicable.

Transportation Permission Form

When the District is Not Providing Transportation

I _____ give permission for _____
(Name of Parent/Legal Guardian) (Name of Student)

to attend the following trip: _____
(Identity of Field Trip)

The district will not be providing or arranging transportation for this trip, therefore, other students and parents and/or guardians will provide transportation. To this end, I give permission for _____(Name of Student) to be transported in a vehicle operated by _____ (Name of Student, Parent or Guardian). I understand that it is my responsibility to make certain that my child is safely transported to this event.

(Parent/Legal Guardian signature)

(Date)

**Student Assumption of Risk,
Acknowledgement and Release
Sporting Events**

I _____ desire to participate in the _____
(Participant) (Name of Sport Program)

on: _____
(Dates of Sport Camp Program Session or Field Trip)

I understand participation in the _____ (Name of Sport Program) involves rigorous physical activity and risks of physical injury. I acknowledge that I attended a meeting held _____ (Date and Place of Meeting) where these risks were explained. I understand that the risks include a full range of injuries, from minor to severe, including death. Although protective equipment may be used, safety rules employed, coaching instructions provided, medical care provided, and other efforts taken, there is no guarantee that I will not be injured. I agree to assume and accept these risks.

Participant

Date

Parent or Legal Guardian signature

Date

Volunteer Application

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

In case of emergency notify: _____

Briefly state why you want to volunteer: _____

List your skills, interests, hobbies, community activities, work or professional experience: _____

List previous volunteer experience: _____

Do you have transportation? Yes No

If yes, do you have a valid NYS Driver's License? Yes No

License Number: _____ State: _____

Are there any restrictions on your license? Yes No

If yes, list all restrictions: _____

Can you provide transportation for others? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of a crime (do not include traffic violations)? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Indicate Which Volunteer Activities Would Be Of Interest

**** LIST VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY YOUR DISTRICT ****

REFERENCES

Please list three references (not relatives) preferably persons who can attest to your ability to work with others in a volunteer capacity:

Name & Address	Telephone	Relationship

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

Volunteer candidates must meet the highest standard of conduct because of the district's responsibilities for those in its care. This information is to be used only to assist us in determining qualifications for a position as a volunteer.

I agree to conform to the district's rules and regulations to the best of my ability. I agree to participate in orientation and training. I understand that a criminal record and Department of Motor Vehicles check may be made, and my references and experience checked. I release my criminal conviction record to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

***I authorize all references listed to give you pertinent information,
and release all parties from any liability from furnishing this information.***

Signature of applicant _____ DOB: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date: _____

Signed and sworn this ____ day of ____, 20__.

Notary

Model Code of Conduct

School districts in New York State are required to adopt a code of conduct. The codes of conduct apply to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function. A school function means any schoolsponsored extra-curricular event or activity.

Codes of conduct are one of the most important policies adopted by a district. In recent years, many districts have wisely reviewed their codes of conduct, and made adjustments and changes. The codes vary, but contain several common elements. They include:

- Student rights and responsibilities
- Role of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, school board members and parents
- Acceptable and unacceptable conduct, language, dress for students, school personnel and visitors
- Reporting procedures to local law enforcement
- Discipline, detention, suspension and classroom removal
- Parental notification of code violations
- Filing court actions
- Referrals to human services
- Suspension periods
- Staff training
- Students with disabilities
- Searches and interrogations
- School visitors
- Public conduct on school property

A Code of Conduct developed by the New York State School Boards Association follows.

Model Code of Conduct

Developed by New York State School Boards Association.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights

The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and civil school environment, all district students have the right to:

- **Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender or sexual orientation or disability.**
- **Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.**
- **Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.**

Student Responsibilities

All district students have the responsibility to:

- **Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.**
- **Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.**
- **Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.**

- **Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.**
- **React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.**
- **Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.**
- **Ask questions when they do not understand.**
- **Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.**
- **Dress appropriately for school and school functions.**
- **Accept responsibility for their actions.**
- **Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.**

STUDENT DRESS CODE

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up, and nails, shall:

- **Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.**
- **Recognize that extremely brief garments such as tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and seethrough garments are not appropriate.**
- **Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.**
- **Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.**
- **Not include the wearing of hats in the classroom except for a medical or religious purpose.**
- **Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race,color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.**
- **Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.**

Each Building Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item, and if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

Engage in conduct that is disorderly.

Examples of disorderly conduct include:

- **Running in hallways.**
- **Making unreasonable noise.**
- **Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.**
- **Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.**
- **Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.**

- **Trespassing.** Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
- **Computer/electronic communications misuse,** including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
- **Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching)** upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
- **Possessing a weapon.** Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.

Engage in conduct that is insubordinate.

Examples of insubordinate conduct include:

- **Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.**
- **Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.**
- **Skipping detention.**
- **Displaying what appears to be a weapon.**
- **Threatening to use any weapon.**
- **Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.**
- **Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.**

Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

Examples of such conduct include:

Engage in conduct that is disruptive.

Examples of disruptive conduct include:

- **Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.**
- **Lying to school personnel.**
- **Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.**

Engage in conduct that is violent.

Examples of violent conduct include:

- **Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching)** upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
- **Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching)** upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
- **Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.**
- **Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.**

- **Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or persistent pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning.**
- **Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.**
- **Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.**
- **Selling, using or possessing obscene material.**
- **Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.**
- **Smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.**
- **Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either. “Illegal substances” include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as “designer drugs.”**
- **Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.**
- **Gambling.**
- **Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.**
- **Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.**

Engage in misconduct while on a school bus.

It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses, to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated.

Engage in any form of academic misconduct.

Examples of academic misconduct include:

- **Plagiarism**
- **Cheating**
- **Copying**
- **Altering records**
- **Assisting another student in any of the above actions**

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, the Building Principal or his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the Principal, the Principal’s designee or the Superintendent of Schools.

All district staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to their supervisor, who shall in turn impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction, if so authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.

Any weapon, alcohol or illegal substance found shall be confiscated immediately, if possible, followed by notification to the parent of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary sanction, which may include permanent suspension and referral for prosecution.

The Principal or his/her designee must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of a school as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the Principal or his/her designee learns of the violation. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct that violated the code of conduct and constituted a crime.

DISCIPLINARY PENALTIES, PROCEDURES AND REFERRALS

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following:

- **The student's age.**
- **The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.**
- **The student's prior disciplinary record.**
- **The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.**
- **Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate.**
- **Other extenuating circumstances.**

As a general rule, discipline will be

progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations.

If the conduct of a student is related to a disability or suspected disability, the student shall be referred to the Committee on Special Education and discipline, if warranted, shall be administered consistent with the separate requirements of this code of conduct for disciplining students with a disability or presumed to have a disability. A student identified as having a disability shall not be disciplined for behavior related to his/her disability.

Penalties

Students who are found to have violated the district's code of conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination.

- **Oral warning**
- **Written warning**
- **Written notification to parent**
- **Detention**
- **Suspension from transportation**
- **Suspension from athletic participation**
- **Suspension from social or extracurricular activities**
- **Suspension of other privileges**
- **In-school suspension**
- **Removal from classroom by teacher**
- **Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school**
- **Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school**
- **Permanent suspension from school**

Procedures

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.

Students who are to be given penalties other than an oral warning, written warning or written notification to their parents are entitled to additional rights before the penalty is imposed.

Detention

Teachers, Principals and the Superintendent may use after school detention as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate. Detention will be imposed as a penalty only after the student's parent has been notified to confirm that there is no parental objection to the penalty and the student has appropriate transportation home following detention.

Suspension from transportation

If a student does not conduct himself/herself properly on a bus, the bus driver is expected to bring such misconduct to the Principal's attention. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have their riding privileges suspended by the Principal or the Superintendent or their designees.

In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that his or her child gets to and from school safely. Should the

suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance, the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the Principal or the Principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

Suspension from athletic participation, extracurricular activities and other privileges

A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities or other privileges is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

In-school suspension

The Board recognizes the school must balance the need of students to attend school and the need for order in the classroom to establish an environment conducive to learning. As such, the Board authorizes Principals and the Superintendent to place students who would otherwise be suspended from school as the result of a code of conduct violation in "in-school suspension." The in-school suspension teacher will be a certified teacher.

A student subjected to an in-school suspension is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the in-school suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

Teacher disciplinary removal of disruptive students

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. These techniques may include practices that involve the teacher directing a student to briefly leave the classroom to give the student an opportunity to regain his or her composure and self-control in an alternative setting.

Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short term "time out" in an elementary classroom or in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student into the hallway briefly; (3) sending a student to the Principal's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (4) sending a student to a guidance counselor or other district staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this code.

A classroom teacher may remove a disruptive student from class for up to two days. The removal from class applies to the class of the removing teacher only. If the disruptive student does not pose a danger or ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, the teacher must provide the student with an explanation for why he or she is being removed and an opportunity to explain his or her version of the relevant events before the student is removed. Only after the informal discussion may a teacher remove a student from class.

If the student poses a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, the teacher may order the student to be removed immediately. The teacher must, however, explain to the student why he or she was removed from the classroom and give the student a chance to present his or her

version of the relevant events within 24-hours, provided that if such twenty-four hour period does not end on a school day, it shall be extended to the corresponding time on the next school day.

The teacher must complete a district established disciplinary removal form and meet with the Principal or his or her designee as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day, to explain the circumstances of the removal and to present the removal form. If the Principal or designee is not available by the end of the same school day, the teacher must leave the form with the secretary and meet with the Principal or designee prior to the beginning of classes on the next school day.

Within 24 hours after the student's removal, provided that if such twenty-four period does not end on a school day, it shall be extended to the corresponding time on the next school day. The Principal or another district administrator designated by the Principal must notify the student's parent, in writing, that the student has been removed from class and why. The notice must also inform the parent that he or she has the right, upon request, to meet informally with the Principal or the Principal's designee to discuss the reasons for the removal.

The written notice must be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or some other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the student's removal, provided that if such twenty-four hour period does not end of a school day, it shall be extended to the corresponding time on the next school day, at the last known address for the parent. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting parents.

The Principal may require the teacher who ordered the removal to attend the informal

conference.

If at the informal meeting the student denies the charges, the Principal or the Principal's designee must explain why the student was removed and give the student and the student's parents a chance to present the student's version of the relevant events. The informal meeting must be held within 48 hours of the student's removal, provided that if such forty eight hour period does not end on a school day, it shall be extended in the corresponding time on the next school day. The timing of the informal meeting may be extended by mutual agreement of the parent and Principal.

The Principal or the Principal's designee may overturn the removal of the student from class if the Principal finds any one of the following:

- **The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.**
- **The student's removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the district's code of conduct.**
- **The conduct warrants suspension from school pursuant to Education Law §3214 and a suspension will be imposed.**

The Principal or his/her designee may overturn a removal at any point between receiving the referral form issued by the teacher and the close of business on the day following the 48- hour period for the informal conference, provided that if such forty-eight hour period does not end on a school day, it shall be extended to the corresponding time on the next school day, if a conference is requested. No student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the Principal makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever is less.

Any disruptive student removed from the

classroom by the classroom teacher shall be offered continued educational programming and activities until he or she is permitted to return to the classroom.

Each teacher must keep a complete log (on a district provided form) for all cases of removal of students from his/her class. The Principal must keep a log of all removals of students from class.

Removal of a student with a disability, under certain circumstances may constitute a change in the student's placement. Accordingly, no teacher may remove a student with a disability from his or her class until he or she has verified with the Principal or the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education that the removal will not violate the student's rights under state or federal law or regulation.

Suspension from school

Suspension from school is a severe penalty, which may be imposed only upon students who are insubordinate, disorderly, violent or disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

The Board retains its authority to suspend students, but places primary responsibility for the suspension of students with the Superintendent and the Principals.

Any staff member may recommend to the Superintendent or the Principal that a student be suspended. All staff members must immediately report and refer a violent student to the Principal or the Superintendent for a violation of the code of conduct. All recommendations and referrals shall be made in writing unless the conditions underlying the recommendation or referral warrant immediate attention. In such cases a written report is to be prepared as soon as possible by the staff member recommending the suspension.

The Superintendent or Principal, upon receiving a recommendation or referral for suspension or when processing a case for suspension, shall gather the facts relevant to the matter and record them for subsequent presentation, if necessary.

Short term (five days or less) suspension from school

When the Superintendent or Principal (referred to as the “suspending authority”) proposes to suspend a student charged with misconduct for five days or less pursuant to Education Law §3214(3), the suspending authority must immediately notify the student orally. If the student denies the misconduct, the suspending authority must provide an explanation of the basis for the proposed suspension. The suspending authority must also notify the student’s parents in writing that the student may be suspended from school. The written notice must be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or some other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the decision to propose suspension at the last known address for the parents. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parents.

The notice shall provide a description of the charges against the student and the incident for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents of the right to request an immediate informal conference with the Principal. Both the notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents. At the conference, the parents shall be permitted to ask questions of complaining witnesses under such procedures as the Principal may establish.

The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place before the student

is suspended unless the student’s presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process. If the student’s presence does pose such a danger or threat of disruption, the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

After the conference, the Principal shall promptly advise the parents in writing of his or her decision. The Principal shall advise the parents that if they are not satisfied with the decision and wish to pursue the matter, they must file a written appeal to the Superintendent within five business days, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. If the parents are not satisfied with the Superintendent’s decision, they must file a written appeal to the Board of education with the District Clerk within 10 business days of the date of the Superintendent’s decision, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. Only final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the decision.

Long term (more than five days) suspension from school

When the Superintendent determines that a suspension for more than five days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student’s parents of their right to a fair hearing. At the hearing the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to question witnesses against him or her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his or her behalf.

The Superintendent shall personally hear and

determine the proceeding or may, in his or her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding before him or her. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the Superintendent. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the Superintendent may accept all or any part thereof.

An appeal of the decision of the Superintendent may be made to the Board that will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the district clerk within 10 business days of the date of the Superintendent's decision, unless the parents can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the Superintendent. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the decision.

Permanent suspension

Permanent suspension is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as where a student's conduct poses a life-threatening danger to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.

Minimum Periods of Suspension

Students who bring or possess a weapon on school property

Any student, other than a student with

a disability, found guilty of bringing or possessing a weapon onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the one-year suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the following:

- **The student's age.**
- **The student's grade in school.**
- **The student's prior disciplinary record.**
- **The Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective.**
- **Input from parents, teachers and/or others.**
- **Other extenuating circumstances.**

A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law.

Students who commit violent acts other than bringing a weapon to school

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, shall be subject to suspension from school for at least five days. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all students subject to a short-term suspension. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a

case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

Students who are repeatedly substantially disruptive of the educational process or repeatedly substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for at least five days. For purposes of this code of conduct, "repeatedly is substantially disruptive" means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom by teacher(s) pursuant to Education Law § 3214 (3-a) and this code on four or more occasions during a semester, or three or more occasions during a trimester. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all students subject to a short-term suspension. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

Referrals

Counseling

The Guidance Office shall handle all referrals of students to counseling.

PINS Petitions

The district may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:

- **Being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.**
- **Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school**
- **Knowingly and unlawfully possesses marijuana in violation of Penal Law § 221.05. A single violation of § 221.05 will be a sufficient basis for filing a PINS petition.**

Juvenile Delinquents and Juvenile Offenders

The Superintendent is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court:

- **Any student under the age of 16 who is found to have brought or possessed a weapon onto school property, or**
- **Any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law § 1.20 (42).**

The Superintendent is required to refer students age 16 and older or any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Field Trip Attendance System Description

Prepared by the NYS Division of State Police

The Field Trip Attendance System was developed to help identify and track students/participants when they are on a field trip. The system includes a Field Trip Attendance Sheet and color-coded, numbered Identification Tags.

Here is how it works . . .

Fill out the Field Trip Attendance Sheet with the school name, date of trip, teacher's name, grade, destination and the color of the Identification Tags. List all students/participants and adults and their corresponding emergency contact numbers.

When you send out the permission slips for the parents to sign, remember to ask for an emergency contact number for the day of the field trip. This will ensure that you have a current number to include on the sheet.

It is a good idea to assign the last number on the sheet to the teacher/leader, so s/he can easily remember how many people are participating.

Print the color coded number tags and give one to every participant, including all the adults. Sample options are:

Using a color printer, you can choose to print tags or sticky labels with the word:

- BLUE in blue lettering,
- RED in red lettering or
- GREEN in green lettering.

Using colored paper, you can choose to print:

- tags with the word BLUE in black lettering on blue paper,
- tags with the word RED in black lettering on red paper,
- tags with the word GREEN in black lettering on green paper, or
- tags with just numbers in black, on any color you choose.

Note:

Colors are used to distinguish your group from others that may be there.

Numbers are used instead of names for student safety. Strangers will be unable to identify and call students by name.

Printing the word BLUE on blue paper, RED on red paper and GREEN on green paper is so that people who are color blind can "read" the color.

Remember to write the chosen color on the Field Trip Attendance Sheet.

Decide on a code word. The code word is for adults on the field trip to use with the students to let them know he/she is a safe adult with which to go. Students should be taught not to go anywhere with someone who doesn't know the code word right away. The word can be written on the bottom of the Field Trip Attendance Sheet.

If you choose not to write the code word on the bottom of the Field Trip Attendance Sheet, remember that if anything should happen to you, police or emergency medical personnel may need to know the code word in a hurry.

Write any other special instructions, such as any physical needs, allergies, medical conditions or medications any student/participant may need, on the back of the Field Trip Attendance Sheet.

Give copies of the completed form to School Administration, the bus driver(s) and all participating adults. Keep a copy for yourself.

The New York State Police has a Child Abduction Prevention program called Step Away for Safety that can be presented to students a few weeks prior to your outing. The program can be requested by completing Presenter Request Letter that can be found at <http://www.troopers.state.ny.us/> and forwarding it to your local State Police Troop Headquarters.

Field Trip Attendance Sheet

School Name _____ Date _____

Teacher's Name _____ Grade _____

Destination _____ Tag Color _____

All individuals going should be on the list including all adults and the teacher(s).

(It is a good idea to give the teacher the last number so s/he easily remembers how many people there are.)

Tag No.	Last Name	First Name	Emergency Phone No.	
1.			() -	
2.			() -	
3.			() -	
4.			() -	
5.			() -	
6.			() -	
7.			() -	
8.			() -	
9.			() -	
10.			() -	
11.			() -	
12.			() -	
13.			() -	
14.			() -	
15.			() -	
16.			() -	
17.			() -	
18.			() -	
19.			() -	
20.			() -	
21.			() -	
22.			() -	
23.			() -	
24.			() -	
25.			() -	
26.			() -	
27.			() -	
28.			() -	
29.			() -	
30.			() -	

Code Word (optional) _____

Checklist for Charter Bus Trips

Before the Trip

- Make sure there is a written agreement in place with the transportation company, outlining the service being provided, as well as all details of the proposed trip, including dates, locations, and agenda.
- Insurance certificates, with prescribed minimum coverages, should be obtained from the company with the following minimum limits and coverages: Commercial General Liability (\$1 million per occurrence/ \$2 million aggregate); Automobile Liability (\$1 million); Excess or Umbrella Coverage (\$4 million) and Worker's Compensation. Coverage for sexual misconduct is recommended. The district must be listed as an additional insured.
- Check compliance with Article 19A (intrastate) and federal Department of Transportation regulations (interstate).
- Require the bus company to provide you with the names and recent drivers' license abstracts for a "pool" (three or four) of drivers that may be assigned to drive your charter trip. These abstracts would include any motor vehicle accidents, infractions, or convictions.
- Are the drivers "school bus qualified" (that is, fingerprinted and possessing a cleared criminal history) as required by Section 509 of the NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law?

Day of the Trip

- Verify the identity of the driver by requesting to see the driver's license. (This will ensure that only those drivers that you have already checked through the Bus Driver Certification Unit actually show up to drive the trip.)
- Carefully evaluate the condition of the vehicle (please see "Charter Vehicle Inspection Checklist"). It is not uncommon for charter bus companies to overbook and subcontract out to another bus company whose vehicles, operational records, and drivers may not meet a district's requirements. You should consider prohibiting this in writing.
- Evaluate the condition of the driver (sober, alert, etc.).

On the Road

- Monitor the driver's performance (speed, safe lane changes, proper following distances, etc.).
- Carefully monitor the driver's physical condition, particularly on long trips. Make sure the driver is taking necessary breaks.
- At the end of the trip, the person assigned to oversee the trip should direct a written report detailing any safety concerns that came about during the trip to the administrator responsible for student transportation.

Charter Vehicle Inspection Checklist

Instructions: The driver shall conduct an inspection of the vehicle and initial items 1-16.
The trip supervisor shall obtain a copy of the checklist prior to leaving.
Check vehicle # and expiration date on Department of Transportation Inspection.
Sticker No. (_____) Date: (_____)

- Copy of pre-trip inspection is available.
- Check tires and treads.
- Check wheel hubs for grease leaks.
- Check all mirrors for visibility.
- Look for any fluid leaks.
- Check fuel tank cover.
- Check all lights.
- Check emergency doors and windows.
- Check first aid kit, fire extinguisher and reflectors.
- Check driver's seat belt.
- Test horn and windshield wipers and windows for cracks.
- Test emergency brakes and foot brake; make sure they are firm.
- Check two-way communication capability.
- Check that route (map) of trip is visible.
- Ensure that the logbook is visible.

THE TRIP SUPERVISOR WILL MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE BUS DRIVER EXPLAINS EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SAFETY REGULATIONS TO ALL STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS ON THE BUS.

NAME OF DRIVER: _____ BUS CONTRACTOR: _____

DESTINATION: _____ DATE: _____

SCHOOL: _____ BUS TYPE _____

BUS # _____ DEPARTURE TIME: _____ RETURN TIME: _____

NO. OF STUDENTS: _____ NO. OF ADULTS: _____

TRIP SUPERVISOR HAS OBSERVED THE DRIVER CONDUCT THE ABOVE INSPECTION

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Insurance Agreement - Transportation

- I. Notwithstanding any terms, conditions or provisions, in any other writing between the parties, the contractor hereby agrees to effectuate the naming of the district as an unrestricted additional insured on the contractor's insurance policies, with the exception of workers' compensation.
- II. The policy naming the district as an additional insured shall:
 - Be an insurance policy from an A.M. Best rated "secured" or better, New York State admitted insurer.
 - Provide for 30 days notice of cancellation.
 - State that the organization's coverage shall be primary coverage for the district, its board, employees and volunteers.
 - State that the policy affirmatively provides coverage for claims of negligent hiring, training and supervision, which may arise in the context of sexual molestation, abuse harassment, or similar sexual misconduct.
 - The district shall be listed as an additional insured by using endorsement CG 2010 11 85 or broader. The certificate must state that this endorsement is being used. If another endorsement is used, a copy shall be included with the certificate of insurance.
- III. The contractor agrees to indemnify the district for any applicable deductibles.
- IV. The insurance producer must indicate whether or not they are an agent for the companies providing the coverage.
- V. Required Insurance:
 - Commercial General Liability Insurance \$1,000,000 per occurrence/ \$2,000,000 aggregate.
 - Automobile Liability \$5,000,000 combined single limit for owned, hired and borrowed and non-owned motor vehicles
 - Workers' Compensation Statutory Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability Insurance for all employees.
- VI. Contractor acknowledges that failure to obtain such insurance on behalf of the district constitutes a material breach of contract and subjects it to liability for damages and all legal remedies available to the district. The contractor is to provide the district with a certificate of insurance, evidencing the above requirements has been met, prior to the commencement of work or use of facilities.
- VII. The district is a member/owner of the New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal (NYSIR). The contractor further acknowledges that the procurement of such insurance as required herein is intended to benefit not only the district but also NYSIR, as the district's insurer.

References

American Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org>

Centers for Disease Control:

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

Federal Bureau of Investigation

<http://www.fbi.gov/>

NYS Education Department – Resources for School Administrators

<http://usny.nysed.gov/schooladmin/>

NYS Division of State Police

http://www.troopers.state.ny.us/Schools_&_Communities/

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/>

U.S. State Department:

<http://travel.state.gov/>

<http://travel.state.gov/travel/>

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/>